



Ministry  
of Defence

# **JSP 342**

## **Education of Service Children Overseas**

Part One

Version 5.1 2023

People lie at the heart of operational capability; attracting and retaining the right numbers of capable, motivated individuals to deliver Defence outputs is critical. This is dependent upon maintaining a credible and realistic offer that earns and retains the trust of people in Defence. In order to achieve this, all personnel must be confident that, not only will they be treated fairly, but also that their families will be treated properly with respect and be appropriately supported.

Our Service children, from an early age, may experience challenges that their civilian counterparts may not; mobility within the Services can mean that children change schools more frequently and dealing with deployment and separation may also impact upon a child. Education can provide the stability to help children through these times.

JSP 342 shares the policy requirements for the coordination and delivery of education to Service children overseas.

**Chief of Defence People  
Functional Owner for Defence People**

# Preface

## How to use this JSP

1. This Joint Service Publication (JSP) 342 defines MOD policy for the education of Service children overseas. The JSP will be reviewed every two years or in response to changes mandated by Defence or on Defence by Central Government.
2. This JSP provides the direction that must be followed in accordance with statute or policy mandated by Defence or on Defence by Central Government. This document also provides information to assist the user to comply with MOD policy.

## Coherence with other Functional Leadership Policy and Guidance

3. Where this document contains references to policies, publications and other JSPs which are published by other Functions, these Functions have been consulted in the formulation of the policy and guidance detailed in this publication.

## Further Advice and Feedback – Contacts

4. The owner of this JSP is the Head of Armed Forces Families and Safeguarding (AFFS). For further information or advice on any aspect of this publication or to provide feedback on the content, contact:

Job Title	Email
AFFS Education Policy Team	People-AFFS-Education-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk

## Record of Amendments

Version 5.1	Amendment	Date
Throughout	DIN links updated to current DIN versions  Page details updated to reflect version of JSP	Dec 2023
Version 5	Amendment	Date
Throughout	Refinement of policy focus on Service Children's education overseas. Removal of all content on UK education including childcare and early childhood education.	Aug 2023

	Amendments from DCYP to AFFS and DCS and related terminology.  Restructuring of Chapters.	
Preface	Refinement of purpose	
Ch1	New content on limitations of policy	
Ch1	Definition of Service child amended to include children of mobilised Reserve Forces serving overseas.	
Ch1	Inclusion and refinement of lines on elective home education from V4.0 Ch 4 and 5, SEND from V4.0 Ch 2,4 and 5. Removal of ANDA reference. Strengthening lines on responsibilities.	
Ch2	Clarification of policy for childcare/early childhood education, including responsibilities.	
Ch3	New lines on MOD provided schools operating model. Removal of MOD School policy and process on Spare Capacity, Admissions, Retention of Children, Parental Preference and Placement out of Chronological Year Group. Policy and process removed to DCS internal direction and guidance.	
Ch4 Paras 6, 7, 8	Refinement of content defining entitlement to education. Introduction of new content for entitled non-fee-paying placements.	
Ch4	Clarification on funding of education in locations not serviced by a MOD provided school.	

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# 1 General

## Aim

1. The MOD recognises the importance of children's education in building and sustaining thriving Service families. The MOD also recognises the demands that Service life can make on Service children, in particular as a result of mobility and deployment. MOD policy is therefore aimed at minimising/ mitigating, wherever possible, the impact Service life may have on a Service child's education where they accompany their Serving parent overseas. This document provides a policy framework for the facilitation and delivery of education services overseas for Service children. It is designed to be used by MOD personnel responsible for the facilitation and delivery of children's education services and by Service personnel and entitled MOD Civilians to inform decisions on the education of their children. In the writing of this policy the [Family Test](#) was considered to ensure it limits the negative impact on Service families.

## Scope

2. This policy covers **overseas** education for Service children, including early childhood education, childcare, primary and secondary education.
3. In addition, MOD Civilians transferring overseas are directed to Civilian HR Policy for Overseas Transfers, which details policy specific to their terms and conditions of Service.

