



Ministry
of Defence



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE STATEMENT OF CIVILIAN PERSONNEL POLICY

CHANGE OF WORK LOCATION: EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN THE UK AND OVERSEAS

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EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN THE UK AND OVERSEAS

Education of your Children While Overseas

Service Children's Education

Service Children's Education (SCE) is an MOD Agency which exists to provide schooling for the children of members of HM Armed Forces and MOD civil servants working overseas. Education is provided in accordance with the UK curriculum. SCE has schools in the main overseas areas (such as Germany and Cyprus) but there are many locations where SCE cannot provide schooling. Attendance at SCE schools is free of charge for accompanying children and they offer the following educational facilities:

- Primary Education (5 to 11 years) as in UK.
- Secondary Education (11 and over) organized on comprehensive lines but may be restricted in some areas. Consult SCE before taking a child of this age overseas.
- Middle Schools (9 to 13 years) – available in some areas, forms a 3 tier system of education.

From 1st September 2010, if you have school aged children and are being posted to an overseas area where a SCE school exists, you will be expected to use the local SCE school. If you have been employed in overseas areas prior to 1st September 2010 you may be eligible for either Boarding School Allowance or Day School Allowance.

Nursery Education

SCE also provide free nursery and pre-school places at designated schools in the main overseas Command areas. If you are posted to an overseas area where SCE are unable to provide Nursery/pre-school education then you may be able to claim Nursery Allowance to pay for or assist with the cost of private nursery sessions.

You will be entitled to either free/financial assistance towards nursery education from the beginning of the first term after your child reaches their third birthday. The dates that qualify a child for a Nursery place or the Nursery Allowance are set out in the table below:

Date of child's third birthday	Qualifying date for Nursery place or Nursery allowance
1 April – 31 August	The start of the autumn term following their 3 rd birthday until statutory school age
1 September – 31 December	The start of the spring term following their 3 rd birthday until statutory school age
1 January – 31 March	The start of the summer term following their 3 rd birthday until statutory school age

The third birthday must fall before, rather than on, the qualifying date.

Claims for nursery fees

When you submit your claim for nursery fees you will receive a refund up to the published *per capita* funding level set by the Department for Education and Skills for nursery places in England and Wales. There is no entitlement to any expenses other than the tuition fees. Your claim should be submitted on **HR Form 058: MOD Claim for Schooling Allowance** accompanied by receipts to the following address:

LF Res HQLF BLB E1
IDL 29
Blenheim Bld
Marlborough Lines
Monxton Road
ANDOVER
Hampshire
SP11 8HT
E-mail address LF-RESHQLFBLBE1-2@mod.uk
Tel STD: 0044 1264 886262 / MIL 94393 6262

Any enquiries that you have regarding nursery education should also be referred to this address.

Cessation of Nursery Allowances

Eligibility for the Nursery Allowances ceases in the following circumstances:

- When a child reaches UK statutory school age i.e. at the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday.
- On the admission of a child to a publicly funded place in a SCE school or pre-school.
- On the admission of a child to a non-SCE school overseas where SCE provide free nursery education
- From the date of return to the UK.

If you transfer from one overseas area to another

If as a result of being permanently transferred from one overseas area to another, or back to UK, and you leave your child behind at an SCE school or other free school to complete an A level or GCSE course and you incur board and lodging costs, then these may be reimbursed within the board and lodging element of the Schooling Allowance (See **Change of Work Location and Travel and Subsistence – Rates of Allowances, Costs, Rates and Charges**) starting from the term following your departure. Proof of board and lodging costs **must** be provided. If you are not charged for board and lodging then the SCE boarding school may levy what is known as a Home Savings charge which you cannot claim reimbursement of. The Home Savings Contribution is a nominal daily charge that is normally made in respect of weekly boarders in recognition that the child element of COLA is still being

paid, but your child is receiving free board at the SCE boarding school, so you would make some savings.

If your child attends a fee-paying school overseas and has, at the time of your posting to another overseas location or the UK, commenced a course of study directly leading to a public examination, then you may continue to be reimbursed school fees within the Schooling Allowance ceiling. For rates of Schooling Allowance see **Change of Work Location and Travel and Subsistence – Rates of Allowances, Costs, Rates and Charges**.

