



Ministry
of Defence

Moving Schools

A Parents' Guide



Preface

It is hoped that this booklet may help when moving from one location to another. It is recognised that there are very individual and specific issues that Service children may experience as a result of parental mobility and deployment. If you have particular concerns or would like to discuss your child's education further, please contact CEAS:

CEAS
Trenchard Lines
Upavon, Pewsey
Wiltshire
SN9 6BE

Civ: +44 (0) 1980 618244
Mil: 94344 8244

DCYP-CEAS-Enquiries@mod.gov.uk

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Using your Moving On Booklet

This booklet is to help you, as a Service Parent, to support your child when moving from one school to another. Service children may have to move schools a number of times because of the nature of Service life.

It is therefore vital that schools have as much information as possible about your child's achievements and needs. This will enable your child to settle more quickly into the new school, to help teachers to plan work at an appropriate level, and to generally lead to a more positive transition.

Once you are aware of your next posting, whilst the majority of parents encounter few problems in accessing a new school for their child, some may find that local schools

are full and may have to go to an appeal. Particular areas of the country may present more difficulties than others, but CEAS can support you in this process.

This pack will not replace the information that schools must transfer by law but will supplement it and will help the school to get to know your child.

In addition to this booklet, we have also produced a Pupil Passport which encourages young people to tell a new school all about themselves. It is suitable for children of all ages and can be completed either together with a parent, or independently by more confident, or older students.



Explaining about your child

When your child moves to a new school, it is important that he/she settles in quickly and is able to continue work at the most appropriate level. Your child's previous school will send transfer documents to the new school, but it is useful if you can supplement these documents.

The easiest way a teacher can assess your child is by looking at a cross-section of your child's work. We would suggest that if possible, school have sight of this before your child arrives, so that teaching can be delivered at an appropriate level.



What would be useful?

For Primary Age Children

- Ensure that you have examples of English and Maths work (if possible, photocopy sections from exercise books).
- Examples over time are very useful so that teachers can see rate of progress. A piece of writing from the beginning of the year and one from the end of year for example. Ensure that what you choose is current, and reflects what your child can do.
- Any pieces of work which show a particular talent. Copies of artwork for example, or sporting, or musical achievements.
- Evidence of any assessments carried out. Be aware that these will be different depending on where in the UK your child goes to school.
- A copy of their most recent school report.

For Secondary Age Children

- Some courses/subjects your child is following may have an element of coursework or a portfolio which may count towards a final grade.
- Ensure you have copies of any marked coursework/controlled assessments or any portfolio work which has been completed. In this case, it is best to keep hold of the originals, and leave the previous school with copies.
- Provide the new school with details of topics covered. For example, which novels or play have been studied in English? What periods of history have been studied? This may help the new school in planning an appropriate course of study.

It may be possible for your child to make contact with their new class by email. It may be worth asking about this as it could be a way to forge links and make the transition feel a little easier.

Children with Additional Needs

If your child has additional support needs including Special Educational Needs, a disability, or English as an additional language (for example), it is very important to obtain a record of what support they are receiving and why. It is crucial to provide adequate notice and allow appropriate time for transition for any child with an Education, Health and Care Plan or another coordinated support plan. We would suggest that you may wish to contact CEAS for guidance as soon as any postings are known.

Collect all plans or reports relating to your child in school. This includes any plan for support within the classroom, general end of year reports, and reports written by external agencies. E.g. An Educational Psychologist's Report, or a Speech and Language Report.

If your child has at any time attended an MOD School or setting, you may have documentation relating to their support in school. This could be a Record of Intervention, Assessment and Intervention of Special Educational Needs (RIASEN) or a Service Children's Assessment of Need (SCAN). Local Authorities must have regard to these documents, in England. You are entitled to ask for and receive these documents and to ensure that the new school is aware of your child's needs, it is vital that they are able to access records of previous support. We would encourage you to contact CEAS once you are aware of a new posting (within the UK) as we can guide you through the upcoming transition process.

