

# Navigating the British School System/NDSP Crash Course

YOU CAN NEVER BE TOO PREPARED

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# Overview

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- **Comparisons: Differences Between American and British Schools**
- **Different Types of Schools:**
  - **Primary School Education**
  - **Secondary School Education**
- **Different Types of Education Qualifications**
- **NDSP Orientation**

# UK Term Breaks and Holidays

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## □ Three Terms vs Two Semesters

- Autumn (Sept - Dec)
- Spring (Jan - Mar)
- Summer (April - July)
  - Different Names of Terms - can vary by school
  - Michael-Mass, Trinity, Lent

## □ Longer Breaks During School Year (half term and term breaks)/Shorter Summers

## □ UK Bank Holidays - NOT US Holidays

# Every Child is Different And So is Every School

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Most important things to remember:

- Every child is different
- Not every school, even the most popular or where Facebook said to go, is right for YOUR child and YOUR family
- Some schools offer extracurricular activities and certain classes that others do not
- Schools in the UK are different than the US
  - Words/phrases
  - Subjects compacted
  - Typical sports offered

If you have a question, don't be afraid to ask the school



# British School Terms That Are Different

## American Word

## British Word

Period

Study

Spelling, Punctuation, and Grammar

Eraser

Points

Grade

Graded

Mrs./Mr. \_\_\_\_\_

Quarter

Math

Test

Pre-K

Student

Sit an exam

Class

Parentheses

Full Stop

Revise

SPaG

Rubber

Marks

Year

Marked

Miss/Sir (no last name)

Term

Maths

Exam

Reception

Pupil

Take a test

Lesson

Brackets



# State Schools

Free to UK Residents Between 4 and 18 - Funded By Government  
All are inspected by Ofsted on a regular schedule

## Local School Authority

- Controlled by local council
- Not part of a business or religious group
- Largest number
- Must follow national curriculum
- Admissions through council website

## Academies

- Run by a governing body
- Independent from the local council, and control own admissions
- Allowed to follow their own curriculum

## Grammar Schools

- Run by the local council, a foundation body or a trust
  - Not every area offers grammar schools
- Select all or most of their pupils based on academic ability
- Usually an exam to get in
- Exam one year ahead
  - Often in summer term

# Private (Independent) Schools

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- Charge fees to attend instead of being funded by the government
- Control their own admissions process
  - Rolling admissions
  - Some require testing for entry
  - Almost all require a “taster day”, in which the potential pupil is observed in the school setting
- Do not have to follow the national curriculum
  - Must be registered with the government
- Inspected regularly
  - All school reports are published online by the organization responsible for inspecting them.
  - Half of all independent schools are inspected by Ofsted
  - The Independent Schools Inspectorate inspects schools that are members of the associations that form the Independent Schools Council

# Special Schools

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- Currently, about two per cent of school-age children attend a special school, and the vast majority have a statement or EHC plan. Children who are educated in special schools have been identified as having a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.
- Special schools can specialize in 1 of the 4 areas of special educational needs:
  - communication and interaction
  - cognition and learning
  - social, emotional and mental health
  - sensory and physical needs
- Schools can further specialize within these categories to reflect the special needs they help with -- for example Autistic spectrum disorders, visual impairment, or speech, language and communication needs



# Sports Offered

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## Summer and Winter Sports

- Rugby
- Field Hockey
- Football
- Netball
- Cricket
- Rounders
- Athletics
- Tennis
- Lacrosse
- Swimming
- Basketball and Track be
- more popular



## Extracurricular Programs/Clubs

- Badminton
- Street Dance
- Table Tennis
- Strength and Conditioning
- Dance (Ballet and tap)
- Choir
- Band
- Archery
- Horseback Riding
- Origami
- Wall Climbing
- Swimming

# Charters (Buses)

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- ▶ **Make sure the school you choose has a charter route from your town to the school**
  - ▶ Private schools often revise routes annually based on attendance
  - ▶ Drop-off and Pick-up by parents allowed
  - ▶ Dark Early in winter months, weather - Keep this in mind
  - ▶ Sidewalks not always available
- ▶ **Transportation can be covered by NDSP**
  - ▶ Must be more than a mile from school to drop-off/pick-up location
    - ▶ If available - bus transportation is directed
    - ▶ POV reimbursement and private hire possible if bus transportation unavailable
- ▶ **Away-from-Post students (Boarding in US for example): Transportation is funded from duty station to school at beginning of year and school to duty station at end of school year only**
- ▶ **State School Students Catchment Zones**
  - ▶ Classroom Availability