Assistance with School fees will cease with effect from the end of the Academic year following the date of your departure.

Transfer of your child(ren)'s school, medical and educational records

It will be your responsibility to make the necessary arrangements for the transfer of records from the UK school to the SCE school.

Education arrangements where there are no SCE schools – English speaking countries

If you are in an overseas area where there are no SCE schools but free state education, conducted in the English language, is available (e.g. Australia, New Zealand, the USA or Canada) then you would normally be expected to educate your child(ren) in the state system. Where, however, you choose to enrol your child(ren) in a fee-paying school because the local curriculum is significantly different to the UK, reimbursement of fees can be claimed but will be limited to two-thirds of the cost (the Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) can advise). An exception to this is education for children between the ages of 14 and 18 in the USA where, because of the wide divergence between the state curricula and the UK curriculum, it has been determined that UK children within this age bracket could be seriously disadvantaged on return to the UK. Consequently, parents in the USA and with school children between the ages of 14 (at the start of the school year) and 18 may enrol their child(ren) in a fee-paying school to study IGCSE, A levels, or International Baccalaureate and claim 90% reimbursement within the limits of the fees charged by the British School of Washington. For the avoidance of doubt the child must already be aged 14 by 1 September to be eligible for assistance in that academic year. Similarly, parents in Canada who enrol their children in an International Baccalaureate Programme at a fee paying school may claim 90% of the fees.

The normal age for commencing full time education in the USA and Canada is 6. Again, in order to prevent children being disadvantaged, school fees can be reimbursed for children who would, had they been in the UK, have started primary school. Detailed guidance can be provided by the overseas area concerned.

Whenever fees are claimed (either in full or in part, you must note that reimbursement will only include certain admissible extras (see below **Admissible and Inadmissible Extras**).

Education Arrangements where there are no SCE Schools – non-English Speaking Countries

If you are in an overseas area where there are no SCE schools and no access to free state run English language speaking schools then you can place your child in a CEAS approved local private English speaking day school (e.g. an International School) which can provide a suitable and acceptable level of education for your child. You will be able claim fees and certain admissible expenses (see below **Admissible and Inadmissible Extras**) and these can be refunded up to and including the academic year in which your child reaches their 18th birthday.

Only costs of educational facilities comparable with those provided free in the UK will be considered for payment. Claims for school fees beyond the academic year in which your child turns 18 will be considered where your child has to retake an academic year due to educational or medical reasons. Applications for such extended payment must be approved by DBS Civilian Personnel Relocations

Admissible and Inadmissible Extras

You may claim reimbursement of certain 'extras' if an item or service would normally be provided free of charge in the UK state school of education. If the extras relate to tuition, it must be an essential part of the school curriculum and provided free in the UK. A list of admissible and inadmissible education related items are listed below. The list is based on the general rule and separates Primary and Secondary aged children but if you believe that any item would have been provided free of charge in the UK and wish to claim accordingly then you must provide documentary evidence from your Local Education Authority to support your claim.

<u>PRIMARY SCHOOL - (5-11)</u>	<u>SECONDARY SCHOOL - (12-18)</u>
<p align="center"><u>ADMISSIBLE ITEMS</u></p> <p>Text books Work books Stationery Basic art supplies Registration Fee</p>	<p align="center"><u>ADMISSIBLE ITEMS</u></p> <p>Text books Work Books Language lessons (if part of the curriculum and provided free of charge in the UK) Basic art supplies Registration Fee Examinations* (GCSE, IB A level)</p>
<p align="center"><u>INADMISSIBLE</u></p> <p>Language tuition Voluntary contributions Musical instrument hire, lessons and books Transport provided for school trips/excursions Sporting events contributions</p>	<p align="center"><u>INADMISSIBLE</u></p> <p>Stationery Voluntary contributions Musical instrument hire, Lessons and books School field trips/excursions Ingredients for cookery lessons Sporting events contributions</p>

Extra curricular activities	Extra curricular activities Transport to school
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* Not inclusive of examination re-sits or subjects not an essential part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination.

