



Defence
Children
Services

Defence Children Services Schools and Settings

Educate the Child – Support the Family – Defend the Nation

**Dedicated
to the
education
of Service
Children**



Welcome

From the Head of Defence Children Services

Your child is unique and at DCS schools and settings we work hard to discern the needs and abilities of each individual. We believe that the most important thing we can give your child is the sense of belonging as a service child.

We are committed to providing your child with an educational provision that inspires and motivates them; a curriculum that is interesting and challenging, one that stimulates young minds and promotes a thirst for learning. We believe in providing an exciting, safe and stimulating environment which enables every child to achieve their best through varied learning experiences so that they can be confident, happy, healthy pupils who are life-long learners.

In all of our schools and settings, our leaders ensure that each and every child is given the best possible opportunity to reach their full potential and achieve their best regardless of their starting points or prior learning journeys.

Developing a life-long love of learning for your child is our ultimate goal. We firmly believe it is no coincidence that children learn best when they feel happy, safe and secure.

We very much look forward to welcoming you and your child/children to one of our schools or settings.

Beverley Martin
Head DCS



“Parents and teachers
are the sculptors who
mould the shape of the
students for whom they
are responsible. If
parents and teachers
set the right example,
the students will
automatically blossom
into models of
excellence and bring
glory to the nation”

Sai Baba

Traditional values; Forward thinking

For every child who enters one of our schools or settings, whatever their future path may take them, our role is to ensure that they are poised for greatness - that they are equipped with a blend of strengths that they will carry within themselves and bring to whatever they do.

Our schools and settings are a family. We offer the perfect blend of traditional values with a forward-thinking education. Our 'Open Door' policy at every location means that parents can feel fully involved in their child's educational journey.

United by core values

Values are important in education because they help students develop a sense of self, build positive relationships, and become more resilient.

Values-based Education is an approach to teaching that works with values. It creates a strong learning environment that enhances academic achievement and develops students' social and relationship skills that last throughout their lives.





Determination

The commitment to achieve personal goals, regardless of external challenges such as moving between schools or countries. Students who express determination continue to work to achieve their goals by being decisive and by demonstrating resoluteness regardless of location or prior learning.

Character

Character determines one's thoughts and actions in all areas of our personal development. Good character is the existence of intrinsic motivation to do what is good according to the highest standards of behaviour in every situation

Success

Success is beyond achieving expected grades or standards. Success is achievement of personal goals and ambitions. Students who do well in school and in their personal lives are better able to make the transition into adulthood and to achieve occupational and economic successes to enhance their future life chances.

Whilst every school and setting has their own localised values and ethos, in all locations, service children are united through the core values on this page.



**The
future
begins
here**



Achieving success

We believe children are entitled to high quality teaching and learning that is planned to meet each child's individual needs. We set out to ensure maximum progress is made and attainment to the highest level is achieved.

Our schools and settings do this through:

Developing caring and secure relationships which promote the development of Values, independence, confidence and self-discipline and equality of opportunity for all.

Engaging and challenging the hearts and minds of children by offering every child access to a curriculum, which is rich, varied, and inspiring. Such a curriculum will provide for practical experiences, which develop a range of skills, the acquisition of knowledge and extended study opportunities.

Providing a unique learning environments which are safe whilst exciting and promote enriched learning and curiosity.

We do more than help our students achieve excellent results, we prepare them for life.

Academic results

DCS children regularly attain high academic results at the end of each key stage of learning. Results are generally above English and Scottish national figures year on year.

However, the results are not what makes our schools and settings special. It is the unique locations, dedicated teachers, well planned and well executed curriculum delivery and committed leadership that are the foundations to your child's development.

At each location, DCS Schools and Settings have developed their curricula to ensure that every child who comes through our doors, is positively advantaged by learning outside of the United Kingdom.

Whether they are with us for only a few short weeks, a few terms or become our long-term pupils, every child is provided opportunities that enhances their learning; giving them lifelong memories of being stationed in unique locations.

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Nelson Mandela





**Best
beginnings**

Early Years

Children from birth to five

Every child deserves the best possible start to their educational journey. Young children form their impressions of education and schooling during their earliest years. Whether your child is joining one of our individual nursery settings, our school based nurseries or a foundation stage class, our staff will help your child gain a positive school experience from the moment they step into the building.

