



Defence
Children
Services

Educator induction: Head Teachers and Senior Leaders



Welcome

This document has been written for a new Head Teacher. However, it is our expectation that this document will also be used for a new Deputy Head Teacher / Senior Leader. Given that the role is to deputise in the absence of the Head Teacher, it is important that the standards and expectations are the same.

We offer a range of support to help you in your first year of Headship and we strive to provide a bespoke induction package. The most important thing about this package is that it is tailored not just to your needs but also those of the school, reflecting the direction that the DCS Schools executive leaders and the SGC want the school to take.

The support package has a number of elements and will be carried out by the various members of the school improvement team.

Although your Assistant Head (AH) of S&S will have overall responsibility for your induction, it is important that you also take responsibility for this, and are proactive in setting up meetings and seeking out information. They oversee the performance of all schools within their district, reporting directly to the Chief Education Officer (CEdO). They lead a team of school improvement professionals that will all have a part to play in your induction and in supporting you in securing a focused approach towards school improvement.

Your AH is a key first point of contact for any Head Teacher and can help to signpost to a variety of support options. They are typically closely involved in headship appointments and work closely with the School Governance Committees (SGCs). The AH S&S will have led your interview process and will have a detailed contextual understanding of your school. They will aim to meet with you regularly (possibly virtually) before you take up appointment, to discuss your induction needs (including a possible mentor and their role) and help you to engage with the school prior to taking up post.

Your AH or the School Improvement Advisor (SIA) will then visit you, within one month of commencing appointment, to talk about your initial thoughts of the school, how your induction needs might have developed in light of them and any other issues that you feel are relevant. Mentors Where possible you will be assigned a mentor. This will usually be an experienced MOD Schools Head Teacher who is available to support you with a range of issues. How you use your mentor is up to you. They will have experience and knowledge which can be very useful to draw upon.

Prior to taking up post

You will want to establish some understanding of how the school works and its procedures ahead of taking up post, as well as getting a view of its calendar. Ideally, you would want to be involved in discussions regarding these dates. You might feel the need to make changes at this point, however it can sometimes be helpful to run with the dates set so that it is possible to

make a more informed decision about changes at a later stage (make sure you discuss your thoughts with your AH before implementing any date changes).

Establishing relationships early with key people will be important. Obviously, this will include members of the senior leadership team and your admin personnel. Establishing a strong working relationship with the Chair of the SGC is also vital.

If you were previously a Deputy Head Teacher, the way in which the Head Teacher and Chair work together might not have been clear. Establishing an agreed pattern of meetings and a sense of the working relationship is vital. Whilst the above points are relatively straightforward and obvious activities, this is also a good time to be more reflective about the school and start the process of identifying strengths and weaknesses.

It is not always easy to form a carefully considered view of the school during the interview process. However, in the run up to your start date you will have the time to reflect more carefully on things before you get immersed into, what will undoubtedly be, a very busy first few weeks in post. Some of this will become clear through your pre-appointment discussions with your AH and discussions with the outgoing Head Teacher, Senior Leadership Team members and the Chair of the SGC. However, there are key documents that it will be helpful to review ahead of starting on post:

- School improvement plan and self-evaluation document.
- The school's internal tracking/performance data.
- The most recent Head Teacher's report to the SGC.
- Monitoring records both internal and external (if any).
- Budget information.
- Analysing School Performance (ASP) online data analysis.
- Details of any on-going HR activities.

As explained above, your ACEO will hold regular meetings with you to:

- Discuss your initial perceptions.
- Provide MODSchools view of the school and priorities.
- Share the Core Visit Programme reports and any identified action From this, they will discuss with you your emerging view of priorities for the first few months, the first term and the first year.

These discussions should help you to begin to identify any development needs you might have. Whilst some of these might be generic, some will be driven by your perceptions of the school and the areas that you feel might need development. In reflecting on your needs, it's helpful to prioritise them and also to think about how best you might be able to fulfil them.

You might take up a Head Ship in a school that is receiving additional support from the DCS Schools School Improvement Team, to help secure rapid improvements. This Programme of Support (PoS) will have been designed in conjunction with the previous Head Teacher. If you are appointed in such a school, the AH S&S will discuss the package with you, taking you through the key elements, the focus of the work, the progress to date and how things now need to progress further. There may be challenges in having to manage this through with the school and the MOD Schools team are there to support you with this.

It will also be helpful to discuss any likely Ofsted activity with your AH S&S.

AH S&S have a detailed understanding of the Ofsted framework and the way in which it is applied by inspectors in our schools and settings which may differ from what you are used to. Discussing the school's potential vulnerabilities and where the school lies in the Ofsted cycle will help you plan key activities that you might need to carry out. This again, will potentially feed into your development needs.