Claims for school fees and extras

You can claim for the refund of school and related expenses on the appropriate form supported by receipted bills.

Cessation of refund/payment of local private school fees

Your eligibility to claim or have your child's local school fees paid will cease in the following circumstances:

- up to and including the academic year in which your child reaches their 18th birthday.
- From the date of your return to the UK

If you decide to remove your child out of a fee paying school for personnel reasons part way through a term, you will be responsible for the fees for the remainder of the term for which your child is not in attendance. Any fees already paid will need to be refunded back to the Department.

CHILDREN TRAVELLING TO THE UK FOR EDUCATIONAL REASONS

If you are accompanied by your child in the overseas area, and at some stage during your tour of duty they need to return to the UK for an interview or admission to a day/boarding school, college or University then they may travel at public expense.

To be Eligible

Your child must have accompanied you overseas at public expense and have been resident in the overseas area for at least 6 months and you must have 6 months of your tour of duty still remaining.

Day/Boarding School Entry Interview

Either you or your spouse/partner may accompany your child at public expense if it is necessary for them to undergo an entry interview (not attendance at an open day) and/or on initial entry to boarding school. The MOD will only pay travel costs of one parent/guardian (if the child is 16 years old or under) and the eligible child(ren) to and from the airport/port of entry in the UK. Onward travel to the school and return travel to the airport/port must be at private expense.

Admission to Specials Schools in the UK

If your child has Special Educational Needs which are formally recognised only after you have arrived overseas and CEAS/SCE certify that they cannot be catered for in the overseas area then either you or your spouse/partner may escort your child to the UK at public expense to attend an interview at a special school which can cater for your child's particular needs. This will also apply if you or your spouse/partner are required to attend a case conference at some future date. In the case of Special Educational Needs, full travel costs for the child and one parent/guardian to and from the place of interview will be met at public expense.

Higher Education / 6th Form College/University Entrance

If a college or university is unable to make a decision on your child without an interview then they may travel to the UK at public expense to attend an interview. Note that you would not be able to accompany them at public expense.

IMPORTANT: Your child is only entitled to one visit, so if they are considering a number of schools or universities and entry interviews are necessary, you will have to make arrangements for interviews to take place during your one permitted visit.

The MOD will only pay for the child's travel to and from the airport/port of entry in the UK for college / university interviews and/or entrance. Onward travel to the university or college and return travel to the airport/port must be at private expense. Also note that travel at public expense is not permitted for attendance at college/university open days.

Method of Travel

By air - If your overseas area is serviced by RAF trooper/MOD Charter flights then you and your child would be expected to utilise these. If such flights are not available then travel would be by civil flights at economy class.

By car under Privately Arranged Travel (PAT) - If you are in a post in North West Europe and wish to drive your child back to the UK for an entry interview or initial entry to Day/Boarding school then you may do this under the PAT regulations at **Methods of, and Eligibility to Travel on Posting Overseas – Making your own Private Travel Arrangements**. Your PAT refund limit will be based on the notional cost of the MOD Charter flight for you and/or child as allowed, and where onward travel is permitted, rail travel. You will be able to claim car ferry/channel tunnel costs and the Private Transport Rate of Motor Mileage Allowance with the refund limit.

You **will not** be able to claim any accommodation or subsistence expenses during the visit.

Using Boarding Schools in the UK and Payment of Schooling Allowances

Background

If you have school aged children, you will need to decide whether they are to accompany you and be educated overseas or complete their schooling in the UK. In reaching your decision you will need to be clear what the schooling options in the overseas location are. If, however, you decide that your child's interests would be better served by staying in the UK but, to do so, it would be necessary for them to be enrolled in a fee paying school then the MOD may sometimes provide financial assistance in the form of either Boarding School Allowance (BSA) or Day School Allowance (DSA). Where that is agreed, the payment of either BSA or DSA is conditional upon you contributing at least 10% towards the cost of the school's fees.