## Definitions

4. **Service Child.** For the purposes of this JSP only, the term 'Service child' means the child of at least one parent/ carer with a legal obligation to support the child and where the parent/carers is either a MOD Civilian<sup>1</sup> or Serving member of the Regular Armed Forces, including mobilised Reserve Forces personnel<sup>2</sup> (who are eligible for overseas assignment).
5. **Child.** For the purposes of this JSP, a child is deemed to be a person below the age of 18 years, unless otherwise specified.<sup>3</sup>
6. **Suitable Education.** For the purposes of this JSP, suitable education is defined as:
- An education that offers a broad and balanced curriculum which shares common aspects of the English state school system.
  - An education that does not place the safety, welfare, or social development of a Service child at risk.
7. When making decisions on education overseas, all personnel should take account of the following:

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<sup>1</sup> UK Based Civilians on an official MOD permanent posting or temporary transfer, UK Based Civilians on an Operational Deployment, Civilian Staff Specially Recruited for overseas service.

<sup>2</sup> [Mobilised Reserve Forces as defined in JSP 753: Regulations for the Mobilisation of UK Reserve Forces](#)

<sup>3</sup> People with SEND between the ages of 0-25 are recognised in the Children and Families Act (2014).

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- a. Suitability is not necessarily a measure of quality. As in England and the Devolved Administrations, school (and early childhood) provision varies considerably. Parents should make certain that they are satisfied with the provision of education through their own research and engagement with the Overseas Education and Supportability Team (OEST) within DCS, by emailing [RC-DCS-HQ-OES@mod.gov.uk](mailto:RC-DCS-HQ-OES@mod.gov.uk)
- b. Where the overseas based command has determined that a child's SEND can be supported, the command should take reasonable steps to ensure support can be provided for the duration of the assignment.

### Limitations of this Policy

8. This JSP cannot provide policy guidance for all scenarios. In situations where the application of policy is unclear or where this policy appears to be silent, guidance should be sought from the Education Policy Team in AFFS by emailing [People-AFFS-Education-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk](mailto:People-AFFS-Education-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk).

### Legislative Framework

9. **Within the UK.** In the UK, legislative responsibility for education has been devolved to the Scottish Parliament, the Northern Ireland Assembly, and the Welsh Assembly. In England, legislative responsibility for education lies solely with the Department for Education (DfE). When personnel and their families move within the UK, the education legislation applicable to the administration in which they are located, carries primacy. Areas such as SEND, admissions or the curriculum can be different across administrations.

10. **Overseas.** The full legal context for the delivery of children's education overseas varies from location to location and will include host nation laws and/ or any relevant international agreements relating to the status of UK forces. In all overseas locations the MOD seeks, wherever possible, to align its educational policy with the principles laid out in DfE policy. For example, the MOD has adopted the principles of Raising the Participation Age (England), which means that Service children who are supportable overseas and are accompanying their Service parent will be expected to participate in education or training that leads to nationally recognised qualifications, until their 18th birthday.

### Responsibilities

11. **Parental Responsibilities.** It is a fundamental principle of educational policy<sup>4</sup> that parents are responsible for the education of their children. This is equally true for parents posted to overseas MOD locations. Parents are strongly advised to research education provision in the prospective overseas location. Information on education overseas is available through [RC-DCS-HQ-OES@mod.gov.uk](mailto:RC-DCS-HQ-OES@mod.gov.uk) and [People-AFFS-Education-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk](mailto:People-AFFS-Education-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk).

12. **Departmental Responsibilities.** In overseas locations, wherever possible, the MOD facilitates access to an education. In certain locations the MOD provides schools which deliver an education to meet the needs of Service children. These schools are run by DCS

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<sup>4</sup> The Children Act 1989



and conform in type, scope, and standard to that required by the Education Acts in England.

13. **AFFS.** Working to the Chief of Defence People through the Director of Armed Forces People Policy, the AFFS organisation is the Departmental focus for all policy issues related to Armed Forces families (including children's education) and safeguarding. AFFS advises the wider MOD, Other Government Departments, Devolved Administrations, and other stakeholders, to ensure their policy, procedures and practice take best account of Service children's educational needs. The team also provides educational advice and guidance to the overseas chain of command (CofC). This includes assessing educational transitions between locations to enable local commands to make informed decisions about the educational options. The AFFS educational policy team owns this JSP and can be contacted by emailing [People-AFFS-Education-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk](mailto:People-AFFS-Education-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk). General enquires should be directed by email to: [People-AFFS-MAILBOX@mod.gov.uk](mailto:People-AFFS-MAILBOX@mod.gov.uk)

