

Foreword

Moving can be as challenging as it is exciting – sometimes more so. Each time a Defence family is posted they accept that challenge and set about planning for the move.

For those families with school-aged children, education is a major concern at such times. Understanding the education system in the new state or territory, discovering what schooling options are available at a locality, contacting particular schools, and accessing special education services are just some of the tasks that must be dealt with to enable a smooth transition for these children.

Defence recognises the impact that living a mobile lifestyle can have upon the education of children and has provided assistance for its families. This booklet is just one form of the assistance that is available. In it you will find a great deal of information about education in New South Wales, suggestions to make the change from one school to another as positive as possible, advice about the Education Assistance Scheme, contact details for school systems, and a range of other helpful material.

No booklet can contain all the information that families require and no booklet can be specific enough to cater for the needs of each particular family. Please do not hesitate to contact me for whatever assistance you require. Always ensure that when you are posted with school-aged children, 'Call the REDLO!' is the first thought that comes into your mind.

I hope you enjoy your time in New South Wales, and that your children benefit from experiencing the quality education that is available.

Ken Welsh

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The information in this book is current at the time of printing.

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Defence Community Organisation Services

The Defence Community Organisation (DCO) provides confidential services to the Australian Defence Force, its members and their families through a broad range of specialised services.

DCO supports Commanders, members and their families by providing assistance in case of accident, illness, hospitalisation, financial difficulty, managing casualties and estates, and at time of bereavement.

DCO–NSW contact details are:

Sydney Office

Level 3, Defence Plaza
270 Pitt St
Sydney 2000
Tel: (02) 9377 3314

Liverpool Office

Liverpool Military Area
Moorebank Ave
Liverpool 2170
Tel: (02) 8782 4864

Richmond Office

Building 14
Delarue St
RAAF Base Richmond 2755
Tel: (02) 4587 1130

Nowra Office

Level 2, Suite 2 Bridgeton House
55–57 Berry St
Nowra 2541
Tel: (02) 4421 3855

Hunter Office

Building 225
McNamara Dr
RAAF Base Williamtown 2314
Tel: (02) 4964 6973

Your local DCO team employs the following staff:

Defence Social Workers are qualified professionals trained to assist members and their families to address a wide range of personal, family and work-related issues in a confidential setting.

Military Support Officers (MSOs) are uniformed personnel from the three Services who offer support and assistance to members and their families, and undertake a liaison function with Units and Command.

Family Liaison Officers (FLOs) assist members and families to settle into new communities and are a source of information about local and Australian Defence Force resources and support activities.

Regional Education Liaison Officers (REDLOs) are qualified, experienced teachers who assist Defence families with matters related to education. They provide information, advice, referral and specialised assistance to Service members and their families, the ADF and education systems on education matters. REDLOs provide advice about the impacts of posting mobility on education. They can assist with the transition between the various state and territory primary, secondary and tertiary education systems.

REDLO NSW can be contacted on:

Tel: (02) 9377 3316 or via email at

Email: redlo.nsw@defence.gov.au

Education Assistance Scheme

Defence recognises that the mobile lifestyle can create particular challenges for school-aged children. One purpose of the Education Assistance Scheme (EAS) is to assist with the cost of additional educational services, such as tuition support for children. The aim of this assistance is to overcome any immediate difficulties and disruption that have impacted on the child's learning due to a member's posting.

The basic elements of the EAS are as follows:

- tuition must be provided by a qualified person or a properly accredited organisation
- tuition must be provided within 18 months of the child enrolling at the new school
- the principal or class teacher certifies that the tuition is required
- tuition can be provided for one hour per week, per subject
- for previously studied compulsory subjects, this tuition can last for 14 weeks
- for compulsory subjects not previously studied, this tuition can be for up to six months
- in Years 10, 11 or 12 some tuition can last for the school year
- tuition may be undertaken during or outside school hours
- the CO/OC of the member's unit or REDLO gives approval for the 14 weeks of tuition
- there is provision for an extension of EAS if the disruption was not reduced to a reasonable degree by the initial tuition.

Other aspects covered by the EAS scheme include:

- boarding assistance for students in Years 9, 10, 11 or 12 who do not relocate on posting with their family
- accommodation costs, in certain circumstances, for tertiary students
- student reunion travel for students who board or are at a tertiary institution



- assistance for assessment, therapy and additional support for special needs students who were receiving this support in their previous posting and who are unable to access such services in the government system in the new state/territory, provided they have been recognised by Defence under the Family With Special Needs policy
- compensation to a member whose child forfeits a scholarship or bursary because of the member posting to another locality.

The EAS also contains a variety of discretionary clauses relating to the above provisions.

Under some elements of the scheme, there remains a parental contribution component.

Full details of the Education Assistance Scheme are available at PACMAN, Vol. 2 Ch. 8 Part 4. A copy is available online at <http://intranet.defence.gov.au/pac/>

Application forms are available on DEFWEB:

Tutoring Assistance	AD 301
Tutoring Assistance (Discretionary)	AD 301-1
Boarding Assistance	AD 302
Tertiary Assistance	AD 303

Note: Child tuition assistance under the Education Assistance Scheme is not Fringe Benefits Tax reportable.

For further assistance or advice, please contact your local REDLO.

Age of Entry for Schooling

The age of entry to formal schooling varies from state to state/territory and each sets its own guidelines. As you can see from the table below, a child may be eligible to commence schooling in one state but not eligible to do so in another. For further information or to discuss any concerns about age of entry, contact the REDLO.



