



Ministry
of Defence



Defence Children Services (DCS) Schools and Settings Overseas Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Offer

Defence Children Services is part of the Ministry of Defence. It focuses on issues related to service children and young people. Defence Children Services has a similar role to a local education authority, but does not have the same legislative powers.

DCS Schools and Early Years Settings in overseas locations mirror the English education system and adopt the principles of the SEND Code of Practice (2015). Special educational needs (SEN), is also known as **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)** in England. Parents moving to a MOD school from Scotland, may know this as **Additional Support Needs (ASN)**, or from Northern Ireland may know it as **SEN support** and **Additional Learning Needs (ALN)** in Wales.

DCS schools and settings are committed to inclusion. We aim for all our children and young people to thrive and achieve their full potential. Headteachers, setting managers, senior leaders, class teachers, practitioners and support staff ensure that children:

- Feel secure and know that their contributions are valued
- Appreciate and value the differences they see in others
- Take responsibility for their own actions
- Are taught in groupings that allow them all to experience success
- Have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles
- Have challenging targets that enable them to succeed
- Are encouraged to participate fully, regardless of disabilities or medical needs

What is the aim of the DCS Schools and Early Years Settings SEND Offer?

The DCS schools and settings SEND Offer is the first place for service families, **who are being posted overseas**, to access information to support their SEND journey. The Offer helps children, young people and their parents to understand what services and support they can expect **from DCS schools and settings in overseas locations**. The priority for this information is to empower service families by giving them knowledge about what they should expect, the services and provision available, how to access it, and what to do if they are not satisfied.

What is a Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND)?

The SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years, January 2015 states:

“A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him/her. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- a. Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or,*
- b. Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.”*

This means that children with SEND may need extra help or support, or special provision made for them to have the same opportunities of other children of their age. If a child has a SEND, their needs will mainly fall into one or more of the following four areas: Communication and interaction needs, Cognition and learning difficulties, Social, emotional and mental health difficulties, Sensory and/or physical needs.

How do I apply for an overseas school place for my child with SEND?

If you are thinking of applying for a place, contact the MOD school or setting local to your posting. If you are applying for a place in an overseas location that does not have a DCS school or setting you will need to contact the Overseas Education and Supportability (OES) Team for advice.

RC-DCS-HQ-OES@mod.gov.uk

It is important to understand that admissions arrangements to schools in a non-MOD school location are determined locally and some international schools may not be able to support children with SEND. Critically, the support pathways that

a child accesses in their UK school may not be transferrable to the overseas context.

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) only apply in England and are not transferrable to the overseas context.

If there is a DCS school/setting in your posting location they will begin the educational clearance process as soon as you make contact by phone or email. You will need to complete an admission form and give consent for the DCS school/setting to contact your child's current school/early years provider. The DCS school/setting will then contact them by email, asking for information about your child. They will be asked to complete an Education Overseas and Supportability (EOS) Form 102 (Primary) or Form 103 (Early Years).

For children transferring from a school/setting in Northern Ireland to a DCS school/setting, completion of the EOS form will be coordinated by the Overseas Education and Supportability (OES) team. Parents should contact OES for more information.

RC-DCS-HQ-OES@mod.gov.uk

Once the EOS form has been returned to the DCS school/setting a decision will be made about the supportability of the child. Most children will receive a Confirmation of Educational Supportability (CES) form straight away. Some forms will have details about how your child will be supported if they have additional support needs. If a child's needs are thought to be more complex the school/setting will begin the MASO (MOD Assessment of Supportability Overseas) process to ensure that your child can access the support they need to progress.

If your child is found to be supportable a clearance certificate will be issued outlining the support your child will receive.

What can I expect from my school or setting?

In every DCS school or setting support should arise from a four-part cycle, known as the **graduated approach**, where decisions and actions are revisited, and reviewed regularly. This cycle develops understanding about the pupil's needs and supports them in making good progress. The four stages of the cycle are: **Assess, Plan, Do, Review.**



DCS schools and settings will:

- Follow the graduated approach
- Use their best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEND gets the support they need
- Ensure that children and young people with SEND engage in the activities of the school/setting alongside pupils who do not have SEND
- Designate a teacher or setting practitioner to be responsible for co-ordinating SEND provision (the SEND co-ordinator, or SENDCo)
- Inform parents when they are making special educational provision for a child
- Publish a SEND information report and share the arrangements that have been taken to prevent SEND children from being treated less favourably than others

DCS schools and settings seek to support every child, but in some situations local commands may conclude that they cannot support a child with SEND in an overseas location. Detailed direction is laid out in JSP 770 and JSP 342.

Where a DCS school or setting can support a child's needs, a graduated approach will be initiated and if appropriate a Service Children's Assessment of Need (SCAN) may be completed. Whilst the SCAN is analogous to an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP - England), Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP - Scotland), a SEN Statement (Northern Ireland), or an Individual Development Plan (IDP – Wales), it is important to understand that a SCAN does not guarantee access to the same level of support that may be available in the UK.