It may also be beneficial to read the mini-guide on transition from the National Association for Special Educational Needs:

<http://www.nasen.org.uk/resources/resources.transition.html>



The First Visit to a new school

The first visit to a new school is very important as it gives an opportunity for you and your child to see what the school is like and to tell the school all about your child. It is best to make an appointment with the school before your visit, so that the relevant staff are able to give you some dedicated time. If you are unable to visit, you may wish to phone and ask to speak to the Headteacher, the Head of Year (Secondary) or Head of Key Stage (Primary). If your child has any special or additional needs, you may wish to ask to speak to the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) or the person in charge of children with additional needs.

During this first visit, your child will be able to meet members of staff that they will have contact with, their class teacher or form tutor for example. They may also be able to see other children from their year group, and it may be a good opportunity to ask about a buddy if possible for the first few days. Becoming more familiar about the layout of the school, and what classrooms look like may go some way to alleviating a little bit of transition anxiety which is natural for all children.

Questions to Ask

We have put together a range of questions which may help you remember what you need to ask on a school visit. We don't suggest you try asking all of them, but they may be a starting point when you are thinking about what you need to know.

General Questions

- What are the school's aims? What are they trying to achieve for their pupils?
- How does the school ensure all students are included and participate in the life of the school?
- What homework will my child get? How can I check? What input is required from parents? Does the school offer homework clubs or supported study sessions?
- What opportunities are there for after school activities?
- What should I do if I feel my child is being bullied?
- How will you contact me if my child is ill?
How will you contact me if there is a problem with the standard of their work?
- How does the school inform parents of upcoming events.
- What rewards are there if my child does well? Is there a points or house system?
- What happens if my child misbehaves or they do not complete their work and how does the school reward good work and behaviour?
- Where can I buy school uniform?

Questions Relating to Curriculum

- Will my child follow the same curriculum as they did at their last school? If not, what are the similarities and differences?
- Which year group will my child be placed in?
- Does the school offer the same subjects as the previous school and are there places available in the classes working towards examinations (for Y10 – Y13 students). Are the GCSE/A-level options my child chose in their previous school available?
- How is the timetable structured? How many hours will they spend on each subject?
- Do you use the same examination boards as the previous school?
If not, how will this be managed? What exams will my child take if they are not going to school in England?
- Who should I contact at school to discuss any queries relating to the work my child has been set?

Questions Relating to the School Day

- When does school start and finish?
- Is there opportunity for hot school lunches? How do I pay for them?
- Is there a policy for what children can bring in their packed lunch?
- On what days are PE/Games?
- Is any home to school transport available?

Questions Related to Additional Educational Needs

- How will my child's needs be met?
- Who do I talk to if I am worried about my child's progress?
- What is the school's policy on inclusion and meeting the needs of learners with additional needs?
- What support is available should my child need it?
Both academic, social and emotional needs should be considered.

Additional Information to Share with the School

- A list of previous schools attended
- Information about what your child is good at or enjoys doing.
- Evidence of his/her achievements.
- Details of any difficulties your child has had at school, e.g. settling in and making friends.
- Other languages spoken at home.
- Relevant information about the family.
For example, any history of specific conditions within the family
- Concerns regarding the child during periods of parental absence.
- Information about his/her dietary needs.
- Information about his/her medical conditions.



Unique Pupil Number (UPN)

Every child being educated in England and Wales has a **Unique Pupil Number (UPN)**. If you know the number for your child, it is useful to pass this to school so your child can be quickly identified. If your child has previously been educated in Scotland or Northern Ireland, they will be issued with a UPN if they transfer into a school in England or Wales.

Ensure the new school know that you are a Service Family as this will enable them to access the Service Pupil Premium allocated to schools following each January census.

Consider supporting your child to complete the Student Passport booklet which aims to let young people have a voice when moving to a new school. You can do this together with your child (for example if they are younger, you could scribe for them), or your child can do it independently. Please add any extra sheets of paper if you would like to.