State/territory	Name of first year	Eligibility	Date of commencement
Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	Kindergarten	Five years of age on or before 30 April	January of that year
New South Wales (NSW)	Kindergarten	Five years of age on or before 31 July	January of that year
Northern Territory (NT)	Transition	Five years of age on or before 30 June	January of that year
Queensland (QLD)	Preparatory	Five years of age on or before 30 June	January of that year
South Australia (SA)	Reception	Five years of age	The beginning of the term after the child turns five years of age
Tasmania (TAS)	Preparatory	Five years of age on or by 1 January in any year	Must start school in that year
Victoria (VIC)	Preparatory	Five years of age on or before 30 April	January of that year
Western Australia (WA)	Pre-primary	Five years of age on or before 30 June	January of that year

On the Move Again

Moving is a major life change. It is an event filled with a variety of emotions such as excitement, anticipation, fear, sadness, anxiety, confusion and optimism. Recognise that your children may particularly experience a sense of loss as a result of a move. It takes time to work through this loss. Encourage children to express their emotions. Accept their feelings and respond with understanding. By expressing your own feelings in healthy ways, children will recognise that they are not alone in their feelings.

Encourage children to keep a scrapbook or photo album of their former community, school, home and friends. Allow children to maintain contact with former friends for as long as necessary (telephone, email, letters, photographs etc.).

Be prepared for signs of stress from children of any age. Preschoolers may regress to thumb-sucking, baby talk or other behaviour they had left behind. School-aged children may intensify natural habits; for example, a shy child may become more shy, an aggressive child more aggressive.

Talk to them about the posting – early and often. Give your child as much information as possible before the move; more lead time means more time for the child to get used to the idea. Having information or knowledge about the new location can also increase the likelihood of making a smooth and positive transition.

The most important aspect of settling children into any environment, whether it is school or not, is to make them feel secure. This security may just be a feeling that the family is together, or that someone will be there when they need to talk. Younger children may feel more secure if they have a treasured possession with them.



After the move, resume normal family routines as soon as possible (bedtime, chores, discipline, storytime, traditions). Consider allocating special time to just sit down with your child to discuss his/her day, as well as sharing items about your day. These few minutes spent with your child will probably confirm in your child's mind your interest in all that he/she is doing. Congratulate your child on managing the challenging experience of moving.

Children need time to adjust. In general it takes children six months to adjust to a move. If you have concerns about your child's adjustment, contact a GP, the school counsellor or other health professional.

Changing Schools

So, your family has another posting?

Among other challenges and opportunities that this event entails, there is that unenviable task of preparing your child for a change in schools. Here are some hints that may help your child during this transition.

Before you leave:

- notify the present school of the move
- ask the school for reports, samples of work and other relevant information for collection prior to departure
- prepare a student information portfolio for each child (see next page)
- return all library items, texts, equipment etc. that belong to the school
- ensure all outstanding fees are paid
- encourage your child to collect mementos, gather contact details and email addresses of friends
- contact the REDLO for information on education in the new location
- contact the new school for enrolment forms, school prospectus, curriculum details, web address and other details required
- explore the new school via the internet if possible
- ensure that all information needed to enrol at the new school is carried with you.

On arrival:

- make an appointment with the principal or relevant enrolment officer
- at the appointment discuss your child's strengths and weaknesses, special needs (if applicable), appropriate year level placement, student information portfolio, subject choices etc.
- accompany your child on a tour of the school
- familiarise yourself with the established forms of communication between the school and the home
- allow approximately four weeks for your child to settle in and for teachers to get to know them, then ring the school to discuss progress
- access the Education Assistance Scheme if appropriate
- contact the REDLO for further assistance or advice if required. Issues may include: handwriting styles, behaviour management, communication with the school, school behaviour management, exclusion and expulsion etc.



As a parent it may be worth noting that, in April 1989, the members of the Australian Education Council accepted the recommendation that:

'systems accept differences in handwriting styles and that this information be distributed to teachers showing the accepted styles' and that 'all Australian government school systems will now accept that a child taught a handwriting style in one state will not have to change it on transfer to another state which teaches a different style'.

State Education Departments

Address	Telephone/Fax	Website
Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Department of Education and Training 220 Northbourne Ave BRADDON ACT 2612	Tel: (02) 6207 5111 Fax: (02) 6205 9333	www.decs.act.gov.au
New South Wales (NSW) NSW Department of Education and Training GPO Box 33 SYDNEY NSW 2001	Tel: (02) 9561 8000	www.schools.nsw.edu.au
Northern Territory (NT) Department of Employment, Education and Training GPO Box 4821 DARWIN NT 0801	Tel: (08) 8999 5659 Fax: (08) 8901 1326	www.deet.nt.gov.au
Queensland (QLD) Department of Education, Training and the Arts 30 Mary Street BRISBANE QLD 4000	Tel: (07) 3237 0111	www.education.qld.gov.au
South Australia (SA) Department of Education and Children's Services 31 Flinders Street ADELAIDE SA 5000	Tel: (08) 8226 1000 Tel: 1800 088 158	www.decs.sa.gov.au
Tasmania (TAS) Department of Education 116 Bathurst Street HOBART TAS 7000	Tel: 1300 135 513 Fax: (03) 6231 1576	www.education.tas.gov.au
Victoria (VIC) Department of Education 2 Treasury Place MELBOURNE VIC 3000	Tel: (03) 9637 2000	www.education.vic.gov.au
Western Australia (WA) Department of Education and Training 151 Royal Street EAST PERTH WA 6004	Tel: (08) 9264 4111 Fax: (08) 9264 5005	www.det.wa.edu.au

Student Information Portfolio

A student information portfolio is a collection of materials designed to show your child's schooling experience and achievements. Constructing the portfolio can be a cooperative project with your child and can help generate confidence and enthusiasm for a move.

A digital student information portfolio has been developed by DCO. It is an interactive multimedia program that captures the academic, sporting, cultural and social history of a child over each year of their schooling. A copy of this digital version can be obtained from your local REDLO or DCO office.