# Uniforms and Lunches

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## Uniforms

- ▶ Not paid for by NDSP
- ▶ Most schools do not include uniforms in tuition price
- ▶ Can run anywhere from £200-£500 (Private/Independent Schools tend to be more expensive than State Schools)
  - ▶ Second hand uniforms OK
  - ▶ Many schools have second hand shops - inquire at the school
  - ▶ MFRC and State Dept have uniform closets



## Lunches

- ▶ Not paid for by NDSP
  - ▶ Can run from a few pounds a meal or less to £200/term
- ▶ Many schools include lunches in tuition price - NDSP will pull out this cost
- ▶ Much different than US Cafeteria lunches

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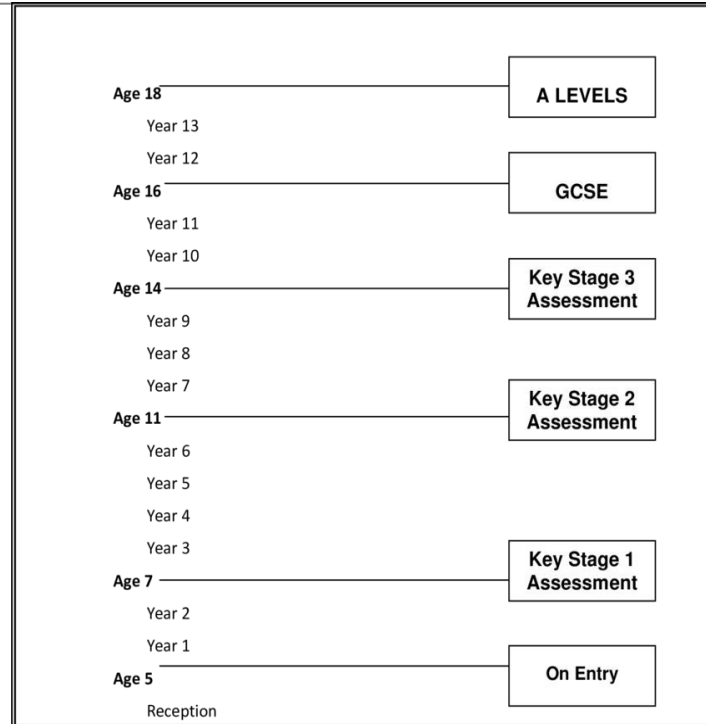


# Common Differences

- **Pre-K called Reception**
  - Starts at age 4
  - Student will start the year they are 4 on 31 August
- **Children will be reading and writing by the time they hit Year 1** (Kindergarten)
  - Many schools teach cursive
- **Year you enter determined more by age than in the US**
  - Age 4 □ Reception
  - Ages 5-10 □ Primary (Years 1-6)
  - Ages 11-18 □ Secondary (with 16-18 being A-Levels, IB, etc...)
- **Teach basic skills**
- **No specific grading system nationwide**

Year in England	Age of student	Grade in the US
Nursery	3-4	Preschool
Reception	4-5	Preschool
Year 1	5-6	Kindergarten
Year 2	6-7	Grade 1
Year 3	7-8	Grade 2
Year 4	8-9	Grade 3
Year 5	9-10	Grade 4
Year 6	10-11	Grade 5
Year 7	11-12	Grade 6
Year 8	12-13	Grade 7
Year 9	13-14	Grade 8
Year 10	14-15	Grade 9
Year 11	15-16	Grade 10
Year 12	16-17	Grade 11
Year 13	17-18	Grade 12

# Key Stages



# Grading In Key Stages

## What Are SATs?

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### Standardized Assessment Tests

### HOW SATS ARE MARKED (GRADED)

- **Key Stage 1**
  - Score below 100 means that your child is currently working below the expected standard
  - Score above 100 means that your child is working at a level higher than is expected of them at their age
  - Maximum score is 115
  - Minimum score is 85
  - Papers marked internally
- **Key Stage 2**
  - Since 2016, children have been given scaled SATs scores (and notice on whether or not they have reached the national standard)
  - Your child's raw score (the actual number of marks ((points)) they achieved will be converted to a scaled score
  - Papers are marked externally
  - Letters you may see on your child's report card
    - AS: Expected standard achieved
    - NS: Not achieved
    - B: Child is working below level expected
    - M: Child missed the test
    - A: Child was absent for one or more of the SAT's papers

# Grading In Key Stages

## Progress Reports

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You may hear a teacher explain your child's progress like this:

- Working within the expected level of attainment for his/her age
- Working towards the expected level of attainment
- Working below the expected level of attainment
- Working beyond the expected level of attainment (at greater depth)
- Bear in mind, however, that it is up to individual schools to decide how they assess pupils' progress.