If your child is moving back to the UK with a SCAN it will not be maintained and it may not be turned into an EHCP, CSP, IDP or Statement by the new local education authority. Parents of children with SEND should be aware that the UK Equality Act (2010) is not enforceable in all overseas locations.

More information can be found in the SEND information section of the MOD School/Settings website.

What is the Graduated Response – Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR)?

When it is decided that a child would benefit from specific, targeted support/intervention, your child’s teacher/setting practitioner supported by the SENDCo will consider the advice in the SEND Code of Practice using the Graduated Response:

Assess

The class teacher/setting practitioner, working with the SENDCo and parents, discusses the child's needs and creates a baseline assessment by which progress will be measured.

Plan

A plan of additional support is drawn up for a pupil (Inclusion Support Plan – ISP), a record will be kept and the parents MUST be informed. The school/setting and parents will agree what progress they hope will be made (outcomes), and by what date (deadlines).

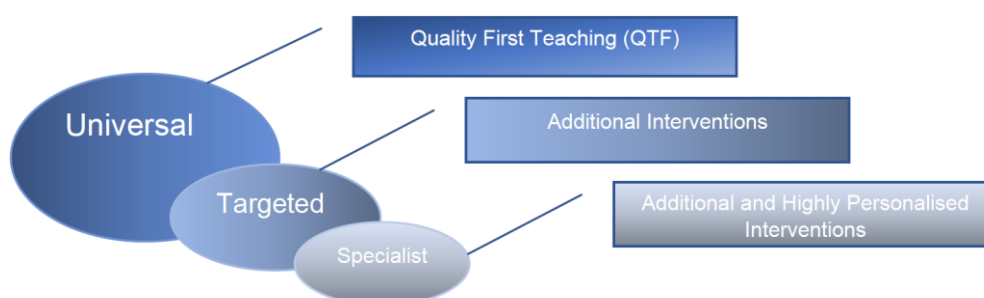
Do

The pupil is given extra support, undertaken under the supervision of the class teacher/setting practitioner.

Review

Termly reviews with parents are held at least three times per year. Parents are fully involved.

What is meant by Universal, Targeted and Specialist provision?



Universal

This will be support that is available to all children and young people. It can be accessed without needing any specialist resources or assessment.

Targeted

This is for children and young people who may need additional support to

access education, or may need support that is specifically designed to meet their needs. Some targeted provision can be accessed directly with or without an assessment.

Specialist

This is for children and young people with higher level needs who are likely to require even more support than is available either through universal or targeted services. This usually requires outside agency support and specialist Assessment.

What should I do if I am concerned about my child's progress and/or development?

Every school or setting has a designated person who is responsible for co/ordinating help for children with SEND. This person is known as the **Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo)**.

As a parent you may have concerns about your child's progress/development and think that they require extra support. The first point of contact should be your child's class teacher, setting practitioner, tutor or SENDCo. You will be given the opportunity to share your concerns and plan an appropriate course of action. It may be helpful to make notes before you attend the meeting.

How does the school prepare and support children to transfer to a new school or the next stage of education and life?

We understand the importance of smooth transitions for all our pupils as they move to a DCS school or setting, move up a key stage, move from class to class, and move on to Post 16 provision. We are sensitive to all their individual needs and the challenges of service children's frequent transitions.

Support for transitions start early and we encourage pupils, parents and carers to look at websites, take virtual tours and speak to the school or setting prior to their posting. If you are moving on from a DCS school or setting let them know as early as possible so they can begin the transition process with your child. If you know the school or setting you are moving to the DCS school/setting will begin liaison work as soon as they have your permission.

If your child has special needs, additional support is available for transition, this will be coordinated by the DCS school or setting and involve the Overseas Education and Supportability (OES) Team and the Education Advisory Team (EAT - UK).

What services are available in MOD Schools?

The available services are dependent on the overseas location, your local DCS school or setting will be able to provide more specific information.

Medical and Community Health services: It is in your best interest to ensure that the appropriate facilities are available in the overseas location to maintain continuity of treatment for a specific condition. If your child is diagnosed with a particular illness or a condition that is being treated in the UK, it is very important that you consult with your unit medical officer well in advance of arriving in post overseas.

Early Years Settings and Childcare: The current overseas context does not guarantee full or automatic access to 0-5 early years/childcare in every location. In locations where parents are not able to access MOD provision, they may make use of the **Overseas Nursery Allowance** to fund early years education/childcare for eligible children. Detailed guidance is accessed on DCYP's GOV.UK site (DIN 2017DIN01-167).