A well-constructed portfolio can:

- provide a documented history of the student's progress
- provide details about the student to assist the new school in placing the student in an appropriate year level
- encourage your child to feel he/she is making a contribution to his/her schooling
- help parents to relate more confidently to new schools.

If you are unable to access the digital program, then a sturdy two-ring binder and a number of clear plastic inserts or a display book is suitable for the portfolio.

Suggested items for inclusion are:

Introductory section

- Personal details
- A recent photograph
- Details of siblings at the same school
- Copy of birth certificate
- Immunisation record
- Baptismal certificate (if applicable)

School information

- Schooling history sheet
- Current subjects and levels
- Reports
- Dated samples of student's work
- Awards and certificates

Special information

- Guidance assessment reports, medical reports, school recommendations
- Involvement with school-based activities, e.g. canteen duty, coaching or umpiring a sporting team, Rock and Roll Eisteddfod etc.

Co-curricular activities

- Sports, hobbies, club membership
- Art, music, languages, drama

Resources

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) has developed two resources to assist schools and parents when students change schools.

- 'Changing Schools' is a kit for parents containing an information booklet and a checklist brochure
- 'Interstate Student Data Transfer Note' – with parental approval this system allows student information to be transferred from the old school in one state or territory to the new school in another.

Further information can be obtained from:
Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
(DEEWR)
PO Box 9880
Canberra City ACT 2601

General enquiries: 1300 363 079
Canberra Switchboard: (02) 6240 8111

Copies of the 'Changing Schools' booklet and brochure can be accessed at
Internet: www.dest.gov.au/changingschools or
Internet: www.deewr.gov.au or via
Email: publications@dest.gov.au

Information on the transfer note can be found at
Internet: www.mceetya.edu.au/transfernote

NSW Public School Term Dates

(Note: For government schools the first day of Terms 1, 2 and 3 are staff development days.)

2009	2010
<p>Term 1</p> <p>Tuesday 27 January to Friday 9 April</p>	<p>Term 1</p> <p>Wednesday 27 January to Thursday 1 April</p>
<p>Term 2</p> <p>Tuesday 28 April to Friday 10 July</p>	<p>Term 2</p> <p>Tuesday 19 April to Friday 2 July</p>
<p>Term 3</p> <p>Monday 27 July to Friday 2 October</p>	<p>Term 3</p> <p>Monday 19 July to Friday 24 September</p>
<p>Term 4</p> <p>Monday 19 October to Friday 18 December</p>	<p>Term 4</p> <p>Monday 11 October to Friday 17 December</p>

NOTE: Some non-government schools do not follow this calendar. Please check with your non-government school to confirm their school term dates.

Education in New South Wales

The key priority of public schools in New South Wales is to provide children and young people with the foundations for lifelong learning so that they become literate, numerate, well-educated citizens with the capabilities and confidence to make a positive contribution to our society. Public schools deliver a curriculum that meets students' needs and aspirations, is relevant to today's world and is responsive to community expectations.

A parallel system of education is operated on a fee-paying basis by religious and other independent organisations.

The New South Wales education system consists of three stages:

1. Non- or Pre-Compulsory Education

The NSW Department of Education and Training operates 100 preschools across the state. Most preschools provide educational programs to children for one year prior to enrolment in kindergarten, which is the first year of compulsory schooling. Some preschools offer two-year programs.

The majority of preschools in New South Wales are privately run and are overseen by the Department of Community Services.



Pre-Compulsory Education Options

2. Compulsory Education

Parents are required to ensure that their children are enrolled at school from the age of six to 15 years. However, children may be enrolled at school earlier, provided they turn five on or before 31 July of that year.

All government primary and the vast majority of government high schools have a **designated local enrolment area**. Parents may apply to enrol their child at a school outside their enrolment area. Schools can accept enrolments outside their area **if space permits**. Parents should make contact with the principal of the school(s) they would like their child to attend to find out whether places are available.

When a child is transferred from one New South Wales public school (primary and secondary) to another public school in New South Wales, parents must obtain a **Transfer Certificate** from the child's previous school.

Students transferring from interstate can normally be expected to join the same age group that they occupied in their previous school system. However, the circumstances of each case are considered individually, and parents are encouraged to discuss these matters with the school principal. It is vital that each student has a well-constructed student information portfolio.

3. Post-Compulsory Education

Students may choose to continue their education by attending a range of secondary schools, senior colleges, colleges of technical and further education (TAFE), university and higher education institutions.

1. Preschool Education (Department of Education and Training)

Attendance – most Departmental preschools operate on a sessional basis with sessions lasting 2.5 hours each. Children in sessional preschools attend for either five mornings or five afternoons per week. Some preschools offer full day attendance, either for two or three days per week, usually from 9am to 3pm, while a limited number offer full-time attendance for five days per week.

Eligibility – children attend Departmental preschools for one year before they enter kindergarten, the first year of formal school. They may enter Departmental preschools at the beginning of the school year if they turn four on or before 31 July of that year.

Program – all Departmental preschools are staffed with teachers qualified in early childhood education. They provide an educational program that caters for each child's individual stage of development. The program includes activities which develop children's literacy, numeracy, physical, social, emotional and self-help skills.

2. Community- and Centre-Based Preschool/Kindergartens

Attendance – preschool/kindergartens that are **centre-based** childcare services usually open between 9am and 3pm Monday to Friday in the school term.

Preschool/Kindergartens that are **community-based** usually operate on a daily sessional basis, i.e. 1, 2 or 3 days per child per week, and may enrol children aged two years prior to formal school entrance. These centres operate on a non-profit basis.

Operation – preschools may be privately owned, managed by non-profit organisations or parent groups.

