

POLICY

Home education

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1 POLICY

The Northern Territory Government supports a parent's right to choose an educational environment that suits their child. Some parents choose to educate their children at home for a variety of reasons.

The Department of Education and Training (DET) and Northern Territory Government considers that the optimum learning environment for children is through enrolment and attendance at a school, unless there are particular circumstances to warrant home education.

Parents who wish to home educate children of compulsory school age must ensure that, prior to home education commencing, approval is received through DET. Approval applies for a calendar year unless otherwise specified and parents are required to reapply each year.

2 BUSINESS NEED

A parent of a child of compulsory school age who proposes to provide home education for the child must, before providing home education apply to the Chief Executive for approval to home educate and provide the Chief Executive with details of the proposed home education.

To determine whether the proposed home education is suitable, the Chief Executive may direct a departmental officer to enquire into the proposal and give a report about the proposed education.

If the Chief Executive is satisfied that the home education proposed for a child is suitable, the Chief Executive may approve the home education.

3 DELEGATION

The Chief Executive's powers in respect of the provisions of Section 20E of the Northern Territory *Education Act* (the Act) have been formally delegated to the Managers of Regional Operations.

4 SCOPE

This policy applies to home education in accordance with Section 20A of the Act. Section 20A of the Act outlines the compulsory enrolment requirements for the Northern Territory. Section 20(4)(b) of the Act provides that where a child is enrolled in a school in another state or territory and receiving education or training that, if provided in the Northern Territory, would comply with the requirements of Part 4 of the Act, they are not required to register for home education in the Northern Territory e.g. a child enrolled in a distance learning school registered in another State or Territory.

5 GUIDELINES

Detailed guidelines and processes are provided in the Home Education Guidelines.

6 RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents

Parents are responsible for:

- meeting the compulsory schooling obligation by seeking approval to home educate their child
- providing and delivering suitable curriculum, resources and facilities for their child
- complying with the conditions of approval by providing their child with the education that is detailed in the application
- complying with the annual home visit to be undertaken by principal or delegated departmental officer
- ensuring that a portfolio of their children's work samples is available to be viewed by the principal or delegated departmental officer
- advising School Operations if the child is re-enrolled in a school
- advising School Operations if there are changes to their contact details.

School Operations

This area is responsible for:

- providing assistance and support to families to comply with legislative procedures should they wish to home educate
- coordinating the approval process
- maintaining a database of approved students undertaking home education.

Regional Curriculum Manager

Regional Curriculum Managers are responsible for:

- assessment of the proposed curriculum in each application
- providing recommendations based on the assessment.

Principal/delegated departmental officer

Principals/delegated departmental officers are responsible for:

- conducting an annual home visit and submitting a report to School Operations to establish that provision has been made for the child's education by providing a suitable work area, curriculum and facilities
- providing curriculum advice to the family at the home visit if required.

Manager Regional Operations

Managers of Regional Operations are responsible for:

- Final approval of home education applications, based on the initial application, advice from the Regional Curriculum Manager and principal/delegated departmental officer report.

Executive Director Schools

Executive Directors Schools are responsible for:

- Reviewing home education applications if a parent seeks a review of the Manager Regional Operations determination.

7 DEFINITIONS

School: a school or institution at which any person or body of persons provides, or offers to provide, courses of instruction substantially in preschool, primary or secondary education.

Parent: includes the person who has actual custody of a child and/or the person with whom a child resides.

Interim approval: is granted once a home education application has been received and is deemed to be completed adequately. Interim approval is valid for the duration of the approval process.

Final approval: for home education for a calendar year may be granted by the relevant Manager Regional Operations. The approval will be based on recommendations by the Regional Curriculum Manager and the principal/delegated departmental officer who conducted the home visit. Final approval is the authority for home education and if this is not granted following interim approval then the child must be enrolled at and attend a school.

Home visit: an annual home visit by a local principal/delegated departmental officer must be undertaken as part of the home education application process. The principal/delegated departmental officer must complete a written report based on the home visit for submission to School Operations.

Compulsory school age: is the age of six until the minimum school leaving age.

Minimum school leaving age: is the age at which a child completes Year 10 of secondary education or the age of 17 years, whichever comes sooner. However, a child will still be of compulsory school age until age 17 even though they have completed Year 10 unless they are participating as required in one or more eligible options for a total of 25 hours per week or more.

Eligible options: include participating full-time (25 hours per week) in further education, approved training courses or employment, or a combination of those.

8 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Northern Territory *Education Act*

DET Enrolment/Priority Enrolment Policy

Forms: home education application form.