Nursery settings & school based nurseries

DCS has three nursery settings in Cyprus, and one in Gibraltar. Sennelarger, The Falkland Islands and Brunei have school-based nursery settings as part of the DCS school. In each location, there is provision from birth.

Our quality provision is popular with parents when assigned overseas especially families with multiple children or those who are on their first assignment outside of the UK. Regardless of the reason for you choosing one of our settings, we are here to help. We can provide continuity of care from the beginning of a child's educational journey through into the primary school.



The first steps are the most important

Our Setting Managers can provide parents with flexibility around pick up times and are often able to offer hours outside of the normal school hours. Including holidays and after school time in terms of Wrap Around Care (WAC).

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets standards for the learning, development and care of your child from birth to five years old.

As per the Department for Education's guidance, your child's progress will be reviewed when they're between two and three by an Early Years Practitioner or Health Visitor (the assessment is based on classroom observation - your child will not be tested in any way). This will lay the foundations for personal development and growth as your child moves through into Year 1 and beyond.

Children learn as they play. More importantly, in play, children learn how to learn.” – Fred Donaldson



Foundation stages 1 and 2

All our primary schools have foundation stage classes catering for children from three to five years old.

The foundation stage curriculum is constructed to meet the needs of the whole child. Developmentally appropriate activities enrich the social, emotional, physical and cognitive growth of each child.

Stimulating and enjoyable experiences foster the individual's confidence as a learner. Self-esteem is strengthened as the child becomes more aware of their own unique contributions to the group, their improved ability to be independent and their growing spheres of knowledge, skills and values.

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum promotes teaching and learning to ensure children are ready for school and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for future progress through school and life.

The EYFS curriculum places stronger emphasis on three Prime Areas that are considered most essential for children's healthy development. The three Prime areas are particularly important for building children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. They are:

- Communication and Language,
- Physical,
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

This curriculum is delivered through carefully structured and differentiated play activities which help all the children to develop their knowledge, skills and values.

The children are helped to develop the key learning skills of listening, speaking, sharing, concentrating and co-operating. Children develop self-confidence and independence in a secure and friendly environment.

Foundation Stage 1 (FS1)

FS1 accepts children from the term after their third birthday. FS1 is the first bridge between home and school and the partnership with parents is a fundamental principle.

From the start, children are developing the communication, literacy and numeracy skills which prepare them for future learning.

High priority is also placed on the development of physical and creative skills alongside an increasing knowledge and understanding of the world in which we live.

This happens in an environment which is carefully planned and organised with a mix of adult and child-initiated activities and the direct teaching of skills. Sharing information, observing, assessing and recording ensures that children continue to make rapid progress during their Foundation Stage experiences. It is considered vital that children are given the appropriate support and encouragement.

Foundation Stage 2 (FS2)

Children in foundation stage 2 continue to follow the EYFS framework. This year group is often known as Reception in England.

There are seven Areas of Learning and Development that shape educational programmes in the early years. All Areas of Learning and Development are important and inter-connected. The Areas of Learning and Development are split into two categories: Prime areas (see FS1) and Specific areas.

There are four Specific areas (which provide children with a broad curriculum and with opportunities to strengthen and apply the Prime areas). They are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

In FS 2 there is a greater focus on teaching the essential skills and knowledge in the Specific Areas of Learning. This will help your child prepare for Year 1.



Key Stage 1:

Children from five to seven years old

Year 1

In Year 1 children begin a journey toward strong academic achievement and excellence by increasing their fluency in their speaking, reading and writing abilities and by learning good study habits. The positive self-image developed in the foundation stage is fostered, as is every child's eagerness to learn.

Through integrated themed units, children become enthusiastic learners in all aspects of the curriculum.

Year 2

Year 2 pupils continue their development of self-confidence and good work habits. The children learn to work more independently than they did in previous years.

The DCS curriculum encourages children to explore their world, challenges them to think critically, promotes creativity and strives for continuous growth.

The purpose of all teaching across Key Stage 1 is to elicit the pride of achievement that promotes a strong "I CAN" ethos.





Curriculum

The curriculum for Key Stage 1 is carefully constructed to emphasise the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, and computing with plenty of opportunities to develop skills in the arts, humanities and sport as well as teamwork, personal development and leadership.

