



Defence
Children
Services

DCS Directive 3.2.23

MOD Overseas Schools and Settings Admissions

DCS Jan 22 v1.0

General

Authorisation	Head DCS
Senior Responsible Owner	CEO Schools and Settings
Point of Contact	MOD Schools SO1 Policy & Assurance
Review Date	Jan 2024
Related Policy/Guidance	JSP 342: Education of Children and Young People
	JSP 770: Tri Service Operational and Non-Operational Welfare Policy
	DfE School Admissions Code
	DCS Guidance: Placement out of Chronological Year Group

Introduction

1. MOD schools and settings provide education to Defence children in designated overseas locations, and for designated stages of schooling. These schools/settings are aligned to the English education system, with key stage tests and public examinations as in England. MOD schools are registered with the DfE and inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate, Ofsted and inspection reports are accessed through the Ofsted website. Full details of MOD schools/settings are accessed on MOD school pages of GOV.UK

Aim

2. In overseas locations where the number and age profile of children justify it, and where there is no equivalent/appropriate local provision, the MOD will provide dedicated schools. The role of MOD Schools is to provide an educational service to meet the needs of Defence children outside the UK which, as far as possible, conforms in type, scope, and standard to that required by statute in England.

Scope

3. MOD schools follow admission procedures laid out in this Admissions Directive which mirrors, where reasonably practicable overseas, statutory requirements for school admissions in England. All Applications are to be made by the parent/carer to the headteacher of the school using the MOD schools admissions process defined in this directive and accessed on individual school websites. The headteacher's decision on admissions is final.

4. The Queen Victoria School (Dunblane) will follow Scottish National statutory direction and guidance for school admissions and may make use of this Directive where it is complementary.

Starting School

5. Children may be admitted to Nursery (Foundation stage 1), the term after their third birthday. A child is eligible for admission from the beginning of the term following their third birthday. For this purpose, terms are defined as beginning on 1 September, 1 January and 1 April regardless of actual term dates. Thus, a child who has their third birthday on 1 September is not eligible for admission to a Foundation Stage 1 setting until the following January.
6. Children may be admitted to Reception from four years of age to Foundation Stage 2 in the school year they turn 5. Children are admitted annually to Foundation Stage 2 classes. A child is eligible for admission from the beginning of the school year following their fourth birthday. For this purpose, the school year is defined as beginning on 1 September regardless of actual term dates.
7. On first admission to a Foundation Stage 2 class in a MOD primary school, schools may choose to adopt a part time start where children will attend on a part-time basis for a period not exceeding four weeks. Each school is required to have its own guidance, regarding whether they operate an initial part time start and the period of initial part-time attendance if so.

Entitlement to MOD School Placements

8. MOD school placements are either classed as Entitled Non-Fee-Paying Placement, Entitled Fee-Paying Placement or Non-Entitled Children. All personnel should familiarise themselves with the policy on entitlement to MOD school placements and the associated fees as covered in JSP 342: Education of Children and Young People.

Applying to MOD Schools

9. As in the UK, parents overseas are responsible for the education of their children and are strongly advised to research education provision overseas in their prospective assignment/transfer location. Information on MOD schools is accessed on the MOD Schools pages of the GOV.UK website. Parents are advised to contact the head teacher in the relevant MOD school in a prospective location.
10. Personnel are directed to follow policy laid out in JSP 770 (Chapter 2A) for the MOD Assessment of Supportability (MASO). The MASO process includes a DCS assessment of educational supportability which applies to all Defence children. Parents need to be aware that schools overseas may not always be able to meet the needs of children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) or additional needs. It is therefore crucial that parents of children with SEND and/or additional needs seek advice from DCS at the earliest opportunity.
11. Personnel are to complete the DCS First Contact form, accessed on GOV.UK /individual MOD School websites or direct from the MOD school and return it to the headteacher of the relevant MOD school. Completion of this form enables early contact with DCS and begins the process of the educational supportability assessment.
12. Following completion of the educational supportability assessment process, parents will be issued with their child's confirmation of educational supportability. Upon receipt of this confirmation, parents will be invited to complete the MOD School Application form and return it to the headteacher of the MOD school.

13. The MOD school will then commence with their local pupil admission/induction process which will include, but is not limited to;

- a. Obtaining consent forms e.g. use of pupil photographs/images within school and/or Defence media,
- b. Medical information as appropriate,
- c. School ICT acceptable user policies
- d. Confirmation of Free School Meals (FSM)
- e. School uniform policy
- f. School bicycle/scooter policy

Oversubscription Criteria

14. Where MOD schools/settings are oversubscribed and are required to prioritise access to early years/childcare (for example, to remain within statutory school capacity levels and meet short notice surges in overseas assignments), the following oversubscription criteria will be used, in the order shown, for:

- a. Children who are vulnerable, including looked after children.
- b. Children of a lone working parent employed by Defence - Service personnel and UK Based Civilians posted overseas or specially recruited for overseas service.
- c. Children of dual working parents employed by Defence - both parents are Service personnel or UK Based Civilians posted overseas or specially recruited for overseas service.
- d. Children of deployed Service parents (one or both parents are posted on operational deployment).
- e. Children who are bereaved or where the Service parent is injured/long term sick.

15. Where there are circumstances which do not meet any of these conditions, parents will need to submit casework through their Chain of Command (COC) to MOD Schools.

16. Applications for a placement in a MOD school on compassionate grounds will be assessed on a case by case basis by MOD Schools.

Parental Preference

17. Children of entitled parents/carers will normally attend the designated MOD school in their Service Family Accommodation area. Parents/carers may, as they do in the UK, express a preference for a place at an alternative MOD school. Places other than at the designated school may only be allocated if there is spare capacity at the preferred school.

18. Parental preference applications should be made in writing to the head teacher of the preferred school, who will consult with the head teacher of the school to which the pupil would

normally attend. The agreement of both head teachers is required to allow a parental preference to proceed. Parents/carers who have been refused a place other than at the designated school may appeal against the decision. Appeals should be submitted in writing to the head teacher of the preferred school.

19. Parents of children who are admitted to an alternative school under the parental preference scheme will be responsible for transport to and from the school.

Placement Out of Chronological Year Group

20. It is the policy of DCS that children attending MOD schools are automatically placed with their chronological year group unless there are exceptional circumstances (for example, entry from an alternative education system, missing large amounts of a school year, long term illness). Please refer to the DCS guidance on Placement out of chronological year group for full information.

Record Keeping

21. MOD Schools will store and handle the first contact form, application form and additional forms received as part of their local admission/induction process in line with MOD/DCS record keeping policies as well as the DCS privacy notice on the MOD schools' pages of the GOV.UK website.