14. **DCS.** DCS is responsible for the delivery of education and care in MOD provided schools and settings overseas and at the Queen Victoria School (QVS) in Scotland. Further details about DCS, including service provision, points of contact and detailed information about MOD provided schools can be accessed at: [Defence Children Services \(DCS\)](#). To ensure fairness overseas, DCS applies its duties outlined in the Armed Forces Covenant<sup>5</sup>, seeking to ensure that Service children face no disadvantage because of their Service status. DCS can be contacted by emailing [RC-DCS-HQ-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk](mailto:RC-DCS-HQ-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk)

## Children with SEND

15. Local authorities in each devolved administration set out what will be provided for children with special educational needs. In England this is called an Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), in Scotland a Co-ordinated Support Plan, in Wales an Individual Development Plan and in Northern Ireland a Statement of Special Educational Needs. **Plans are not transferrable on assignment overseas or automatically reinstated on return to the UK and parents are advised to consult early with their child's allocated school prior to returning to the UK.**

## School Transport

16. Funding and arrangements for school transport are the responsibility of the relevant overseas CofC with advice from their finance/ resource team. Decisions should seek to ensure that a child's education is not disadvantaged due to home to school transport arrangements. The use of Military Transport (MT) for home to school transport and transport required to deliver the school curriculum is detailed in *Defence Movements and Transport Policy JSP 800 – Volume 5* and all personnel are to use this policy for direction and guidance.

17. In the UK, the use of MOD provided transport is not generally permitted for school transport, except under the conditions granted within *JSP 752 (Tri Service Regulations for Expenses and Allowances)*.

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<sup>5</sup> [Home - Armed Forces Covenant](#)

## Elective Home Education

18. It is a parent's responsibility to ensure that their child is educated. When a Service family accompanies the Service person overseas, the MOD expects that any school age children in the family will usually attend school. A family may wish to home educate their children in certain circumstances if practical to do so. Educating children at home can work well when it is a positive choice and is conducted with proper regard for the needs of the child. However, the nature and context of the overseas location combined with the circumstances of the child, may mean that home education is not supportable. The MOD's [Assessment of support needs for accompanied assignments overseas](#) document outlines the process to determine this. This will involve a multi-agency meeting to assess the appropriate course of action. The policy for elective home education is set out in [2023DIN01-105](#) accessed at Defence Instructions and Notices. A guide for parents containing information on the process for elective home education can be accessed at: Defence Children Services (DCS) - GOV.UK or on request by emailing RC-DCS-HQ-EHE@mod.gov.uk.

## 2 Childcare and Early Childhood Education Overseas

### General

1. Service children overseas are not required by policy to attend early childhood education/ childcare and there may be no type of provision available in location. **A host nation may require children to be in formal education before the age of compulsory schooling in England (age 5). In these circumstances personnel must seek advice from their CofC on host nation laws, Status of Forces Agreements (SOFAs) and other international agreements that may be applicable.**
2. Local CofC are not required by policy to provide access to early years settings, although it is considered good practice to do so where this is practicable and where sufficient demand exists. Where early years settings exist, these should be funded and maintained through local budgets. It is a parental responsibility to check the availability and nature of early years provision in specific overseas locations prior to posting.
3. General guidance on childcare and the use of childminders overseas is accessed by contacting the education policy lead at: [People-AFFS-Education-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk](mailto:People-AFFS-Education-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk)

### Provision

4. Overseas the offer of early childhood education/childcare will differ across the globe:
  - a. In certain locations, there are MOD provided settings. Where these settings are available/ accessible, parents are usually expected to make use of them. MOD provided settings follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework (statutory in England/Wales) and provision is regulated in accordance with DfE statutory requirements. Detailed information is accessed at: [Defence Children Services \(DCS\) - GOV.UK](#)
  - b. In locations where there are no MOD provided settings, parents are expected to research provision and be certain that they are satisfied with the offer.