All of our primary schools follow guidance in JSP 342 and the National Curriculum for England (2014). Each school takes advantage of their locations and unique mix of cultures of the countries that they

Nurturing a love for learning

The curriculum at learning phase 2 is designed to stimulate intellectual curiosity and an appetite for learning while developing in children those values and skills needed to become independent lifelong learners.

In addition to core subjects our students study physical education, music, art, drama, dance, design and technology, history, geography and religious education.

**“Education is not the filling of a pail,
but the lighting of a fire” – WB Yates**

Key Stage 2:

Children from seven to eleven

Year 3

The move to Key Stage 2 allows your child to engage in a broad and balanced curriculum, with less focus on phonics and early maths and reading. Children will start to develop their knowledge of wider subjects like history, geography, science and other foundation subjects in the National Curriculum, which is only covered in Key Stage 2, like learning a foreign or ancient language.

Furthermore, there will be greater emphasis on understanding and learning spelling rules. In maths, your child will be using more formal methods of calculation than in previous years. They will learn to read and write all numbers to 1000 in digits and words. Find 10 or 100 more/less than a given number. Recall and use multiplication and division facts for 3, 4, 8 tables.

Year 4

In Year 4 your child grows in their independence and confidence in their learning. There will be a greater focus on home learning ensuring the children have a strong grasp of their key spellings and core reading development.

In maths and English, teachers will be aiming to ensure that Year 4 children know and understand key skills such as apostrophes, commas, times tables, and key spellings; which are just some of the things children in Year 4 are expected to use accurately. Furthermore, this will be the year that your child will undertake an assessment in their times tables.

Year 5

Children in Year 5 master basic organisational skills and continue to develop study skills which they will be expected to use with greater independence. The aim in this year group is to create not only good students but students who take charge of their learning, hold high expectations of themselves and others and aspire to accomplish great things.

Year 6

Year 6 provides an amalgam of academic and social opportunities that harness the children's early adolescent energy, and the skills and enthusiasm of dedicated teachers.

The program for Year 6 provides the bridge between the carefully guided progress of primary school and the increased demands of their secondary school education and living successfully in the 21st Century.

Key Stage 3:

Children from eleven to fourteen

Key Stage 3 marks an exciting transition from primary to secondary education, where learners are encouraged to explore, question, and develop their knowledge in a supportive and stimulating environment. Our curriculum is designed to build strong foundations across a range of subjects while fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and independent learning skills.

A Broad and Balanced Curriculum

Learners engage with a diverse and enriching curriculum, including:

- **Core Subjects:** English, mathematics, science
- **Humanities:** history, geography, religious education (R.E.)
- **Languages:** modern foreign languages
- **Creative Arts:** art, music, design & technology (D.T.)
- **Physical and Well-being Education:** physical education (P.E.), personal, social, and health education (P.S.H.E.)
- **Digital & Technical Skills:** computing, and computer science



Learning Beyond the Classroom

To nurture well-rounded individuals, learners participate in:

- **Hands-on Learning:** Practical activities, group projects, and collaborative tasks to reinforce knowledge.
- **Extracurricular Engagement:** School clubs, sports teams, and creative arts programmes.
- **Personal Growth:** Opportunities to develop leadership skills, resilience, and self-confidence.

As learners progress through KS3, they build on prior knowledge, refine their study skills, and explore their interests to make informed choices for Key Stage 4.

Key Stage 4:

Children from fourteen to sixteen

Key Stage 4 is an important phase where learners deepen their subject knowledge and prepare for their General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations. Our approach balances academic achievement with personal development, ensuring that learners feel supported and inspired to reach their full potential.

Personalised pathways

Learners study a mix of:

- **Core Subjects:** English Language, English Literature, mathematics, science (Combined or Separate)
- **Options:** A range of subjects including history, geography, art, music, design & technology, business, computer science, food preparation & nutrition, languages, religious education(R.E.), physical education (P.E.), and personal, social, and health education (P.S.H.E.)

“Education is the key that unlocks the golden door to freedom.”
George Washington Carver



Holistic learning experiences

Beyond the classroom, learners benefit from:

- **Career Guidance & Leadership Opportunities:** Subject-specific projects, leadership roles, and career planning support
- **Study & Revision Strategies:** Metacognitive techniques, mock exams, and personalised study plans
- **School Life & Community Engagement:** Participation in school events, extracurricular activities, and mentoring programmes

Learners develop the skills and confidence to excel in their exams while preparing for post-16 education and future careers.