Eligibility Criteria

If in a location where assistance may be considered, you must still meet some basic criteria to be able to claim BSA or DSA:

- You must be accompanied by your spouse/civil partner/partner in the overseas area. or
- You must be widowed, divorced, legally separated or a single parent and have sole or primary responsibility for your child who must have resided with you before your overseas posting and who would visit you during the majority of the school holidays.
- Your child must not already be attending boarding school. However, if there are no SCE facilities in the overseas area and as a result of your posting, your child changes from being a day pupil to a boarder or needs to move to another school to be nearer to relatives for *exeats*, weekends and half-term holidays then the MOD will reimburse the **extra** costs that you incur within the usual BSA limits.

Service Children Education (SCE) Schools

If you were posted or appointed overseas on or after 1st September 2010, have school aged children and are posted to an overseas area where a SCE school exists, you will still be expected to use the local SCE school. No assistance with BSA or DSA will be offered. However, if the SCE school does not cater for the age range of the child; or the SCE school cannot offer the core curricula subjects at examination level [and by this it is meant the subjects which the majority of UK schools would provide] BSA/DSA may then be offered;

Specially Recruited for Overseas Service

- If you were specially recruited for overseas service on or after 1st

September 2001 you can only claim BSA or DSA if there are no adequate SCE educational facilities in your overseas area [e.g. SCE cannot cater for the age range of your child, or are unable to offer the core curricula subjects your child wishes to study. If you are claiming BSA or DSA on this basis your claim must be supported by written confirmation from the Head Teacher of the SCE school that your child's chosen course of study cannot be satisfied by SCE.] There will be no provision for sending a child to a Boarding School at Departmental expense because particular non core curricula subjects are not covered overseas by SCE.

Employees recruited after 1 September 2010

- If you were specially recruited for overseas prior to 1st September 2010 and later transfer to a new post overseas you will continue to qualify for BSA/DSA under eligibility arrangements linked to your initial recruitment overseas. UK based civilian (UKBCs) already on an overseas tour who undertake a new posting overseas will not be eligible for BSA/DSA in SCE areas [unless the SCE school cannot cater for the child education or core curricula subjects leading to examination], but any children already at Boarding School as a consequence of the initial or earlier posting overseas will continue to be eligible for any existing BSA/DSA.

When Schooling Allowance can be Paid

Schooling Allowance (SA):

- is payable for children until the end of the academic year in which they reach their 18th birthday.
- can, in exceptional cases, be claimed beyond the 18th birthday for children who have to retake A levels, but only if the Head Teacher certifies that this has not been as a result of misbehaviour or poor performance due to truancy, inattention or lack of effort, and that the child is likely to pass or improve their grades. SA may also continue if:
 - your child has to extend a course of study due to illness, or
 - your child has to change school half-way through a course and the change results in putting your child back a year due to differing course content or curriculum.
- can also be payable for children in the 16-18 age group undergoing either academic, vocational or technical training if the course:
 - leads to a recognised certificate or diploma **and**
 - lasts at least 1 academic year **but**
 - not if the training forms part of a paid contract of employment (e.g. apprenticeship or articles).

Special Educational Needs Allowance (SENA)

If your child has special needs you can claim the SENA rate of Schooling Allowance. A statement of Special Educational Needs will be required and

your child should be registered with the CEAS (0198061 (Mil 94344 8244).

The Rates of Schooling Allowance (SA)

Schooling Allowance is calculated using independently sourced data on private school fees in the UK. Rates of BSA and DSA are revised once a year in readiness for the start of the autumn term in September each year. The rates can be found in **Change of Work Location and Travel and Subsistence – Rates of Allowances, Costs, Rates and Charges**.

You should note that:

- After you have paid the 10% parental contribution, you will be reimbursed the actual amount of fees still owing to the school, but only within the SA maxima.
- If you have received a Local Education Authority grant or bursary, etc, the amount is “deducted” from the school fees and the 10% parental contribution is calculated from the net fee.

When Payment of Schooling Allowance (SA) Starts

SA is not payable any earlier than the start of the school term in which you go abroad and, if you are married, your spouse must have travelled at public expense to accompany you overseas by the end of the succeeding term at the latest. If you depart UK during a school holiday SA is only payable from the start of the following term.

When Payment of Schooling Allowance (SA) Stops

SA ceases at the end of the term in which either you or your spouse/partner arrives back in UK (the previous term if during a school holiday). If the date of your return is 2 weeks or less after the commencement of a school term, SA is not payable for that term – SA will cease from the end of the preceding term.