Eligible dual-working parents may make use of **Tax-Free Childcare** overseas where it is supported by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. Tax Free Childcare for Service parents overseas can only be accessed in a registered setting. Detailed guidance is accessed on DCYP's GOV.UK site (DIN 2018DIN01-011 for Service personnel and 2017DIN01-101 for MOD Civilians). 23 JSP 342 Pt 1 (V4.0 Sep 19)

Free Early Years Education/Childcare - The MOD will mirror, where reasonably practicable, the entitlement to free early years education. This entitlement to free early education for eligible children is intended to cover 15 hours a week of free, high quality, flexible childcare.

Extended Free Childcare - This additional 15 hours' free provision is accessible to families where both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a lone parent family). The entitlement to 15 and up to 30 hours of free early years education cannot be claimed when using childminders or nannies. Detailed guidance is accessed on DCYP's GOV.UK site (DIN 2017DIN01-122).

Transport: Funding and arrangements for Transport mirrors, where reasonably practicable, the principles laid out in Department for Education statutory guidance for the maintained education sector and ensure that a child's education is not disadvantaged. Personnel are to follow direction and guidance for School Transport contained in JSP 800 (Vol 5). Generally, transport is not provided, but in some locations, there is transport from remote service

accommodation areas. Ask the local DCS school or Hive for more information. Transport is not provided for the Early Years settings.

Welfare and Social Care Services: this varies widely dependant on overseas location; your command, the service family federations or local Hives can provide specific information.

Speech and language Therapy (SaLT): Speech therapy techniques are used to improve communication. These can include articulation therapy, language intervention activities, and other support depending on the type of speech or language disorder. This service is available in all DCS schools and settings. The service available in location varies greatly:

Cyprus – SaLT support is available locally through SSAFA and includes face to face therapy and in school support.

Gibraltar – SaLT support is available through the Gibraltar government service. It does include face to face support in a clinical setting, but not in school support.

Rest of the World – DCS SaLT support is available. This is on a clinical assessment basis only and does not include face to face therapy.

More information is available from your DCS school or setting.

Educational Psychology, Speech and Language and SEND (EPSL) Team: Schools and settings can draw upon support and advice from the EPSL team. This service is available to all DCS schools and settings, although face to face work is limited in remote service locations.

Safeguarding and Education Welfare Officers: DCS provide professional support to all schools and settings.

Local Hives: The HIVE Information Service provides information about services available in each overseas location through websites, telephone and email inquiries. They do this on behalf of the chain of command to the Service community and they welcome enquiries from serving personnel, dependants, partners, extended families, and the wider military community including veterans and MOD civilians.

Family Federations: The family federations are the independent voice of Service families, they work hard to improve the quality of life for Service families around the world. They can provide information about services available in each overseas location through websites, telephone and email inquiries.

Useful Links

<https://aff.org.uk/uk-overseas/your-cyprus-posting/>
<https://aff.org.uk/uk-overseas/your-germany-posting/>
<https://aff.org.uk/uk-overseas/your-brunei-posting/>
<https://www.raf-ff.org.uk/overseas/>
<https://bfgnet.de/hive.html>
<http://gibraltarhive.blogspot.com/>
<https://nff.org.uk/overseas-assignments/>

DCS School and Settings Locations

Germany

Ramstein

St David's Primary School (3 to 11 years)

Sennelager

Attenborough Primary School (2 to 11 years)

Cyprus

Akrotiri

Akrotiri Early Years Setting (0 to 3 years)

Akrotiri Primary School (3 to 11 years)

Ayios Nikolaos

Ayios Nikolaos Early Years Setting (0 to 3 years)

Dhekelia

Dhekelia Early Years Setting (0 to 3 years)

Queen Berengaria Primary School (3 to 11 years)

King Richard Secondary School (11 to 19 years)

Episkopi

Episkopi Early Years Setting (0 to 3 years)

Episkopi Primary school (3 to 11 years)

St John's Secondary School (11 to 19 years)

Brunei

Treetops Early Years Setting (0 to 3 years)

Hornbill Primary School (3 to 11 years)

Italy

Naples

BFS Naples Primary School (3 to 11 years)

Belgium

SHAPE Primary School (3 to 11 years)

Falkland Islands

Mount Pleasant Primary School (2 to 11 years)

Gibraltar

Sunflowers Early Years Setting (0 to 3 years) (no website)

St Christopher's Foundation Stage (3 to 5 years)

The Netherlands

AFNORTH Primary School (3 to 11 years)

DCS complaints procedure

The DCS's complaints policy against DCS schools and settings provides further information on how to complain. It can be sourced from your local school or setting.

DCS privacy notice

Our privacy notice on how we use pupil information, can be sourced from your local school or setting.

The DCS Schools and Settings SEND Offer has been developed in partnership with:

Defence Children Services, DCS schools and settings, parents, pupils, EPSL, service family federations, representatives from the armed services and education partners from the devolved authorities.

Many thanks to all of those who have given their valuable time and feedback to this process.

Updated October 2023