Key Stage 5:

Children from sixteen to eighteen

Key Stage 5, also known as Sixth Form, is a transformative period where learners take greater ownership of their learning, preparing for higher education, apprenticeships, or employment.

Academic Excellence & Personal Growth

Learners choose from a range of A-level and vocational courses, including:

- **Traditional Academic Pathways:** English Literature, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, History, Geography, Sociology, Psychology, Languages
- **Creative & Technical Specialisms:** Art, Design & Technology, Sport, Health & Social Care, Travel & Tourism
- **Independent Learning & Research:** Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), work experience, and university visits



Opportunities for Leadership & Development

- **Student Leadership Roles:** Ambassadors, student council, mentoring younger learners.
- **Extracurricular Involvement:** School clubs, societies, and enrichment activities.
- **Future-Ready Support:** University applications, career planning, and transition guidance for post-18 pathways

Through a blend of academic rigour, real-world experiences, and personal development, learners leave Sixth Form as confident, well-rounded individuals ready for their next steps.

Sense of belonging

We are very much aware of the effects of transition and change on our children. At the beginning of each year, and again when a new child enters a class for the first time, activities are incorporated which help children to work, learn and play with each other and bring each class and group into a cohesive unit.

Our Transitions Strategy has been carefully developed to support the transition at all stages of education and is followed by all school leaders.

Central to the work undertaken by our teachers is a commitment to raising the achievement and self-esteem of each individual child. All children have talents that must be realised and celebrated; they may also have weaknesses that we help to overcome with hard work and support.

Supported by school Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENDCos), DCS SEND Advisory Lead and the DCS SEND Service Manager, our school and setting leaders are a team of professionals who cater for children who have a range of individual and specific difficulties or challenges to overcome. Such needs may be linguistic, a specific learning difficulty or a particular gift or talent that needs to be encouraged.

Our schools and settings have created environments where all children and parents feel that their culture and individual identities are valued and respected.



Assessment

We believe in a balanced and holistic approach to assessment, ensuring that each student receives personalised support to thrive.

Assessment Methods Include:

- **Formative Assessments:** Quizzes, class discussions, reflective tasks to provide immediate feedback and guide learning
- **Summative Assessments:** Standardised tests, end-of-term projects, and final exams to measure progress
- **Diagnostic Assessments:** Pre-tests and skills checklists to personalise learning pathways
- **Performance-Based Assessments:** Presentations, portfolios, and practical applications to showcase skills
- **Self & Peer Assessments:** Encouraging learners to reflect, evaluate, and support one another in their learning journey

Following the DCS Assessment, Reporting, Recording Arrangements (ARRA), our school leaders ensure that parents are kept up to date with their child's progress and attainment. This is carried out mainly via:

- Through termly parent meetings
- Mid -year and End-of-year annual reports

Please see individual schools for report dates and times of meetings.

The following are the statutory assessments that are undertaken:

Early Years Foundation Stage

- Between two and three years old , your child will be assessed against key makers in the EYFS curriculum in line with DfE guidance.
- In the academic year that your child turns five (normally FS2) teachers will carry out statutory assessment of children's development. This is known as the Foundation Stage Profile.

Key Stage 1

- Year 1 children are assessed in their Phonic ability. This is matched against a UK national threshold.
- Year 2 children who did not meet the phonics threshold in Year 1 are reassessed in Year 2.
- There is no longer statutory testing at the end of Year 2, however, our school leaders still use these as a benchmark of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1.

Key Stage 2

- Year 4 children undertake the Mental Arithmetic Test.
- Children in Year 6 undergo testing in English, mathematics, writing, grammar, spelling and punctuation. This is known as SATs (Statutory Attainment Testing).

Key Stage 3

- In DCS schools, there are no statutory assessments for Key Stage 3, allowing students to develop their knowledge and skills in a broad range of subjects before choosing their GCSE options.

Key Stage 4

- GCSEs are taken at the end of Year 11 and provide a strong academic foundation. Students can then progress to A Levels in Years 12 and 13, selecting three or four subjects for in-depth study.