If you decide to remove your child out of a fee paying school for personnel reasons part way through a term, you will be responsible for the fees for the remainder of the term for which your child is not in attendance. Any SA already paid will need to be refunded back to the Department.

Special Continuation of Schooling Allowance (SA) after Return to the UK

In the following circumstances you may continue to claim SA after either you or your spouse/civil partner/partner have returned to the UK:

- Where you are able to demonstrate that it is needed to enable appropriate domestic and educational arrangements to be made for your child. Payment of the allowance for one further term only is at the discretion of MOD. Requests for approval must be sent to DBS Civilian Personnel Relocations.
- At any time during the 2 year public examination course at the end of which your child takes the GCSE/A Level examination. SA can continue to be payable until the end of the 2 year course.

Please note that SA becomes subject to income tax and National Insurance contributions if it continues to be paid after your return to the UK. However, MOD will gross up the allowance for tax purposes.

If you Retire, or Resign while Overseas

If you retire or resign and will not be employed in Crown Service on return to UK, you are not entitled to claim further SA beyond the end of the term in which you leave the MOD.

Submitting your SA Claim

Your claim should be submitted to DBS Civilian Personnel Relocations as early as possible and, in any event, before the start of the school term that you wish to claim.

Claims should be supported by the (un-receipted) bill for the coming term and when you submit your claim for the following school term this should be supported by the receipted bill for the preceding term and, again, the (un-receipted) bill for the next term for which you are claiming.

Children Visiting you in the Overseas Area – School Children’s Visits (SCV)

General

If you have a child or children in the UK in full-time education (i.e. at a boarding school, university etc.) then they will be entitled to visit you in your overseas area at public expense as long as they meet certain qualifying criteria (detailed below). Such visits are normally referred to as School Children’s Visits (SCV). The duration of the visit should be for at least 7 days (including travel days) and **must be** to the overseas area that you are employed in. Further details on SCVs can be found in **JSP 800: Defence Movements and Transport Regulations - Volume 2: Passenger Travel Instructions - Chapters 8 and 9**.

The Qualifying Criteria

Both you and your child must meet the following criteria to be eligible for a SCV:

You, as the parent, must be

- serving overseas on a tour of duty of at least 12 months;
- entitled to be accompanied by your family at public expense;
- accompanied by your spouse/civil partner/partner;
- the natural parent or legal custodian of your child
- in receipt of COLA.

Your child must be

- either under 25 years of age and an unmarried dependant; **or**
- under 19 years of age if they do not normally reside with you (e.g. you are separated or divorced and your child lives with your partner/ex-spouse); **and**
- medically fit to travel overseas; and
- in full-time education.

The SCV Entitlement

Under 19 years of age

If your child normally resides with you they are entitled to 3 return trips during the academic year. These can be taken during any school holidays as long as the visit lasts for at least 7 days (including travel days).

If your child does not normally reside with you the entitlement is one return visit during any 12 month period.

19 years of age and under 25 years

If your child normally resides with you they are entitled to 1 return visit during any 12 month period. This is subject to the following:

- The entitlement cannot be carried over from one 12 month period to another.
- The 12 month period commences from either your posting date or the date your child returned to the UK to college/university.
- Your child will qualify for a further visit if any residual period remaining at the end of a tour following a completed period of 12 months is of at least nine months duration.
- If your child is at school outside the UK, the cost of their SCV will be limited to the cost of an official return journey from the UK to your overseas area.
- Your child is undertaking a recognised further education course up to first degree level.

Other Circumstances that may Affect your Entitlement to a SCV

- If you and your spouse/civil partner/ partner are divorced parents and are both UKBCs serving overseas there is no increase in entitlement.
- If you are accompanied by your child in the overseas area but your spouse/civil partner/partner remains in the UK, there is no entitlement under the SCV scheme for the child to visit them in the UK.
- If your child is engaged in paid vocational training or taking a gap year then there is no entitlement to a SCV
- If your overseas tour is extended for less than 12 months only 1 SCV will be allowed during this.
- If you or your spouse/civil partner/partner need to visit your child in the UK for welfare or compassionate reasons (but the reasons do not justify

compassionate travel) you can opt to travel to the UK at public expense in lieu of one SCV for the child being visited. Where this is done, only one parent can travel at public expense since the arrangement is intended to substitute one trip (i.e. the SCV) for another (i.e. the parent visiting the child). Where a parent visits a son/daughter under the provisions of this regulation, no subsistence costs are payable.