3. Child Care

Childcare services must meet numerous minimum NSW standards in order to be licensed to operate. This includes long day care, family day care, preschools, home-based care and occasional care. Long day care centres that offer child care assistance

must also meet the requirements of the National Childcare Accreditation Council. To be accredited, services must meet an acceptable standard on 52 principles of quality child care. Each centre should have its Accreditation Certificate displayed.

There are several types of child care available for children, including:

- **Long day care** – provides child care for a minimum of eight hours per day, 48 weeks per year, in a special-purpose building. It is designed primarily for use by children whose parents are working, seeking employment or studying. Centres may be privately owned, managed by non-profit organisations or parent groups. Some centres also provide preschool care.
- **Family day care** – provides care for up to seven children aged from birth to 12 years with no more than five children under six years in a day carer's home. Trained childcare advisers who oversee the children's activities coordinate the scheme. The days and hours of care can be very flexible and include nights and weekends. Children can attend regular excursions to organised playgroups with other children.
- **Home-based care** – provides a similar service independently of a family day care scheme. Information about local carers can be sought by phoning the Department of Community Services.
- **Occasional care** – provides short periods of care for children aged from birth to school age. Parents use occasional child care for a variety of reasons, including respite care, during appointments, shopping or during casual work. Occasional care services can be found in a variety of forms in shopping malls, specialist centres or community halls. Hours of operation will differ, some open five days a week and others open just one day. A centre will have at least one trained staff member to coordinate and oversee the services.

Child Care Access Hotline:

Tel: 1800 670 305

This toll-free number provides up-to-date information on childcare services in your area, including the type of care available and government help with the cost of child care.

Out of School Hours Care

There are several types of child care for primary school children. The most common is out of school hours care centres. The other types are family day care and home-based care.

1. **Out of school hours care centres** are often located in or near school grounds. The services may run before and after school and/or during the school holidays. These centres largely focus on recreation and leisure rather than education.
2. **Family day care** is able to offer care to school-aged children as long as they do not exceed the total number of children for which they are licensed to care.
3. **Home-based carers** are able to offer care to school-aged children as long as they do not exceed the total number of children for which they are licensed.

Compulsory Education

1. Primary Education (Kindergarten to Year 6)

Parents of primary school children, in partnership with teachers, have an important part to play in encouraging young children to develop a love of learning.

Children may enter kindergarten at the beginning of the school year in the NSW Department of Education and Training schools if they turn five **on or before 31 July** in that year. Some gifted or talented children may be ready to start school at an earlier age. Others may benefit from being a little older but, by law, all children must start school by their sixth birthday.

The NSW school curriculum is organised into key areas of learning as required by the *Education Reform Act 1990*. There are six primary school key learning areas:

- English – including listening, talking, reading and writing. Students are encouraged to develop their spoken and written English skills for a range of purposes.
- mathematics – students study patterns and relationships. Children analyse, count and sort numbers and solve problems in the areas of space, measurement and number.
- science and technology – helps students understand their environment, both man-made and natural, by investigating, designing, making and using technology.
- human society and its environment (HSIE) – encourages students to study relationships between people, cultures and languages, with a special focus on civics and citizenship.
- creative and practical arts – students participate in the art forms of dance, drama, music and visual arts through creating and making their own works.
- personal development, health and physical education (PDHPE) – helps students develop self-esteem, social responsibility, personal fitness and the ability to make informed decisions about health and lifestyle decisions.

Schools must provide learning experiences in each of these areas for each child during each year of primary schooling.

While all the Key Learning Areas are important, teachers spend the greatest time on English and mathematics.

All schools carefully monitor the progress of each student and report regularly to parents. All students are assessed in Year 3 and Year 5 to determine levels of achievement in aspects of literacy and numeracy. These tests are part of the National Assessment Program. Parents receive a personal report on their child's results.

Specialist classes for academically gifted primary school students exist in some public schools in NSW. These classes usually operate in Years 5 and 6, with students being nominated and assessed during Year 4. These classes are called Opportunity Classes.

Which School?

The NSW REDLO can provide a list of government and non-government primary schools near your residence. If one has not been provided with this booklet, please contact the REDLO.

If you are looking for a government school the Department of Education and Training has a website that may be helpful.

Internet: www.schools.nsw.edu.au/schoolfind/locator/index.php

Defence School Transition Aides

The Defence School Transition Aide (DSTA) Program was established to provide 'hands on' support within primary schools to support ADF members and their families during their transition into and out of the local school.

DSTAs are located in a limited number of schools throughout Australia, and in the NSW DCO Region they are working in the following schools:

Ashtonfield Public School, Ashtonfield
Tel: (02) 4934 3584

Bligh Park Public School, Bligh Park
Tel: (02) 4572 7067

Grahamstown Public School, Raymond Terrace
Tel: (02) 4987 6510

Hammondville Public School, Hammondville
Tel: (02) 9825 3948

Holsworthy Public School, Holsworthy
Tel: (02) 9825 1470

Illaroo Road Public School, Nowra
Tel: (02) 4421 0422

Jervis Bay School, Jervis Bay
Tel: (02) 4442 1002

North Nowra Public School, Nowra
Tel: (02) 4422 7045

Nowra Anglican College, Nowra
Tel: (02) 4421 7711

Nowra Hill Public School, Nowra
Tel: (02) 4421 5671

Nowra Public School, Nowra
Tel: (02) 4422 0401

Richmond Public School, Richmond
Tel: (02) 4578 2027

Singleton Heights Public School, Singleton
Tel: (02) 6573 1363

Soldiers Point Public School, Soldiers Point
Tel: (02) 4982 7151

South Coogee Public School, South Coogee
Tel: (02) 9349 4000

St Brigid's Catholic Primary School, Raymond Terrace
Tel: (02) 4987 2625

St Christopher's Catholic Primary School, Holsworthy
Tel: (02) 9825 3251

St Michael's Catholic Primary School, Nowra
Tel: (02) 4421 3630

St Monica's Catholic Primary School, Richmond
Tel: (02) 4588 5405

Thornton Public School, Thornton
Tel: (02) 4964 1369

Tomaree Public School, Salamander Bay
Tel: (02) 4981 1595

Wattle Grove Public School, Wattle Grove
Tel: (02) 9731 1355

Wirreanda Public School, Medowie
Tel: (02) 4982 8707

2. Secondary Education (Year 7 to Year 10)

The NSW Board of Studies awards the School Certificate to eligible students at the end of Year 10. To receive the School Certificate the student is required to complete the following Key Learning Area subjects each year in Years 7–10:

- English
- mathematics
- science
- human society and its environment(HSIE), which includes mandatory courses in Australian history and Australian geography and may include Aboriginal studies, Asian social studies, commerce, geography, history, studies in society and studies of religion.

At some time during Years 7–10, the student is also required to study in the Key Learning Area of:

- personal development, health and physical education(PDHPE)
- creative arts, which includes mandatory courses in each of visual arts and music.

- technological and applied studies, which includes a mandatory course in design and technology with some learning about and using computers. There may also be opportunities to study some of the following: agriculture, computing studies, food technology, sheep husbandry and wool science, technical drawing, technics, and textiles and design.
- languages other than English, with courses of study which may include Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Spanish and Vietnamese.

Students in Year 7 and Year 9 are assessed in literacy and numeracy through tests in the National Assessment Program.

As part of the awarding of the School Certificate all students in Year 10 sit for state-wide external tests in English, mathematics, science, computing skills and Australian history, geography, civics and citizenship.

Defence Transition Mentors

In 2006 the Defence School Transition Aide program was expanded into the secondary school area. In these schools they are called Defence Transition Mentors (DTMs). In the NSW DCO region they are located in the following schools:

Bomaderry High School, Nowra
Tel: (02) 4421 0699

Holsworthy High School, Holsworthy
Tel: (02) 9825 2888

Irrawang High School, Raymond Terrace
Tel: (02) 4987 4686

Nowra Anglican College, Nowra
Tel: (02) 4421 7711

Nowra High School, Nowra
Tel: (02) 4421 4977

St John the Evangelist Catholic High School, Nowra
Tel: (02) 4423 1666

St Philip's Christian College, Salamander Bay
Tel: (02) 4984 3882

Tomaree High School, Salamander Bay
Tel: (02) 4981 1595

Government High Schools – The Options

Local Comprehensive High School

The foundation of public secondary education in NSW is the local comprehensive high school.

Comprehensive high schools offer students the opportunity to undertake secondary school studies in an atmosphere closely reflecting the local community in which the school is located. These schools offer quality education for students of all ability levels, including programs to challenge the gifted and talented and programs to cater for students with special needs.

Comprehensive high schools also provide opportunities for students to select from a wide range of sporting, social and cultural events.

Single-Sex High Schools

Single-sex high schools have a particular enrolment area. Students living within that area will be able to enrol, especially if enrolling at the beginning of the year. Students living outside the area will be enrolled if a place and suitable subjects are available.

Some single-sex high schools may also be academically selective or specialist. Other policies and procedures may relate to enrolment in these types of schools.

Specialist High Schools

Some high schools have a special emphasis, either in curriculum or in the nature of the student enrolment.

Enrolment at technology, languages, sports and performing arts high schools, for students who reside outside the local enrolment area, will depend on the student meeting special criteria for enrolment. In some of these schools, for example sports and performing arts high schools, the criteria for enrolment could include performance or audition.

At technology high schools, students have a choice between a curriculum emphasising technology or a traditional one. Students are also free to move between these two options.

Academically Selective High Schools

Selective and agricultural high schools cater for high-achieving, academically talented students. These schools provide intellectual stimulation by grouping talented students together, concentrating school resources and using specialised teaching methods.

Parents may apply for students to be enrolled in Year 7 at selective high schools or at selective agricultural high schools. These applicants are required to sit for the selective high school tests that are held each year in the March prior to commencing Year 7. A small number of vacancies may also occur in Years 8–12 at selective high schools. These vacancies are filled according to procedures developed at particular selective high schools.

Alternative procedures operate for students living interstate or overseas.

Which School?

The NSW REDLO can provide a list of government and non-government secondary schools near your residence. If one has not been provided with this booklet, please contact the REDLO.

If you are looking for a government school, the Department of Education and Training has a website that may be helpful: www.schools.nsw.edu.au/schoolfind/locator/index.php

Post-Compulsory Education Options

1. Secondary Education (Years 11 and 12)

The Higher School Certificate is the highest educational award a student can gain in NSW schools through the study of courses developed by the NSW Board of Studies. It is a credential awarded to students by the NSW Board of Studies following external examinations at the end of a student's secondary school education.

The Higher School Certificate can be studied at government schools, accredited non-government schools or colleges, or colleges of TAFE. More than 100 courses are available from more than 60 subject areas. In some situations, prior study and/or relevant life experience can be recognised.

Curriculum

Courses for the Higher School Certificate (HSC) are divided into two parts – a Preliminary component, usually studied in Year 11, and a HSC component, usually studied in Year 12. Students must complete the Preliminary component of a course before starting the Higher School Certificate component.

Students may repeat one or more HSC courses to gain higher results, may accelerate in one or more Preliminary or HSC courses ahead of their cohorts, or may accumulate Preliminary or HSC courses over a period up to five years.

Pattern of Study

Candidates for the HSC must undertake a program of study comprising at least:

- 12 units of Preliminary courses
- 10 units of HSC courses.

