

Defence School Transition Aide

The DSTA (Defence School Transition Aide) Program provides support to children of ADF (Australian Defence Force) members and their families, particularly during their transition into and out of a school on posting or during parental absences due to deployment, exercises or courses.

Defence School Transition Aides are funded by the Department of Defence through DCO (Defence Community Organisation). They are employed as a member of the school staff by respective schools or education systems within each State or Territory. Listed below is a description of some of the activities our DSTA organises for our Defence Families.

Defence Kids Club

The Defence Kids Club is held every Wednesday at lunch time and provides students from Defence Families a place where they can meet and enjoy a fun activity together along with the DSTA. Children enjoy a variety of different activities, including art, craft, games, quizzes and LOTS OF FUN! If you feel your child could benefit from attending the Defence Kids Club please encourage them to come along!



Defence Spouse Morning Tea

The DSTA hosts a Defence Spouse Morning Tea once a Term. The Morning Tea provides spouses an opportunity to meet with the DSTA, as well as other Defence Spouses, in a relaxed, friendly environment. The Morning Tea can be a great source of information for new families and a fantastic opportunity to make new friends.



Parental absence from home support

The DSTA works closely with students who are experiencing parental absence from home due to service requirements. The DSTA assists students to keep in contact with their absent parent via family newsletters. Students will meet with the DSTA on a regular basis to monitor personal issues such as friendship, peer groups and classroom difficulties. The DSTA assists families with the countdown to them being reunited and also helps children during the exciting time of welcoming their serving parent home. It is recommended that parents advise the school of member absences from home due to deployment, exercises or extended courses.



The Education Assistance Scheme (EAS)

The EAS is aimed at minimising the disruption to a child's schooling, caused as a result of a Defence posting. Reimbursement may be provided for tuition for primary and secondary children within the first 18 months of enrolment at the new school. The entitlement is 14 weeks at 1 hour per week per subject. This scheme can be of great benefit to your child. The DSTA actively promotes the EAS to our teaching staff and our Defence Families and encourages all entitled students to take advantage of the scheme.

Campus Newsletter

The DSTA regularly contributes items of interest to our Campus Newsletter. This informs our Defence Families of DSTA activities, whilst also raising awareness within the school community, of the challenges our Defence families can face.

Parent Acquaintance Evening

Our school hosts a parent acquaintance evening at the beginning of each school year. The DSTA is available to meet with parents/caregivers to discuss the DSTA role and how it can be used to best support your Defence family.



Commemorative Assemblies

Our school is passionate about educating its students on the importance of commemorative occasions. Our DSTA works together, primarily with students from Defence Families to plan, organise and present our Anzac Day and Remembrance Day Assemblies. In 2013 our school will commemorate Remembrance Day with all of our students participating in the recreating of a "Field of Poppies". This will be a visually moving tribute to our past and currently serving members of our Defence Services. The DSTA also organises visits from Educational Officers to help further educate our student body on the sacrifices made by our Australian Defence service men and women.



Welcome and Farewell

Our DSTA works closely with newly enrolled Defence students, encouraging them in their day to day friendships and schooling activities. New students are introduced to the DSTA within their first week of school (second week for new reception students) and are presented with a 'Welcome Pack'. Students are also paired up with a 'buddy', who will assist them to quickly develop a sense of belonging in our school community. To support your child's transition into their new school, the DSTA can arrange for a 'Pen Pal' to correspond with your child during the short period before their move. A 'Pen Pal' can help to make a child feel less anxious and more positive about their relocation. Families who are enrolling their children from interstate are welcome to contact the DSTA through the front office to request a 'Pen Pal' for their child. Departing students will be issued with a Defence School Passport, a valuable resource which assists families to keep a record of the schools their child/ren have attended throughout their education. Importantly, they will also receive a 'Farewell Pack' with a space to list their school friends and contact details, so they can keep in touch.



Other Information

Our school has a large number of students from Defence Families; because of this, these students are often invited to take part in specially tailored programs which are made available to them. Over the past year, the Defence Community Organisation (DCO) has worked together with our school to provide our student's access to the four week KidSMART Deployment Program which was held on site and facilitated by a visiting DCO Social Worker. Students were also invited to attend the extremely successful Optimistic Kids Program, which involved our students from Defence families travelling to Adelaide Football Club to engage in a fun day of resilience building while also enjoying a tour of the Clubs' state of the art facilities and a special lunch in the Club's Bistro. These programs were offered to our students free of charge and provided opportunities for them to identify their strengths and become more resilient.



We warmly welcome Defence Families to our school and strive to work together with them to make their relocation and posting to Adelaide's Northern Suburbs a successful and enjoyable one. If you require any further information in regards to our DSTA Program, please contact our DSTA, on 08 8284 3065.