Visits for Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

There are special arrangements for SCVs if your child has Special Educational Needs (SEN) which allow either you or your spouse/partner to visit your child in the UK or for them to visit you in the overseas area. Where the child travels overseas but needs the assistance of an escort for part of the journey, then this can also be at public expense.

Visits to the UK by either you or your Spouse/Civil partner/Partner

Qualifying criteria:

- Your child must ordinarily be entitled to a SCV as detailed above.
- Your child must be registered with the Department for Education and Skills and/or the Children's Education Advisory Service as having SEN.
- Your child must be certified by a doctor as being incapable of making the journey to the overseas area because of their special needs.

Number of visits to the UK:

- If your child is under 19 years of age, you or your spouse/civil partner/partner can make 3 visits to the UK. Joint visits are counted as 2 visits.
- If your child is 19 years of age and under 25 years, you or your spouse/civil partner/partner can make 1 visit to the UK.

Visits to Overseas area by Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Qualifying criteria:

- Your child must ordinarily be entitled to a SCV as detailed above.
- Your child must be registered with the Department for Education and Skills and/or the Children's Education Advisory Service as having SEN.

Number of visits to the overseas area:

- If your child is under 19 years of age, he/she is entitled to 3 return trips during any 12 month period.
- If your child is 19 years of age and under 25, he/she is entitled to return trip during any 12 month period.

The SCV Entitlement for Children with SEN

Your child may visit you at public expense within the following financial limits:

- The cost of fares and fees of an escort for the return journey between residential school and airport in UK and between duty station and overseas air terminal for 3 visits during the academic year to your overseas area. (Where escort arrangements are made by CEAS they will pay the bills directly to the agency that provided the escort, so you should have no involvement in settling these costs.
- The cost of travel and escort arrangements as specified above for 1 visit abroad per annum during half term holiday. The cost of flights will be your responsibility but you if you are stationed in Germany you may use MOD Charter flights on a prepayment basis.
- If you are unable to take advantage of the half-term entitlement above you may claim the extra costs of arranging 1 half-term holiday in the UK up to a maximum of the costs that would have been incurred. Such costs would cover the fares of your child and the escort, if necessary, and any special accommodation arrangements other than those provided by relatives.

Making the Travel Arrangements for your Child's SCV

Travel by air

Full details regarding the standard procedures for booking flights for SCVs can be found in **JSP 800: Defence Movements and Transport Regulations - Volume 2: Passenger Travel Instructions - Chapters 8 and 9**. However, booking procedures can vary from overseas location to overseas location so you should seek advice from the local Services Booking Centre (SBC)/Defence Passenger Reservation Centre (DPRC) or travel office.

If RAF Trooper/MOD Charter flights operate between the UK and your overseas area (e.g. Cyprus, Germany, Washington DC.) then these should be used. However, if the flight schedules do not coincide with the end or start of the school term, or if travel to a regional UK airport is more convenient, due to the distance between the boarding school and where the RAF Trooper/MOD Charter flight would normally land, then civil flights may be booked. In overseas areas where RAF Trooper/MOD Charter flights do not operate then civil flights may be used.

Before submitting your SCV flight application you must seek authorisation from your line manager or your local admin office (where one exists). Once authorisation has been received you should complete your application for the required flights using the appropriate form (1 each for the outward and return flight) and submit to the appropriate booking authority. If you are in Germany then you must submit the flight application 4 months before your child's visit and 3 months in advance for other overseas locations.

IMPORTANT: Any changes to, or cancellation of your child's flights must be notified to the booking authority who made the flight bookings as soon as possible. Failure to cancel or notify changes of/to the flights in good time and

without good reason will result in the cost of the cancelled flight being recovered from you.

