

## School Admissions Code of Practice

The revised School Admissions Code of Practice came into force on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2009. The Code applies to all maintained schools and academies in England.

The main points that apply to Service families are found in paragraphs 3.27-3.29. In summary, these state that local authorities and admission authorities must:

- a) ensure that the needs of Service children are taken into account;
- b) allocate a school place in advance if accompanied by an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended address if the applicant would meet the criteria on relocation;
- c) invite a service representative to join the Admission Forum where there are significant concentrations of such personnel; and
- d) accept a Unit postal address or, if appropriate, a "quartering area" address (the address of the closest house in the nearest "quartering area") for applications from service personnel in the absence of a new home postal address.

Admission authorities must not:

- a) Reserve places for blocks of Service children;
- b) Refuse a place to such a child because the family does not currently live in the local authority area.

In addition:

If a state boarding school is oversubscribed, highest priority for places must be given to children in care, followed by Service children. Children with a 'boarding need' must have the next highest priority, and this category includes children of Service personnel who have died while serving or who have been discharged as a result of an attributable injury (paras. 2.59-2.60).

All admission authorities are required to consult for a minimum of eight weeks on their admission arrangements. Parents and local groups with an interest in the local area must be consulted when admission authorities are setting their admission arrangements. (para.1.26).

Admission authorities must treat a Service family being posted to their area, or whose posting abroad comes to an end, as meeting the residency criteria for that catchment area even if no house is currently owned in that area once proof of the posting has been provided (para.2.44).

A copy of the Code can be downloaded at <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/sacode>