# For Your Information

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- **Transportation and Primary Schools (Current 3/23)**
  - **Schools with bus service to RAF Croughton Main Gate**
    - **Akeley Wood**
    - **Kingham Hill School**
    - **Carrdus**
    - **\*\*Thornton College offers door to door service**
- **Before and After or Wraparound Care**
  - **Often a separate charge for extra care – not NDSP authorized expense**

# Secondary School Education

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- **Different types of education qualifications**
  - **GCSE – General Certificate of Secondary Education**
    - GCSE Grading Scale
    - A-Level
- **BTEC, CTECH & IB**

# Different Types of Education Qualification Prior to University

## GCSE - Key Stage 4 (Years 10-11)

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- A General Certificate of Secondary Education is, as of September 2017, graded on a 1 - 9 scale, with a 9 being the highest possible achievement and 1 being the lowest. Those who fail to achieve the minimum standard required for a grade 1 in a GCSE subject will receive a 'U' (unclassified), and a GCSE will not be awarded to them in that subject
- A 9 is considered exceptional and, statistically, only awarded to the top 3% of the population
- However, "9-1" exams were first taken from 2017 for English Literature, English Language and Mathematics
- Schools normally expect students to achieve a minimum of six GCSEs, including maths and English, at grades 9 to 5 (or grade equivalent). Students should achieve a grade 5/6 or above in those subjects they wish to take at A Level (and a grade 6/7, if studying maths and the sciences)

The logo for GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) is displayed in a stylized, multi-colored font. The letters are G (red), C (green), S (blue), and E (yellow), with a slight 3D effect and shadow.

# GCSE Grading Scale Explained

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## GCSE A\*-G/1-9 Equivalent

New GCSE Grades	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Old GCSE Grades	F/G	E	D	Bottom 2 thirds C	Bottom third B Top third C	B Top 2 thirds	A	A*	A* Top 20% Grade A and above

# Different Types of Education Qualification Prior to University

## A-Level - Key Stage 5 (Years 12-13)

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- Remember! College = 6<sup>th</sup> Form (A-Level) & University = US College
- General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced Level, or A Level, is a secondary school leaving qualification in the United Kingdom
- A Levels require studying an offered A level subject over a two-year period and sitting for an examination at the end of each year (A1 and A2, respectively)
- Most students study three A level subjects simultaneously during the two post-16 years (ages 16–18)
- A Levels are recognized by many universities as the standard for assessing the suitability of applicants for admission in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, and many such universities partly base their admissions offers on a student's predicted A-level grades, with the majority of these offers conditional on achieving a minimum set of final grades
- IB Programs
- UCAS applications (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service )
- Applying to universities in the US

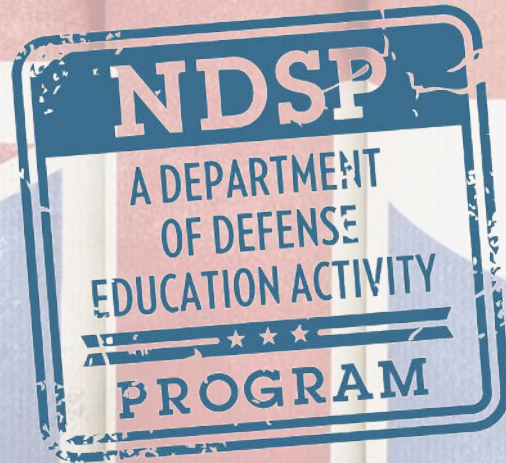
# ACT/SAT/AP Talk

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- ACT/SAT ideally should be taken after spring term of the child's junior year of US high school (UK Year 12) and before October of Year 13
- See College Board website for testing locations
- RAF Alconbury/Lakenheath & ACT/SAT (must be coordinated with DoDEA)
- Kingham Hill School - SAT /AP test site
- If you have a child in US high school years  
See your base school liaison for:
  - Admissions (university, tech school, etc.)
  - Scholarships
  - Testing
  - Upcoming US college fairs