Privately arranged civil flights

All SCV flights **must** be booked through official channels. If you make your own private arrangements to book flights you will not be able to claim reimbursement of the cost.

Escorts

The MOD and civil airlines require that minors are escorted to and from RAF Stations, civil airports or air terminals at the beginning and end of flights. Escorts are normally required for children under 16 years of age. Full details regarding the requirement for escorts can be found in **JSP 800: Defence Movements and Transport Regulations - Volume 2: Passenger Travel Instructions - Chapters 8 and 9**. You are strongly advised to consult this particular JSP if your child is under 16 years of age and check with the booking authority.

Travel to and from the airport in the UK and overseas area

Your child may be reimbursed standard class rail travel. Alternatively, if the school provide a taxi/bus service to a local airport then you may claim reimbursement of the cost of this within the cost of the standard rail fare.

The use of Surface Routes (North West Europe Only)

If you are in North West Europe you may wish to make your own private arrangements to collect your child from the school or port of entry (Calais, Ostende etc). You can do this within the cost of the officially recognised means of travel for your child from the UK school to your overseas location. You cannot claim any travel costs relating to yourself.

Your child may also undertake the journey to your home in North West Europe by ferry/rail again within the cost of the officially recognised means of travel.

TIPS, HINTS AND FAQs

Q1. I am being posted overseas where no SCE school exists and have a 16 year old son/daughter who is studying at an educational establishment/school that doesn't provide lodging/boarding facilities. Can I claim the cost of providing alternative accommodation?

A. If your child is aged 16 or more but the educational establishment does not provide lodging/boarding facilities you may opt for them to stay in a hostel or similar accommodation and claim lodging costs. However, the total claim for tuition fees and separate lodging costs cannot be greater than the Boarding School Allowance (BSA) ceiling and will still be subject to the 10% parental contribution. On the other hand, where the tuition is free, lodging costs may be claimed but only within the Boarding element of the BSA ceiling. Again, you will have to make a minimum 10% contribution. The

accommodation used and for which a separate charge is made must either be associated with the school/college or be recommended by the educational establishment as offering a reasonable regime of care and control. Finally you should note that you cannot claim any boarding costs for children who are left in the care of relatives or friends.

Q2. My child currently attends a UK boarding school as there were no local SCE schools. However I am moving to a new overseas area where an SCE exists. Can I still receive the BSA?

A. Any children already on Boarding School as a consequence of the initial or earlier posting overseas will continue to be eligible for any existing BSA/DSA.

Q2. The school that my son/daughter attends also charges for a number of additional items such as books, equipment and stationery. Can I claim these costs?

A. Providing you do not use the maximum amount of SA then you can claim certain admissible "extra" costs within the SA ceiling. These are also subject to the 10% parental contribution. If the "extras" relate to tuition, it must constitute an essential part of a normal school curriculum which would not normally be charged for under the UK state system of education. The following gives examples of what are deemed to be admissible and inadmissible extras:

Admissible extras: cost of school books and stationery, fees for games, music, handicrafts, home economics, personal laundry (normally done at home), compulsory subscriptions and registration fees.

Inadmissible extras: charges for games equipment, coaching, elocution, ballet, musical instrument/riding lessons, chemists' sundries, dry cleaning, hair cutting, school trips and voluntary contributions.

Q3. My child is being educated in the UK but his/her SEN needs make me eligible to visit him/her in the UK (as a reverse SCV) rather than him/her visiting me overseas. I plan to visit the UK under a 'reverse SCV' for two weeks. Do I have to take annual leave for this?

A. Yes. Although the MOD will fund the travel (as explained above), the trip is still a private matter and your absence from work must be covered by annual leave – including days on which you travel.

Q4. My son/daughter is coming to visit us in Germany on a SCV. I want to meet him/her off the ferry. How do I do this and what can I claim?

A. If, for example, your son/daughter attends the Duke of York's School at Dover, he/she may travel as a foot passenger on a ferry from Dover to Calais. If you want to pick him/her up from Dover or Calais then you can claim the cost of the foot passenger fare and motor mileage from Calais to your home in

North West Europe within the cost of the officially recognised means of travel. You may also claim in the same way when your child returns to the school at the end of the holiday.