### Related Entitlements

5. Overseas the MOD seeks to replicate DfE policy on free access to early years education. Where a MOD setting exists, this should be used; if this is over-subscribed or where no such provision exists parents can access local provision and claim overseas nursery authority (ONA). The setting must be regulated and inspected and parents may not claim ONA if through choice they are accessing paid provision when a place in a MOD setting is available.
  - a. **Free Early childhood education/Childcare.** Direction and guidance are issued as a DIN (30 hours free childcare for working parents with children aged 3 and 4 years) accessed at [Defence Instructions and Notices](#) and further information at the [.gov website](#)

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b. **ONA.** Direction and guidance on this reimbursement is issued as a DIN (Overseas Nursery Authority) accessed at: [Defence Instructions and Notices](#) and at: [.gov.uk](#) website.

c. **Tax Free Childcare.** Eligible dual-working parents may make use of Tax-Free Childcare overseas only where it is supported by HMRC and only in a registered setting. Detailed guidance is accessed at the [.gov.uk](#) website and at: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

6. **Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM).** These can be claimed for children in the equivalent of Reception, Year 1, and Year 2. Detailed guidance is accessed at: [Defence Instructions and Notices](#) and [.gov.uk](#) website.

## 3 MOD Provided Education Overseas

### General

1. There is no central policy governing which overseas locations should be served by MOD schools or early years settings. This is determined by a combination of historical precedent and local need and is a matter for the relevant CofC. Where a MOD school or setting exists, responsibility divides broadly between DCS, who run the establishment, and the local CofC who are responsible for maintaining the infrastructure.
2. Where a new school or setting is being considered it is vital that both DCS and AFFS are consulted at an early stage. The business case will need to consider, among other things
  - a. the local demand for education or childcare and why this is not currently being satisfied by other means
  - b. the legal context under which the school or setting would operate including any relevant international agreements
  - c. the associated build and maintenance costs, and DCS's funding requirements for operating the school.
3. No school should be established unless explicit agreement has been reached with DCS over its funding and operation.
4. Where an existing school or setting is being considered for closure, it is essential that a full consultation takes place before a formal proposal is tabled. Consultation should include DCS, AFFS, any of the involved Services and Civ HR (as appropriate). A full risk assessment should be conducted to consider educational options for Service children and the potential impact on accompanied assignments to that location.
5. Parents who choose alternative schooling are responsible in most situations for all education costs and related expenses.
6. When a MOD school cannot meet the needs of a child and other suitable schooling has been identified, casework must be submitted to OEST and AFFS.

### Provision

7. MOD provided schools are aligned to the English education system. This includes key stage tests, public examinations and are registered with the DfE and inspected by Ofsted. These reports are available through the [Ofsted website](#).
8. The locations and stages of education covered by MOD schools are identified at: [Defence Children Services \(DCS\) - GOV.UK](#) and further details should be accessed by contacting the head teacher at the relevant school or by emailing [RC-DCS-HQ-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk](mailto:RC-DCS-HQ-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk)

## Entitlement to MOD Funded Placement

9. Children who fall into the categories below are entitled to a MOD funded school place in a MOD provided school:

- a. Children of serving UK Armed Forces personnel.
- b. Children of UK Armed Forces personnel on loan or secondment to Commonwealth or foreign governments, unless there is a contract of service between the parent and the government concerned which covers the provision of children's education. Such contracts may provide for the cost of children's education to be borne by the government concerned or by the parent.
- c. Children of UK-based Civil Servants, employees of the MOD and its agencies on overseas attachment.<sup>6</sup>
- d. Children of staff of other UK government departments who are recruited for overseas service and based in the UK. The department concerned must agree to meet the fees of the child.
- e. Children of parents serving on exchange with British Forces where reciprocal arrangements exist.
- f. Where entitlement has been agreed through an international arrangement (for example under a SOFA or other such international agreement). This applies to children of non- British forces.

10. Where a Serving parent is assigned on an unaccompanied tour and the non-UK national parent lives in their country of origin, a child of the family may attend a MOD school in the country of origin for the duration of the Serving parent's unaccompanied tour. This is subject to the agreement of any conditions imposed by the MOD. An application for a place at a MOD school in the country of origin is to be submitted to DCS for approval before the child can be enrolled.

11. A child will continue to be entitled to a place in a MOD school during periods when the parent is temporarily assigned to another location (for example, for all operational tours, exercise, training, or active service), provided that:

- (1) The parent continues to serve, or be employed, on the establishment of the overseas CofC or;
- (2) The family retains official entitled family status in the overseas location.