If your school is due an inspection in your first year, preparing for this will be important and there will be no time to waste. Planning to understand the school's strengths and weaknesses at an early stage, updating the school's self-evaluation and taking some early action if necessary will be key.

Taking up post

It is essential that you get to know the performance of all aspects of the school as soon as possible. The list below details some of the initial familiarisation activities that should be undertaken.

Taking multiple viewpoints will help you gain perspective. The views of someone else from outside the school, such as your AH or SIA, will also help secure an accurate and detailed understanding.

1. Headline standards and progress
2. The quality of education
3. Behaviour and attitudes
4. Personal development
5. Leadership and management
6. Early years/ Post-16 education
7. Views of stakeholders

It is all too easy to find your time dominated by operational, day to day issues. It is important for you to safeguard time to think and act strategically. The time needed for this will differ over the school year but it is essential that you and your wider leadership team regularly engage in focused school improvement activities.

Civil Service mandatory training

Before starting your Headship, it is helpful to start the mandatory Civil Service training programme. This is essential training which needs to be completed during your first two weeks.

Starting this earlier helps as once you are involved in the day to day running of the school, it is not always easy to find time to sit and complete these. You will find links to these on Sharepoint or via your Assistant Head (AH).

Staffing

DCS Schools and Settings are made up of a combination of the following groups of staffing:

- **Teaching staff: UKBCs**
UK based civilian teachers are recruited to the position of class teacher via the MOD. Our basic establishment is to have a UKBC in every class. Teachers are classed as Civil Service Subject Matter Experts (SME) and D Grade Civil Servants. Teachers also hold an Equivalent Military Rank of Captain and are expected to hold the respective standards when in and around other military personnel.
- **Learning Support LSAs and Key Workers**
This group is generally recruited locally and are classed as Locally Employed Civilians (LEC). They will have a contract via the local pay office. Most of these posts are made up from the dependant population, i.e. spouses of serving personnel.
- **Locally Employed Civilians (LECs)**
Our schools and settings have a small number of Locally Employed Civilian staff supporting the administration and general office duties in each location. Being an LEC means they have been recruited from within the country and are generally natives of the country you are based in. Unlike LSAs or Key Workers, this group of LECs are generally part of the Local Civil Service.
- **Broader banded Civil Servants**
In some of our locations there are also broader banded Civil Servants who are local civilians within the Garrison.

Locating key policies and procedures

The MOD has policies on a vast range of subjects but the main ones of relevance to Head Teachers will be about HR issues. These can all be found on MODNet so get yourself on it! Gone are the days when all policies and procedures were published in hard copy, and you only had to reach them down from your bookshelf. All schools have at least one MODNet computer so accessibility to the relevant documentation shouldn't stand in the way. As Head Teacher you will have your own MODNET laptop.

When you open the MOD home page on MODNet click on the "People Service" tab and select "Civilian HR People Portal" from the drop-down menu. The Civilian HR People Portal contains all civilian HR policies and procedures, including those relating to sickness, absence, conduct, behaviour and probation.

There is a handy A-Z index of all policies and procedures which you may find useful. Defence Business Services (DBS) offers support with all civilian HR procedures and the relevant DBS area contact details can be found in the policies. MODNet also host a number of Joint Service Publications (JSPs) which are applicable to all Defence Personnel. Particularly relevant to DCS are:

- JSP 342: Education of service children overseas
- JSP 834: Safeguarding

However, this is not exhaustive, and you may be required to look up other JSPs. Should you need to access the JSPs, from your MODNet homepage, click on the “Policy and Guidance” tab and go to “Joint Service Publications (JSPs)” from the drop down and from there you can select the JSP index. All JSPs are numbered, and the index lists all JSPs in number order. Should you ever need any clarification or guidance on one of the JSPs, each document has the owner or team listed that you can contact for support.

Finally, as you would expect to see in a school in England, DCS hold a number of school level directives. These directives are based on DfE guidance as far as possible but placed into the MOD overseas context. You will find these on the MOD Schools SharePoint site under the “Policy & Guidance” tab and then select the MOD Schools Directives folder.

The DCS lead for MOD School directives is the Policy, Risk & Assurance Lead who sits in the Executive and who can be contacted on MODNet.

The Main JSPs and Procedures that you will need to be aware of are listed below:

- JSP 342: Education of Service Children Overseas
- JSP 834: Safeguarding
- JSP 345: Applying Prevent within Defence
- JSP 800: Defence Movements and Transport Policy
- JSP 763: The MOD Behaviours and Informal Complaints Resolution Policy
- Civ HR: Probation
- Civ HR: Overseas Civilian Transfers Policy
- Civ HR: Grievance and Dispute Resolution Procedures
- Civ HR: Civilian Formal Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination, Victimisation Complaints Policy & Procedure
- Civ HR: Misconduct and Discipline Policy
- Civ HR: Performance Management
- Civ HR: Supporting Attendance documentation