Key Stage 5

- A Levels are widely recognised for university entry and career pathways. Our schools provide expert teaching, personalised support, and a structured learning environment to help students achieve their full potential.

Working together

We encourage informal contact with teachers and school or setting leaders whenever necessary. Formal meetings can always be arranged via the school or setting office.

We believe that the partnership between home and school plays a vital role in ensuring that we provide the best education, environment and example for all our children: our doors are always open.

A Research-Informed Approach to Teaching & Learning

Our curriculum is built on evidence-based principles that ensure our learners thrive academically, socially, and personally.

Four Key Principles Drive Our Teaching:

- **Metacognition** – Developing learners' ability to understand how they learn and apply effective study strategies
- **Feedback** – Providing meaningful, timely, and constructive feedback to support growth
- **Mastery** – Ensuring deep understanding and high levels of subject proficiency
- **Consistently High-Quality Teaching** – Maintaining excellence in classroom practice across all subjects and year groups

Defence Children Services, where every learner thrives

In our secondary schools, we are committed to nurturing holistic learners who are inquisitive, resilient, and prepared for the challenges of the future. Through engaging, dynamic, and innovative learning experiences, we inspire every student to achieve their full potential in a supportive and inclusive environment.

Join us on this exciting journey of discovery, growth, and success!



**Unique
experiences**



A positive approach to self-image

Children learn to take risks and explore the world through concrete experiences. As they develop a positive self-image, taking pride in wearing their school uniform, children become less self-absorbed and more sensitive to the world around them.

They learn to deal with their feelings, become more responsible, make decisions and gradually become more independent.

Learning from diversity and becoming culturally aware, children coming to any of our schools or settings bring with them a wealth of experiences from previous learning establishments they have attended and countries where they have lived. We relish the opportunities this provides to celebrate and share cultures and experiences, promoting a mutual respect for each other's beliefs and backgrounds.

The best of both worlds

Children, families and staff at our schools and settings enjoy “the best of both worlds” in that they gain a wonderfully rich and culturally diverse experience of living outside of the United Kingdom, yet under the safety and security of a known British education with localised adjustments and cultural experiences.



Extended learning opportunities

A further strength of our schools is the extensive extended learning programmes on offer to children. Our staff ensure that there are a range of opportunities outside of the classroom or the school day.

Children have opportunities to join a range of clubs after school e.g. football, swimming, rugby, art, computing, choir, guitar, rock drumming, dance, gym, magic, and drama to name a few. They have opportunities to try a range of hobbies and sports from web site designing to calligraphy. For localised details please see individual school club offers.

Outdoor activities

Field trips

Alongside the extensive in-school curriculum, most of our schools offer popular educational trips and expeditions during term time.

For example, children have opportunities to participate in outings to museums, local places of worship, local shops, other places of educational interest and residential trips.

Each school has their own unique experiences on offer to ensure that children attending our schools have opportunities which may not be available if your child remained in the United Kingdom.

Residential learning

Our school leaders ensure that where possible, they offer a range of residential visits for children to take their learning outside of the classroom.

These opportunities allow children need to foster their teamwork skills and be courageous in taking on new thinking or new activities. In this way children become ever more independent as they move through the Primary School years.



DCS Schools & Settings



Education is more than just learning; it is about growth, exploration and discovery. In all of our DCS Schools and Settings our leaders and educators are dedicated to shaping future leaders and lifelong learners, offering a supportive environment where every child is valued and encouraged to excel. We look forward to welcoming you to the DCS family, whether your time with us is short or long, your child / children will remember their time spent in our schools and settings as places where they felt at home and encouraged to develop. Our DCS values of Determination, Curiosity and Success are not just values to learn, they are the way of life for all service and entitled children. DCS Children are positively engaged in all they set out to do and belong to an alumni of service children dating as far back as 1674.

Useful links

- Website: [DCS.School](https://www.dcs.school)
- [GOV.UK: Defence Children Services](https://gov.uk/defence-children-services)
- [JSP 342](#)
- [National curriculum in England: framework for key stages 1 to 4](#)
- [National curriculum in English: primary curriculum](#)
- [National curriculum in England: secondary curriculum](#)

Contact us

For the contact details for each school and setting, please visit the Schools & Settings page on our [website](#).