## Entitlement to Fee-Paying Placement

12. The following policy applies for entitlement to a placement in a MOD school on a fee-paying basis:

- a. Children of UK-based employees of the Service institutions and welfare organisations listed under a SOFA. Children in this category must not be ordinarily resident in the country where the MOD provided school is located.

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<sup>6</sup> Service Institutions and Welfare Agencies listed under a SOFA or MOD contract.

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- b. Children of US Forces personnel whose admission to a MOD school is approved by the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) organisation.
- c. Where entitlement and responsibility for funding has been agreed through international agreements (for example under a SOFA or other such international agreement).

### Non-Entitled Children

13. Any child who does not fall into any of the categories detailed above is not entitled to a place in a MOD school. Children who are not entitled, may be admitted to a MOD school on a fee-paying basis where there is spare capacity.

### Fees and Expenses

14. The education of children in MOD schools from Reception to Year 13<sup>7</sup> is free to parents of entitled children. Service personnel are advised to contact the relevant MOD school for advice and information on any additional fees or expenses. MOD schools may charge parents for certain activities. Detailed information and procedures for fees and expenses are published on [Defence Children Services \(DCS\) - GOV.UK](#) or accessed by emailing [RC-DCS-HQ\\_Mailbox@mod.gov.uk](mailto:RC-DCS-HQ_Mailbox@mod.gov.uk)

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<sup>7</sup> The entitlement to funded education may be extended for children who have been previously placed out of chronological year group or where there is agreement to extend the placement to support examination re-sits. Normally this is up to the age of 19 years.

## 4 Non-MOD Provided Education Overseas

### Education Systems

1. Where there is no MOD provided schooling overseas, the MOD facilitates access to Service children's education as below:
  - a. **State Provision.** In overseas locations where the language of instruction in schools is English, the MOD expects Service children to use state provided education.
  - b. **Private Provision.** Where the CofC (supported by AFFS) has determined that there is no suitable state provision, local private education may be used. The full cost of fees and other admissible expenses are refundable, and personnel are to follow local payment procedures.
  - c. Where English is not the language of instruction Service personnel may make use of private schooling. The full cost of fees and other admissible expenses are refundable, and personnel are to follow local payment procedures.
  - d. **Alternative Provision.** If state provision has been reviewed by the CofC (again supported by AFFS) as suitable, but parents consider that there is a compelling case for alternative provision, they are to submit casework, with supporting evidence, via their CofC to the OEST by emailing [RC-DCS-HQ-OES@mod.gov.uk](mailto:RC-DCS-HQ-OES@mod.gov.uk). In situations where the application of policy is unclear or where this policy appears to be silent, guidance is to be sought from AFFS.
  - e. A child can take up a place in a host nation school (if entitled by virtue of their nationality) instead of a MOD provided school. Parents who make this choice are responsible for all education costs and related expenses.
  - f. Where parents take on responsibility for funding alternative provision, they become responsible for all education costs. Policy on education related entitlements will therefore cease to apply.
2. The age at which a child must legally start formal education differs across the globe and Service children may be required to start before or after the compulsory school age in England (the term after children turn 5). Parents should therefore always seek advice from their CofC on host nation laws, on SOFAs and other international agreements regarding education. They may also seek advice from the OEST.
3. There are transferable qualifications overseas, such as the International Baccalaureate and International GCSE (IGCSEs). Parents should ensure any qualifications offered are equal to UK qualifications. In the UK, this equivalence is formally assessed by the Education Counselling and Credit Transfer Information Service (ECCTIS), who can provide certificates of equivalence to individual students.



4. **MOD Civilians.** MOD Civilians are also directed to MOD Civilian HR Overseas Transfers Policy for specific policy on education provision overseas where there is no MOD provided school.

## Responsibilities

5. **AFFS.** Where formally requested by the overseas CofC, AFFS will conduct reviews of the local education offer. This review will allow the CofC to make an informed decision about the options available. Parents may use these reviews if available alongside their own research into schooling. These are available on the on the [communication site](#) from AFFS.