Both the Preliminary course pattern and the HSC pattern must include at least:

- six units of Board-developed courses
- at least two units of a Board-developed English course
- at least three courses of 2 units value or greater
- at least four subjects.

Types of Courses

Courses are of two broad types: Board-developed courses and Board-endorsed courses.

For each **Board-developed course**, the Board of Studies designs and develops a syllabus setting out its purpose, aims and desired outcomes. These are the courses for which the Board sets Higher School Certificate examinations. Board-developed courses contribute to the student's University Admissions Index (UAI).

There are two types of **Board-endorsed courses**:

- School-designed courses are developed by individual schools in response to local interest or need.
- Content-endorsed courses are standardised courses available in popular study areas. Content-endorsed status has also been given to a large range of TAFE courses. This gives students the opportunity to follow a pattern of school and TAFE courses for the Higher School Certificate.

All Board-endorsed courses count towards the Higher School Certificate, are accredited on a student's record of achievement and can be used to meet the Board's

requirements for breadth of study across the key learning areas. **Because these Board-endorsed courses are not externally examined, they cannot count towards the UAI.**

Vocational Education

Senior secondary students across NSW are currently engaged in a wide range of vocational initiatives built upon strong links between schools and industry. In addition, there are many general education courses which provide learning experiences that are relevant to the workplace.

Increasing numbers of senior students are electing to study dual accredited vocational courses, which are accredited by the NSW Board of Studies for the purposes of the Higher School Certificate, and by the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) for the purpose of meeting the training needs of industry. These vocational courses cover the industry areas of business services (administration), construction, information technology, metal and engineering, primary industry, retail, and tourism and hospitality.

TAFE-delivered vocational HSC courses for school students are available in a wide range of vocational areas. TAFE NSW HSC pathways enable students who have a clear vocational focus to undertake a full TAFE NSW Certificate as part of their HSC. By studying for the HSC in TAFE NSW, students can combine studies in a vocational area with general education subjects such as English, mathematics, geography etc.

HSC Examinations

The HSC examinations are held each year in late October and November. Students completing the Higher School Certificate will receive their HSC testamur and also their HSC Record of Achievement that will show their subjects and results.

Universities Admission Index (UAI)

The UAI is a rank between 0.00 and 100.00 which provides a measure of overall academic achievement in the NSW HSC. It assists institutions to rank applicants for university admission. It is calculated by the universities and released by the Universities Admission Centre. Only Board-developed courses, for which there are examinations conducted by the Board of Studies, can be used to calculate the UAI.

The NSW REDLO can provide a list of government and non-government secondary schools near your residence. If one has not been provided with this booklet, please contact the REDLO.

Tertiary Education

1. Colleges of Technical and Further Education (TAFE)

TAFE NSW delivers post-secondary education studies through flexible study programs and services to meet the needs of students, industry and the community. TAFE NSW Colleges offer more than 1,000 courses at locations across the state.

Most TAFE NSW courses have no rigid entry requirement, but some courses may require completion of Year 10 or Year 12, or for the applicant to be an apprentice or trainee, or to have finished other vocational courses.

TAFE NSW offers four levels of Certificate, Diploma and Advanced Diploma courses. Most of these courses are offered as part of the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF). The AQF is a qualifications system, which allows the courses to be nationally and institutionally consistent and recognised.

Internet: www.tafe.nsw.edu.au

2. Universities

Higher education is provided by universities located in major provincial centres throughout New South Wales. Undergraduate and postgraduate courses include architecture, agriculture, business, engineering, medicine, law, science, arts, social welfare, performing arts and teacher education.

To enter an undergraduate course, a student must satisfy the specific entry requirements of the institution, usually by the successful completion of Year 12 or its equivalent. Access to some tertiary courses is available to mature age students who lack formal entry qualifications.

Students intending to enrol in undergraduate courses should contact the University Admissions Centre (UAC) on (02) 9752 0200 for details of enrolment procedures. It is also advisable that course information be obtained from the relevant university prior to your proceeding with an application for enrolment through UAC (www.uac.edu.au).

3. Distance Education

The primary function of choosing an external course of study is to enable students to complete a tertiary course while minimising disruption to their lifestyle. It is also pertinent when there is a degree of family mobility and the course is offered away from the current residential location.

(a) University External Studies

Programs in selected areas are provided by most universities, with applications being made directly to the university before November each year.

Working with carefully prepared multimedia materials engenders independent learning and more effective time management. Renewing or adding to skills used in the workforce can be facilitated by courses that can be fitted in around work hours and do not require regular attendance at a university campus.

(b) OTEN (TAFE Distance Education)

The Open Training and Education Network (OTEN) offers distance education programs. The courses are delivered by a range of alternative media, such as printed lesson notes, satellite broadcasts, videos, audio cassettes and email.

Internet: www.oten.edu.au

(c) Open University Australia

Open University Australia offers university courses. The courses offered have no prerequisites and can lead to a degree from one of the participating institutions. Many of the units also feature ABC television programs, and these provide students with an excellent opportunity to experience tertiary education without leaving home.

Tel: (03) 9903 8955 for a free information brochure.



Alternative Entry to Tertiary Institutions

Adults (18+) wishing to complete secondary school and/or qualify for admission to tertiary institutions have several options.

1. Local High School

Mature age students may return to study at their local high school. Contact your nearest high school for information on enrolment procedures.

2. Senior Colleges

These colleges cater for students in Year 11 or 12 and offer a wide variety of courses – tertiary entrance subjects, career-oriented courses, pre-vocational programs and recreational courses. Most of these colleges are linked with colleges of TAFE.

3. Tertiary Preparation Certificate

TAFE colleges offer a Tertiary Preparation Certificate course for people returning to study. It is a flexible Year 12 equivalent course designed for people who wish to gain the range of skills and subject content necessary to succeed in tertiary study, and to gain entry to TAFE courses, including diplomas and to university.

