

SHAPE: Children and Adult Education

Children's Education

Kindergarten: One of the strengths of the Belgian educational system is the provision which makes for pre-school education. Free play school places are available for all children from the age of 2½ years, and British personnel serving at SHAPE are fully entitled to take advantage of these facilities. The kindergartens used are:

St Denis: The St Denis kindergarten is located 2 kms from Domaine de la Brisee. Children from the age of 2½ until entry to primary school may attend either morning sessions or all day sessions (0830 – 1530 hrs). A cooked lunch is provided for a small charge (optional).

On payment of a small daily charge younger children (18 months - 2½ years) are accepted for the morning session or all day (0830 – 1530 hrs) in the nursery section.

International Kindergarten: The SHAPE International School provides full kindergarten facilities for children aged 2½+ of all SHAPE personnel. The language of instruction is French, but many of the teachers also speak English. No charge is made, other than for meals. Children from all SHAPE nations attend and the environment is stimulating.

Foundation Stage: There is an English-speaking half-day playgroup known as “Foundation Stage One” for children in their year before entry to primary school specifically as a preparation for entry to the UK Section. This is located within the International Kindergarten, and for the other half of the day, children may attend the equivalent French-speaking class.

Primary Education: The UK Section of the SHAPE International School (SIS) is one of the schools controlled by Service Children’s Education (SCE). It offers a standard UK primary education, following the National Curriculum, and is the choice of the overwhelming majority of British parents at SHAPE. If you wish your child to attend the UK Section, you should complete the Pupil Admission form enclosed within your arrival pack and return it to the Head teacher as soon as possible.

There are 7 other elementary sections in the SHAPE International School, most of which will accept children from other nations. For various reasons, a small number of British parents choose to send their children to one or other of these sections.

School Children’s Visits (SCV): There are a number of travel options for public funded School Children’s Visits. To qualify, each visit must be for at least 7 consecutive days. You will be sent full details and an application form if you have children at Boarding School, University or State School and claiming Guardians allowance. Your normal entitlement is 3 return publicly funded SCVs’ per year and one per year for children in higher education. Additional LOA is paid for each day your child is in Belgium on an authorised SCV.

Secondary Education: Unfortunately there is no SCE (NWE) UK Secondary School in SHAPE. Parents of children aged 11 – 18 have 3 choices:

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Boarding School in UK: Parents considering this option should take advice from the educational and pay staff at their current unit. Boarding School Allowance will normally be admissible, and the “continuity principle” will apply; advice on the financial aspects of boarding education is available from your current Admin Office.

Windsor School, Rheindahlen: Windsor School is the nearest SCE (NWE) secondary school to SHAPE. It has boarding facilities for children from a number of isolated locations in NW Europe, and provides a normal UK education for the 11 – 18 age groups.

Transport is provided weekly and LOA is still payable for children at Windsor, but a Home Savings Element is charged for each day spent at the school.

Application for entry to Windsor School should be made on SCE Form 3001, which should be completed and returned to HQ SCE (NEW), BFPO 140.

SHAPE International School: There are 3 secondary sections (Belgian, German and USO at the SHAPE International School. All will accept British children, and at present there are some in each section. In most cases these sections will not be suitable for children approaching GCSE, but they may be an option for children aged 11 – 13 who prefer not to board and can cope with a foreign language and a non-British environment. In all cases parents considering one of these sections should take advice from the Headmaster, Mr Bucknill, Ext 5283.

Adult Education

Individual Education: The Education Centre, UKJSU, is established to provide for the educational needs of Service personnel during their tour in SHAPE or HQ NATO. Certain educational services are also available to dependants. The Education Centre is located in Building 309 and staff can be contacted on Ext 5234.

Individual advice on educational matters is available at any time, and both Service personnel and dependants are invited to drop into the Centre when ever they are visiting the UKJSU. SHAPE does not have a full time education officer, but receives support from 34 AEC, BFPO 40

UKJSU Learning Centre: The defence community are sometimes disadvantaged as they live in remote locations and are often unable to travel to centres of learning. To redress this and to promote the Government’s Lifelong Learning initiatives, a UKJSU Learning Centre has been established within the Education Centre which provides a wide range of online courses; the most popular being the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) and the City and Guilds Adult Literacy and Numeracy certificates. After initial registration, learning can be conducted either at the Learning Centre or from home. The Learning Centre employs staff who provide initial Advice and Guidance and support learners throughout their course when they require assistance. The Learning Centre can also provide access to specialist course tutors whenever necessary.

The Learning Centre Advisors’ may be contacted either by telephone on Ext 7808 or 0032 65 447808 or by e-mail to shape@alc.detsa.co.uk

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Standard Learning Credits Scheme (SLC): Service personnel can receive financial help through the SLC Scheme. Personnel should complete MOD Form 1950 PRIOR to the course which is then signed by the SNCO IER and sent to ETS Branch for authorisation. When the course is completed the student should complete Army Form 09578 to claim a refund (80% of course fees up to a maximum of £175 in the financial year).

Short University Courses: A number of universities offer short courses which are available to both Service personnel and civilians. There is no charge for the courses. Civilians may be allocated places on a fill-up basis only, and may claim travel expenses at the discretion of the budget manager.

Civilian Examinations: The Education Centre is an Examinations Centre for civilian examinations including OU exams, GCSEs and A-Levels. The Services Civilian Examinations Boards (SCEB) offers GCSEs and A-Levels through a variety of resources. When details of civilian examination dates are received from SCEB they are published on Unit Routine Orders. It is then the responsibility of potential candidates to enrol via the Education Centre and to pay the appropriate fee. GCSEs and A-Level examinations can be taken in either June or November.

SHAPE Language Centre: The Language Centre is situated in Building 253 and holds courses in the following languages; French, English, German, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Dutch, Turkish, Greek and Polish. There is a fee for these course (Service personnel may claim a refund through the Individual Refund Scheme provided a Land Standing Order 3320 is submitted to the UKJSU Education Centre before commencement of the course). For more information contact the Language Centre, Ext 4971.