6. **Parents.** Schools overseas deliver different curricula, examinations, and qualifications. Parents with children entering a critical phase of education (Years 9,10 and 11 and Years 12 and 13) should consider the potential impact of a move on their children's education prior to accepting an assignment and should seek advice from the OEST.

7. **Overseas Commands.** Overseas commands are responsible for making decisions on whether the overseas location can provide correct support to the family and if the cost/risk of any additional support is balanced appropriately against budgets, operational commitments and unit outputs. Commands are responsible for the funding arrangements related to a Service child's education overseas.

## Entitlement.

8. Where it has accepted responsibility for personnel overseas, the MOD will provide a funded education on condition that a child's presence in the relevant overseas location is officially recognised as below:

- a. Children of serving UK Service personnel.
- b. Children of UK-based Civil Servants and employees of the MOD and its Agencies.<sup>8</sup>
- c. Where entitlement and responsibility for funding education has been agreed between the MOD and the service provider/contractor and is expressed within the terms and conditions of parental service with or contract with the MOD.
- d. Where entitlement and responsibility for funding has been agreed through international agreements (for example under a SOFA or other such international agreement).

9. Differences in Terms and Conditions of Service for Service personnel (members of the Regular Armed Forces) and entitled MOD Civilians, requires separation in policy on the use of local/international schools. **For MOD Civilian policy on host nation/ international education provision, entitled MOD civilians should refer to their Overseas Transfers Policy.**

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<sup>8</sup> Service Institutions and Welfare Agencies listed under a SOFA or MOD contract.

## Fees and Expenses.

10. Where Defence funds a child's education, responsibility for funding falls to overseas commands. Any overseas command wishing to vary from this arrangement will need to seek advice from their Director of Resources.

11. Compulsory education fees<sup>9</sup> that are normally free in the state-maintained education sector in England are eligible for reimbursement. These fees normally include tuition fees, non-refundable registration and enrolment fees and compulsory charges such as insurance, school medical fees or use of technology fees. Fees for extra tuition should only be reimbursed when that extra tuition is necessary and would normally be a free entitlement in the state-maintained education sector in England. The value of any scholarship awarded to children attending international/ host nation schools overseas should be declared, so that the sums involved can be offset against fees.

12. The expense requests below must be submitted to the OEST before budgetary authority and payment processing. The OEST form is accessed on Defence Children Services (DCS) - GOV.UK by emailing the OEST at: RC-DCS-HQ-OES@mod.gov.uk

a. **SEND support (including Speech and Language Assessment and Therapy).** Where a child's SEND needs are being met within school provision and are part of the school fees, costs are normally admissible for refund. Reimbursement of costs of educational assessment are normally admissible for refund where the assessment has been recommended by the school and where there would normally be entitlement in the state-maintained sector in England.

b. **Language Tuition Fees.** Financial assistance for children who attend non-English speaking schools and nurseries overseas is available. Such assistance must not exceed 130 hours in total. It will normally be limited to a maximum of five hours' tuition per week, and for a maximum period of six months. Tuition may take place up to three months prior to the take up of the post overseas, but this must be paid initially by the claimant and a refund claimed once in post.

c. **Catch up Lessons.** Financial assistance may also be sought for catch up lessons where parents have identified their children have fallen behind on their English language whilst attending a non-English speaking school or nursery overseas and would struggle on return to the UK education sector. Catch up sessions must be taken prior to the return to the UK and will form part of the overall 130 hours language tuition entitlement.

d. **Exceptional Circumstances.** The refund of fees is normally admissible from the September following the child's fourth birthday until the end of the academic year in which the child reaches the age of eighteen with the following exceptions:

(1) Where a child is legally required by the host nation to start school earlier, fees can be claimed.

(2) In circumstances (for example, serious illness) where the child's education has been so disrupted that they could not successfully complete their course by that time, fees may be refunded up until the end of the academic year in

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<sup>9</sup> The entitlement to funded education may be extended for children who have been previously placed out of chronological year group or where there is agreement to extend the placement to support examination re-sits. Normally this is up to the age of 19 years.

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which the child's nineteenth birthday falls. For fees to be refunded, any course of prolonged schooling must have started before the eighteenth birthday.