4. Matriculation at TAFE NSW

TAFE NSW also offers a program of studies for the HSC and University Admission Index (UAI) by accumulating the HSC for up to a period of five years. The pattern of study can be designed to suit your needs – full-time, part-time or distance education – selecting from a broad range of modules.

5. Australian Preparation Studies for Tertiary Entrance

A number of institutions offer tertiary preparation courses. These are normally designed for applicants who have not completed Year 12. There is usually a minimum age requirement.

Most institutions consider the courses offered by other institutions for admission purposes. However, it is advisable to check which institutions consider which tertiary preparation courses.

6. Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT)

The Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT) is a series of related tests. These are designed to assess a range of competencies commonly considered important for success in tertiary study.

STAT is a nationally administered test, therefore, if applying to an interstate institution, the results of STAT NSW will be accepted by most other states.

The decision to use STAT is made by each institution. It is advisable to contact the university/TAFE to ascertain these requirements, as some tertiary institutions do not accept the STAT score.

Careers Information and Advice

Career counselling and careers advisers, who are based in each high school, provide information. Career Information Centres offer comprehensive career and study information. Staff provide assistance with career, education and training information. Please telephone your nearest centre for hours of opening.

Sydney	Tel: (02) 9209 1661
Newcastle	Tel: 1800 067 482
Wollongong	Tel: (02) 4251 4230

Adult and Community Courses

The Adult and Community Education (ACE) courses are open to all adults in NSW, regardless of age or previous education. Many people enrol to provide a foundation for further study at TAFE or university. ACE provides nationally endorsed training that helps adults enter the workforce or add to their existing work-related skills.

ACE courses are available through:

- Adult and Community Education (ACE) centres and colleges
- Workers Education Associations (WEAs)
- Neighbourhood houses and community centres

Internet: www.bace.nsw.gov.au



Parental Involvement in School Community – How you can help

All parents are encouraged to play an active part in their local school community. Depending on your skills, experience and personal interests, there are many different ways in which you can be involved in your child's education.

Classroom help is always welcomed and may include listening to children read, involvement with learning assistance programs, setting up activities or helping with electives. You may be surprised at the skills or activities you will be able to offer or assist with.

Excursions take children to interesting and informative places. Volunteers can enjoy these outings too, whilst assisting the teachers with the organisation and supervision of the children.

School camps are a common activity for many schools, and a good way to enjoy the less formal context of out-of-school learning.

Tuckshop/Canteen activities are part of the normal day-to-day life in most schools, and a great way to involve parents with preparation and serving of food, usually during school hours.

Fundraising at some time is a part of most school activities. This may include participating in auctions, barbeques, book fairs, t-shirt printing or lolly drives. Parents have the opportunity to contribute to this activity with new and exciting ideas.

Library assistance is usually welcomed by all resource centre staff. Covering, repairing, sorting and shelving books are ongoing tasks that are essential to ensure that children gain maximum access to borrowing resources.

Working bees are a great way to help beautify the surroundings of your school, and can involve the whole family in planting bulbs, paving, weeding or small maintenance jobs around that favourite playground.

Parents Associations. Most schools have associations which provide a forum for parents to have an input into the administration of the school. Parents and Citizens (P&C) or Parents and Friends (P&F) Associations are also a great way for Defence families to meet other families and become part of the local community. Contact your schools for meeting dates and times.

Contact your school to be involved. You will benefit from being an active participant, as will your child and the school community. Never underestimate your own contribution, because you have skills and attributes no-one else does. You also have a vested interest in your own family and their future.

Participate, and enjoy the benefits.

Assistance for Children with Special Needs

The Department of Education and Training provides a wide range of services and resources to support the educational needs of students with disabilities, students with learning difficulties and their teachers and parents.

These services assist students in regular classes in local schools, in support classes in regular schools, in special schools, hospitals and at home through distance education.

The Department is committed to the active involvement of parents and carers in all aspects of their child's education, the earliest possible intervention to prevent learning failure, and the provision of support to schools and teachers to assist them in delivering quality teaching and learning programs for students.

Students experiencing learning difficulties are not achieving at a level expected for their age and stage of development. Students may have difficulty learning and maintaining new skills and information. These difficulties may vary in cause, nature, intensity and duration.

Students with learning difficulties, their class teachers, schools and parents are assisted by support teachers (learning difficulties). Support teachers (reading) and support teachers (language) provide intensive programs for students with severe reading or language difficulties. Special Education Support Centres are also available to provide educational assessment, programming advice for parents and teachers and support for students with learning difficulties.

Students with behavioural difficulties present a management problem within their school and their behaviour is often unacceptable in the classroom and/or playground. Inappropriate behaviour frequently interferes with their learning and safety and the learning and safety of other students and staff.

The general principles governing enrolment apply to students with learning or behaviour difficulties. In addition to these general principles, there are particular criteria for enrolment of some students, including students with disabilities.

A disability results in a loss or reduction in ability to function day to day, caused by one or a combination of impairments, including intellectual disability, physical disability, vision impairment, learning impairment and psychological impairment.

Students with disabilities can be enrolled in regular classes with additional support, in a support class in a regular school or in a special school.

The decision on where to enrol a student with a disability, and with what level of support, will depend on a number of factors:

- the expressed desires of parents
- the learning support needs of the student
- the capacity of the Department of Education and Training to provide the level of support services required generally, and at a particular location, and the availability of support services at alternative locations.

The appraisal of the student's educational needs is the basis from which decisions are made. Appraisal is the process of identifying the student's educational achievements, future goals, parent expectations and the level and type of support needed to access an educational program.

