



Defence
Children
Services

Defence Children Services Education Advisory Team UK (EAT UK)

Trenchard Lines,
Upavon,
Wiltshire,
SN9 6BE

09 October 2026

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Information for parents with children starting primary or secondary school in September 2027

This letter provides guidance for Service families whose children are due to start primary school for the first time, or transfer to secondary school in September 2027. It provides some initial information to help families understand the school admissions process.

Each UK nation runs its own school admissions system, with different rules and deadlines. Please check the section below for your nation.

Primary school places in England for September 2027

If you require a primary school place in England for September 2027, the deadline for primary school applications is **15 January 2027**. Each local authority will send out offers for Primary school places on **16 April 2027**.

Secondary school places in England for September 2027

If you require a secondary school place in England for September 2027, the deadline for secondary school applications is **31 October 2026**. Each local authority will send out offers for Secondary school places on **1 March 2027**.

Primary and secondary school places in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland for September 2027

If you require a primary or secondary school place in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland for September 2027, you should follow your local authority's application process, as deadlines may differ from those in England. This information will usually be available on the local authority website. You can contact your local authority directly if you have any questions or require further support.

Applying for a school place for a child with additional support or Special Educational Needs

If your child has a statutory plan for additional support or special educational needs, such as an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP), Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP), Individual Development Plan (IDP) or Statement of Special Educational Needs (Statement of SEN), school placements are usually arranged through the relevant local authority or education authority rather than the normal admissions process. The authority is responsible for identifying and confirming the school placement. Planning for primary or secondary school

transfers often begins well in advance, so families should contact the relevant authority as early as possible. Families may also wish to seek advice from the Education Advisory Team (UK).

Advice and guidance

Defence Children Services (DCS) provides information, advice and guidance to Service families on education-related matters in the UK and overseas, including support with school admissions. For tailored advice relating to your individual circumstances, please contact the relevant team. We welcome contact from any Service families and are here to support you.

- **If you are based in the UK**, contact EAT UK at: RC-DCS-HQ-EAT@mod.gov.uk
- **If you are based overseas**, contact the Virtual School team at: RC-DCS-HQ-VS@mod.gov.uk
- **If you have an overseas posting**, you can visit the [DCS website](#) for contact details for each DCS school. If you require advice, please contact the Overseas Education and Supportability team at: RC-DCS-HQ-OES@mod.gov.uk

The following links provide further information and guidance:

England

- [School Admissions Code \(England\)](#)
- [Department for Education school admissions guidance](#)
- [Home to School Transport Guidance](#)

Wales

- [School admissions code | GOV.WALES](#)
- [Guidance on the co-ordination of school admission arrangements | GOV.WALES](#)
- [Supporting Service Children in Education in Wales](#)

Scotland

- [Register your child for a school](#)
- [Secondary school information](#)
- [Forces Children's Education](#)

Northern Ireland

- [Applying for a School Place | Education Authority Northern Ireland](#)

United Kingdom wide

- [Armed Forces Covenant](#)
- [DCS Education Advisory Team \(EAT\)](#)
- [Transition](#)

Overseas

- [Defence Children Services website](#)

Yours sincerely,

Education Advisory Team
RC-DCS-HQ-EAT@mod.gov.uk