13. The following expense claims do not need to be passed through the OEST for authorisation prior to submission:

- a. **School Fees.** These fees normally include tuition fees, non-refundable registration and enrolment fees and compulsory charges.
- b. **Field Study Trips/ Residential Educational Courses.** The cost of field study and residential educational courses, but not the board and lodging charges, should be refunded if it is required as part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination. Activities relating to the Community Action Service element of the International Baccalaureate do sometimes attract a charge. A full breakdown of options and charges should be provided to the budget holder before any claims can be authorised.
- c. **MOD Road Transport.** Personnel are directed to *JSP 800-Defence Movements and Transport Policy* for the use of MOD road transport for school transport overseas.
- d. **Private Car.** Personnel are directed to *JSP 752 Tri-Service Regulations for Expenses and Allowances* for details on the use of motor mileage allowance.
- e. **Universal Infant Free School Meals.** Overseas, the MOD will reimburse the cost of Infant School Meals for eligible children. Service personnel are directed to DIN (Universal Infant Free School Meals) which is available at: [Defence Instructions and Notices](#)
- f. **Education Resources.** The following list is not exhaustive and advice on what is normally admissible in England's maintained education sector is available from the OEST by emailing RC-DCS-HQ-OES@mod.gov.uk
  - (1) **Books and Stationery.** The refund of the cost of essential books and stationery (for example, textbooks, art materials) as required by a school authority and that would be normally provided free of charge in England's state-maintained sector, is admissible. Such claims are subject to audit, and refunds should be made only on production of suitable receipts.
  - (2) **Technology.** Where electronic devices are provided on a staged payment or deposit basis, costs cannot be reclaimed if the device becomes the property of the claimant/ child at any time during the assignment.

14. The following are not admissible for refund:

- a. All items of clothing, including sportswear.
- b. The cost of meals from the equivalent of Year 3 (England) except where these are included in fees.
- c. Charges for extracurricular activities, (societies, clubs, and school camps) which are not part of the regular and supporting school curriculum and which are normally paid for by the parent in the UK.

- d. Technology where the item is owned by or becomes the property of the Sp or Service child.

## Admissions overseas and when returning to the UK

15. There is no automatic entitlement for admission into a non-MOD provided school overseas and it is important to understand that the governance of education provision, including decisions on admission and retention, taken by these schools is final.

16. The MOD does not have any statutory duties in relation to school admissions within the UK. The Armed Forces Covenant also does not override school admissions policies. The MOD does work closely with schools and local authorities to support families when returning to the UK, and advice and guidance can be sought from AFFS or DCS. This can include supporting Service families if local authorities do not meet their statutory duties in providing school places.

17. For children returning to the England from overseas, admission authorities are required by the DfE School Admissions Code<sup>10</sup> to allocate a school place in advance of a child's move. If the school is oversubscribed, they must use the address at which the child will live.<sup>11</sup> to secure a school place. Parents should contact receiving local authorities and schools as soon as possible to ensure school places can be secured. Each devolved administration in the UK may have differences regarding admissions. Families are encouraged to engage with their receiving local authority for guidance if unsure.

## School Transitions

18. If accepting an overseas posting, it is vital that families plan early for their children's educational transition. OEST must be notified if personnel with children are planning to take a posting overseas.

19. Returning from an overseas assignment requires early planning. Families should seek to gather school records regarding their children's progress from their school provider overseas. This information will be critical in supporting the receiving school to meet the needs of their children, aiding a smooth transition.

20. Each of the UK nations have adopted different school curricula, examinations, and qualification structures. Parents should ensure they are aware of the potential impact on their children's education. This should be a consideration when transitioning out of and when returning to the UK.

21. Families should seek advice for all transitions involving children with identified SEND.

## Extending a School Place

22. The retention of a school place is dependent on the child's entitled status in the overseas location. Each school will have its own policy on retention, therefore parents school liaise with both their CofC and the head teacher at the school. The CofC is

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<sup>10</sup> Paragraph 2.21. [School admissions code - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/91222/school-admissions-code-2019.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Admission of children of Crown Servants Explanatory Note (2021). [Admission of children of crown servants: explanatory note \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/91222/admission-of-children-of-crown-servants-explanatory-note-2021.pdf)

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responsible for decisions on extensions of dependency status for children and any proposal to retain a child in school must therefore be with agreement of the CofC.