# NDSP Orientation



# What is NDSP?

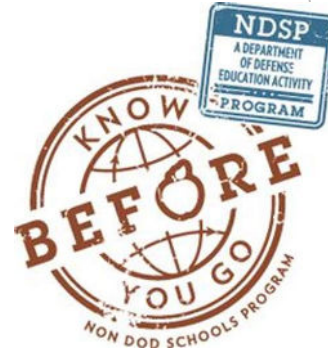
- ▶ **Non-DoD Schools Program** - covers the entire 422d Air Base Group
- ▶ **Funding for dependents at a base without a Department of Defense Dependent School (DoDDS)**
- ▶ **How does it work?**
  - ▶ **Authority**
    - ▶ Title 20 of the United States Code, Section 926 (b)
    - ▶ DoDEA Administrative Instruction 5035.01
    - ▶ U.S. Department of State Standardized Regulations (DSSR), Section 270, Educational Allowance
- ▶ **Educational Options**
  - ▶ Private/Independent School
  - ▶ State School
  - ▶ Homeschooling / Virtual Schools
- ▶ **Expenses (<https://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/generalinformation/expenses/index.cfm>)**
  - ▶ Allowable/Non-allowable
  - ▶ Educational Allowance Amounts



# How to Register for NDSP

## **Private** Brick and Mortar School

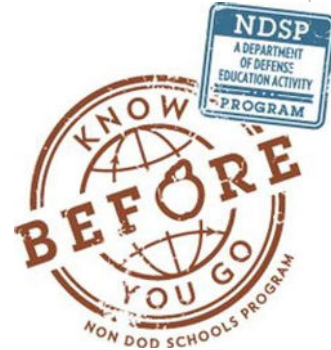
- ▶ View NDSP Orientation at <https://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/ndspOrientation.cfm>
- ▶ Apply for NDSP at <https://registration.dodea.edu/ndsp>
- ▶ Start visiting local schools – contact school admissions
  - ▶ Open Days
  - ▶ Personal Tours
- ▶ Once you choose a school, update NDSP on Sponsor Portal
- ▶ Enroll at the school
  - ▶ If you've already paid registration fee, file a reimbursement claim with NDSP



# How to Register for NDSP

## State Brick and Mortar School

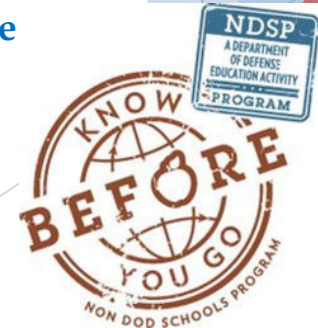
- ▶ View NDSP Orientation at <https://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/ndspOrientation.cfm>
- ▶ Apply for NDSP at <https://registration.dodea.edu/ndsp>
- ▶ Apply through county council for your Post Code
  - ▶ Must have signed lease or government housing assigned
- ▶ Once you choose a school, update NDSP Sponsor Portal
- ▶ Enroll at the school



# How to Register for NDSP

## Home Study

- ▶ View NDSP Orientation at <https://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/ndspOrientation.cfm>
- ▶ Apply for NDSP at <https://registration.dodea.edu/ndsp>
- ▶ Decide on a curriculum, online school/courses, or a blended approach
- ▶ Once you choose, submit Home Study Education Plan in portal
  - ▶ NDSP will provide you with the Education Plan to fill out when you register with NDSP through the Student Online Portal
- ▶ File a Home Study Reimbursement Claim form for any expenses that are allowable up to your annual education allowance



# Allowable Expenses and Non-Allowable Expenses

- ▶ The following slides are examples of allowable and non-allowable expenses for both in person schooling and virtual/home study programs. For a complete and current list please visit the NDSP website

# Allowable Expenses

## ▶ One Time Fees

1. Application, Admission/Registration/Enrollment,
2. Entrance Exam/Evaluation/Assessment

## ▶ Annual Fees

1. Technology fees charged by the school, provided the fee does not include the ownership (lease to own or purchase) of any devices, especially personal, computing devices
2. Laboratory
3. Fees for group-instruction activities such as music, art, and physical education; if these fees are included in courses regularly offered in the curriculum of the school and included as part of the publically advertised rates
4. Costs or fees for course-required or end-of-year examinations/tests, consistent with U.S. public school requirements
5. Musical instrument rental fee required for course as part of school curriculum

## ▶ Tuition and Education Resources

1. Textbooks
2. Transcript Conversion

## ▶ Pre-Approved Supplemental Instruction

1. Gifted Education. The school does not offer a gifted or equivalent program and additional support is in academic content only.
2. Academic Support. The school requires additional instruction to enable the child to:
  1. Enter a grade, remain in the same grade, complete a grade; or,
  2. Successfully complete an academic course in order to progress to the next level in the sequence of courses.
3. Supplemental Coursework