Appraisal involves consideration of the student's learning support needs in areas such as curriculum, mobility, social skills, personal care and communication. It involves a detailed examination of the level of assistance required for the student to participate in all aspects of class and school programs and will include:

- any modification required to curriculum materials and teaching strategies
- the type and level of technology or support equipment required
- modifications required to buildings or facilities
- the need for special transport services.

After the appraisal process, a determination is made about the most appropriate option that meets the student's learning needs, identifies the resources available to support the enrolment, and arranges access to services as required. The principal of the school, if known, where the child is to be enrolled coordinates the appraisal process.

The above information relates to public education in New South Wales. The Catholic and private systems have other support strategies.

For specific information relating to your child, please contact the REDLO.

If your child has special needs, it is important to begin your planning as soon as practicable, and use the assistance measures and support groups available through Defence to ease your child's transition. After all, it is far better to have measures in place and find you do not need to use them, rather than arrive in the new locality unprepared.

Dependants with Special Needs (DWSN)

ADF members who have dependants with special needs (DWSN) attending a registered primary or secondary school full-time may be eligible for education-related assistance. This is detailed in the Pay and Conditions Manual (PACMAN) Volume 2, Chapter 8 parts 4 and 6, and has been mentioned previously in this booklet. However, Defence recognises that families who have a dependant with a recognised special need can face additional problems when it comes time to relocate. For this reason there is a policy that may assist families at this time.

Determination 2007/36 details this policy, explaining who is eligible, the recognition process, the special needs assistance, and other general conditions and provisions. Families who wish to be recognised or who wish to find out what is available under this instruction should read the instruction and contact their local DCO office.

Educational Aspects of Determination 2007/36

Aspects of the DWSN policy relate directly to educational issues and these are highlighted below:

- Families with school-aged children who have been recognised by Defence under the DWSN policy may be eligible for a special needs pre-posting visit. This visit, at Commonwealth expense, is to enable the family to plan adequately and organise educational arrangements for the child with special needs at the gaining locality where this cannot be done from the old locality and when it is necessary for the child with special needs to have direct contact with relevant education authorities/institutions. It should be pointed out that, in most instances, such pre-posting visits are not necessary, as appropriate placement of a special needs child can be achieved by the provision of all appropriate documentation well in advance to the relevant education authorities in the new locality. The services and advice of the REDLO can be accessed in order to achieve this placement.

- Financial assistance may be available to families with children requiring occupational therapy or speech therapy in the new locality where the state/territory enforces a waiting period. This assistance is a stop-gap provided until the state/territory system can assume responsibility. The eligibility for, and type of, support are aligned with the benchmark standard in the new state or territory.
- A member who has a child who is academically gifted and talented may apply to be recognised as DWSN under Determination 2007/36. The child must be assessed as academically gifted and talented by a psychologist with relevant qualifications and experience in the assessment of children, in that the child achieves a score at or above the 95th percentile on:
 - any individual or group IQ test, or
 - on a subscale (e.g. verbal or performance) of an individual IQ test or
 - on any standardised test of achievement.
- Other than a special needs pre-posting visit (SNPPV), the only assistance available under the Determination is assistance with the provision of housing in the locality of the child's education institution. The member is not eligible for either the payment or reimbursement by Defence of any fees associated with the education of the child.

Please read Determination 2007/36 and contact your local DCO office for further information about all aspects of this policy.



Resources

- The New South Wales Department of Education and Training (DET) has a very informative website: www.det.nsw.edu.au
You will be able to access information on the Department's policies on attendance, uniforms, discipline etc. There are also articles on how parents can assist their child's education, the different type and location of schools, the structure of the education system etc.
- The NSW Board of Studies has the responsibility for the curriculum taught in schools in this state. It is also responsible for the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate examinations and awards. For all syllabuses and further information about the Board go to www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au. There is also a site specialising in the primary curriculum at www.bosnsw-k6.nsw.edu.au
- The Universities Admission Centre site contains information about entry to university, the course available, and contact details for the various universities: www.uac.edu.au
- TAFE NSW will provide information on over 1200 courses at 130 locations across the state: www.tafensw.edu.au
- Other websites include:
 - Catholic Education Commission of NSW
Internet: www.cecnsw.catholic.edu.au
 - Association of Independent Schools
Internet: www.aisnsw.edu.au
 - Australian Anglican schools
Internet: www.aasn.edu.au
 - Uniting Church schools
Internet: www.nsw.uca.org.au/schools.htm
 - Christian Schools in NSW
Internet: www.christianschools.edu.au
 - Christian Parent Controlled schools
Internet: www.cpcs.edu.au

Publications available from your local DCO Office

Home is where the family is – a book to help parents assist their children to cope with important changes in their life, changing homes and changing schools. A very helpful book when Defence families are posted with young children.

Parenting at home and away – discusses how parents can learn to cope with being away from their children and how they can feel comfortable integrating back into family life. Particularly written for deployed Defence personnel who are parents.

Travelling teens: A parents' guide to family relocation – covers the issues that teenagers are likely to be grappling with at this stage of their life. This book provides expert advice on how to support teenagers during the process of moving, to make what is often a difficult situation into a positive experience.

Travelling teens Z-card – a great resource for teenagers with lots of tips to help make moving easier.

Defence Community Organisation brochures:

The Regional Education Liaison Officer – describes the services offered by the REDLO.

Changing Schools Checklist – contains hints to help your child change schools.

Education Assistance – outlines the financial assistance available under this scheme.

Choosing a Tutor – a guide to help select a tutor for a child.

This booklet contains information on the most requested issues about education in New South Wales. However, no booklet can address all the issues that may arise for Defence families. If you have any questions or issues relating to education and schooling in New South Wales, please do not hesitate to contact your REDLO

Tel: (02) 9377 3316

Email: redlo.nsw@defence.gov.au

▶ Notes