# Non-Allowable Expenses

- ▶ School meals
- ▶ School Uniforms
- ▶ Elective courses for dancing, horseback riding, sports or other specialized instruction
- ▶ Field trips/school excursions/camps/ regardless of whether the trips are predominately academic in nature or if participation is mandatory or voluntary
- ▶ After school activities
- ▶ Personal devices including, but not limited to, computing devices, internet, personal telephone, satellite or communications
- ▶ Magazine or newspaper subscriptions
- ▶ Admission to school events
- ▶ Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT); American College Testing (ACT); and Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT)
- ▶ Fees for locker or towels
- ▶ Fees for museums, culture events, or performances
- ▶ Fees for graduation, yearbooks, parent-school organizations
- ▶ Fees for before and after school care

# Home Study Allowable

## Home-Based Education Option

- ▶ Tuition charges from a direct education/instructional provider associated with the educational program.
- ▶ Home school curriculum and supplemental materials on a grade/age-appropriate basis
- ▶ Supplies which are normally provided free of charge in U.S. public schools
- ▶ Shipping costs or lesson postage associated with the educational program
- ▶ Fees charged for access to libraries, recreation facilities or education-related curriculum activities.
- ▶ Group lessons already established in the community
- ▶ Grades K-8: 60 minutes a week for each content area for physical education (PE), music and art
- ▶ Grades 9-12: 4 hours per week for each content area for PE, music and art
- ▶ Fees charged for participation on athletic or extra-curricular teams which are normally free of charge in U.S. public schools
- ▶ Fees for curriculum related internet services such as study program, library services, or supplemental distance learning courses
- ▶ Fees for the rental of curriculum-related equipment such as musical instruments which would normally be provided free of charge in U.S. public schools
- ▶ Fees for required testing materials and shipping costs by the authorized program.
- ▶ Instructional curriculum guides

# Expenses

## Virtual Education

- ▶ Tuition charges from a direct education/instructional provider associated with the educational program.
- ▶ Group lessons already established in the community
- ▶ Fees charged for participation on athletic or extra-curricular teams which are normally free of charge in U.S. public schools.
- ▶ Fees charged for participation on athletic or extra-curricular teams which are normally free of charge in U.S. public schools.
- ▶ Fees for curriculum related internet services such as study program, library services or supplemental distance learning courses.
- ▶ Fees for the rental of curriculum-related equipment such as musical instruments which would normally be provided free of charge in U.S. public schools.
- ▶ Fees for required testing materials, shipping costs by the authorized program.
- ▶ Shipping costs or lesson postage

# Home Study Non-Allowable Expenses

- ▶ Purchase of items which have broader use than the course of study such as computer equipment/accessories, telescopes, furniture/furnishings and other items not ordinarily provided free of charge by U.S. public schools.
- ▶ Training for parents in home study
- ▶ Field trips/school excursions/athletic events regardless of whether the trips are predominantly academic in nature or if participation is mandatory or voluntary
- ▶ Any form of compensation to the parent (nanny/childcare or supervisory costs)
- ▶ Travel or transportation costs
- ▶ Personal services including, but not limited to, telephone, internet, satellite, cable or other communication services
- ▶ Fees for museums, culture events, or performances
- ▶ SAT/ACT/PSAT associated costs
- ▶ Private lessons (core or elective subjects)
- ▶ Membership in gymnasiums, cultural clubs, spas or other private clubs
- ▶ Supplies that are normally purchased by parents (pens, papers, markers, pencils)
- ▶ Non-course specific materials, such as software programs, reading materials, and reference materials
- ▶ Religious materials for instruction, unless religion is a subset of the instruction.
- ▶ Transfer Fees charged by bank
- ▶ Third party service provider fees (umbrella school/cover schools not providing direct instruction, course, or accredited virtual education)
- ▶ Supplemental instruction



# NDSP Reimbursement

- ▶ When completing a personal reimbursement claim, use the exchange rate on the day of service or the date the invoice was paid.
  - ▶ Personal reimbursements will be electronically paid in dollars only using the bank information on file with the Defense Finance and Accounting Services (DFAS) you provide during registration.
  - ▶ If needed, use the [Oanda website](#) for the currency conversion rate.
- ▶ When submitting authorized expenses through e-mail, please include UK or United Kingdom in the subject line.
- ▶ Allow 30 to 35 business days for processing and payment to appear in your account
- ▶ Items needed for reimbursement:
  - ▶ Invoice
  - ▶ Receipt of payment
  - ▶ Completely Sponsor Claim Form

# Questions

