

# GUIDELINES

## HOME EDUCATION

**Responsibility of:** School Support Services  
**Effective date:** December 2013  
**Next review date:** December 2015  
**Target audience:** School Staff/Parents/Community

**DoE File:** 2014/131  
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**VERSION NUMBER:** 1.0

This document should be read in conjunction with the Home Education Policy.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

These guidelines outline the procedures to be followed by parents who wish to home educate their children and should be read in conjunction with the Home Education policy.

Home education is usually delivered in a child's home by a parent or guardian. Home education requires that parents accept responsibility for developing, implementing and evaluating their child's learning program.

Relevant documentation must be submitted and approved prior to education taking place. Children must remain enrolled at and attend a government or non-government school until interim approval is granted.

### 2. GUIDELINES

#### **Step 1**

Parent/s complete an application form for each child.

Applications should be addressed to:

Project Officer  
School Education  
Department of Education  
GPO Box 4821  
DARWIN NT 0801  
Email: [homeeducation.det@nt.gov.au](mailto:homeeducation.det@nt.gov.au)

#### **Step 2 (~ 1 week)**

On receipt of the completed application form, interim approval for home education may be granted. Parent/s will be notified in writing if interim approval is granted. If interim approval is not granted, parent/s will be requested to provide further information.

#### **Step 3 (up to 4 weeks)**

Once interim approval is granted, the application is assessed by School Support Services. Assessment of the proposed curriculum is necessary to ensure that key learning areas are covered.

**Step 4 (up to 4 weeks)**

If School Support Services finds the curriculum to be suitable, a principal/delegated departmental officer will conduct a home visit. If School Support Services finds the curriculum to be not suitable, parent/s will be contacted and required to provide further information.

**Step 5 (~1 week)**

Following the home visit, the principal/delegated departmental officer will send a written report based on their assessment of the home education to the project officer. The project officer will prepare a memorandum to the Executive Director to make a determination.

**Step 6**

Parent/s will be notified in writing of the Executive Director's determination.

**Step 7**

If final approval is granted, parent/s continue to home educate until the end of the year. The approval process commences again for the following year and parent/s are required to submit a new home education application.

Parent/s must enroll their child in a school immediately if final approval is not granted. An applicant, who feels aggrieved by a determination not to approve an application, may apply to the Executive Director Schools to review that determination by a request in writing within 30 days of notification. The applicant must clearly outline the grounds on which they consider the decision should be reviewed.

### **3. HOME VISITS**

One of the pre-conditions for approval of home education by the Executive Director is provision for a home visit to ensure that a suitable environment is provided for the child's education, along with adequate facilities and resources. A school principal/delegated departmental officer will carry out the visit.

During the home visit, the principal/delegated departmental officer will assess:

- the proposed educational program/curriculum
- how the child's learning needs are catered for
- the proposed method for recording learning experiences, progress and achievement
- the time intended to be allocated to student learning
- the suitability of the learning environment for effective home education
- the adequacy and availability of resources to support the educational program
- samples of the child's work
- social interaction development planning.

The principal/delegated departmental officer will provide a written report to the Project Officer based on their assessment of the home education. The project officer will then put forward a recommendation to the Executive Director who will make a determination in respect of annual approval and the applicant will be notified accordingly.

## 4. HOME EDUCATION PORTFOLIO

A portfolio of appropriate work samples from the previous year for each child's work will be reviewed during the home visit. This portfolio needs to contain dated and annotated samples of work, which show the progress and achievement for each subject level (e.g. whether the work is independent and unaided, negotiated, copied or is the culmination of a task). Of particular interest are samples showing progress and achievement in literacy and numeracy.

The samples should be collected by parents at the end of each term so that a progression of work can be demonstrated. It is important that all the samples are dated and some relevant observations are included about the way the child was working, for example the time taken to complete tasks, the level of involvement with new processes, the ease of understanding of complex tasks.

For families initially commencing home education, a portfolio of work samples will not need to be reviewed. However, it is expected that recent school reports/other necessary assessment material from the child's previous school will be available for review.

## 5. PROPOSED CURRICULUM

The parent is responsible for providing documentation of a program which, in the opinion of School Support Services and the Executive Director, will provide adequately for the academic, social, emotional and physical development of the child. When formulating the program, the curriculum shall:

- have regard for the age, ability, aptitude and development of the child concerned;
- take account and provide continuity of the learning experiences of the child concerned;
- be responsive to the changing needs of the child concerned and reflect current understandings related to the educational and other development of children; and
- emphasise the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills.

Parents are not required to use the Australian Curriculum and the Northern Territory Curriculum Framework, however these are highly recommended resources. The eight key learning areas listed below are recognised under the Australian Curriculum and Northern Territory Curriculum Framework. The key learning areas form the broad requirements for home education curriculum. The method of delivery will be at the discretion of parents, based on the needs of the child. While parents are responsible for ensuring that the eight key learning areas, taken as a whole, are substantially addressed, this does not mean that instruction in each key learning area must occur every year.

The Australian Curriculum and Northern Territory Curriculum Framework consist of eight key learning areas which include:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- History
- Studies of Society and Environment
- Health and Physical Education
- Technology and Design (problem-solving, designing, producing and appraising)
- The Arts (visual and performing).

## 6. CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS

Have you:

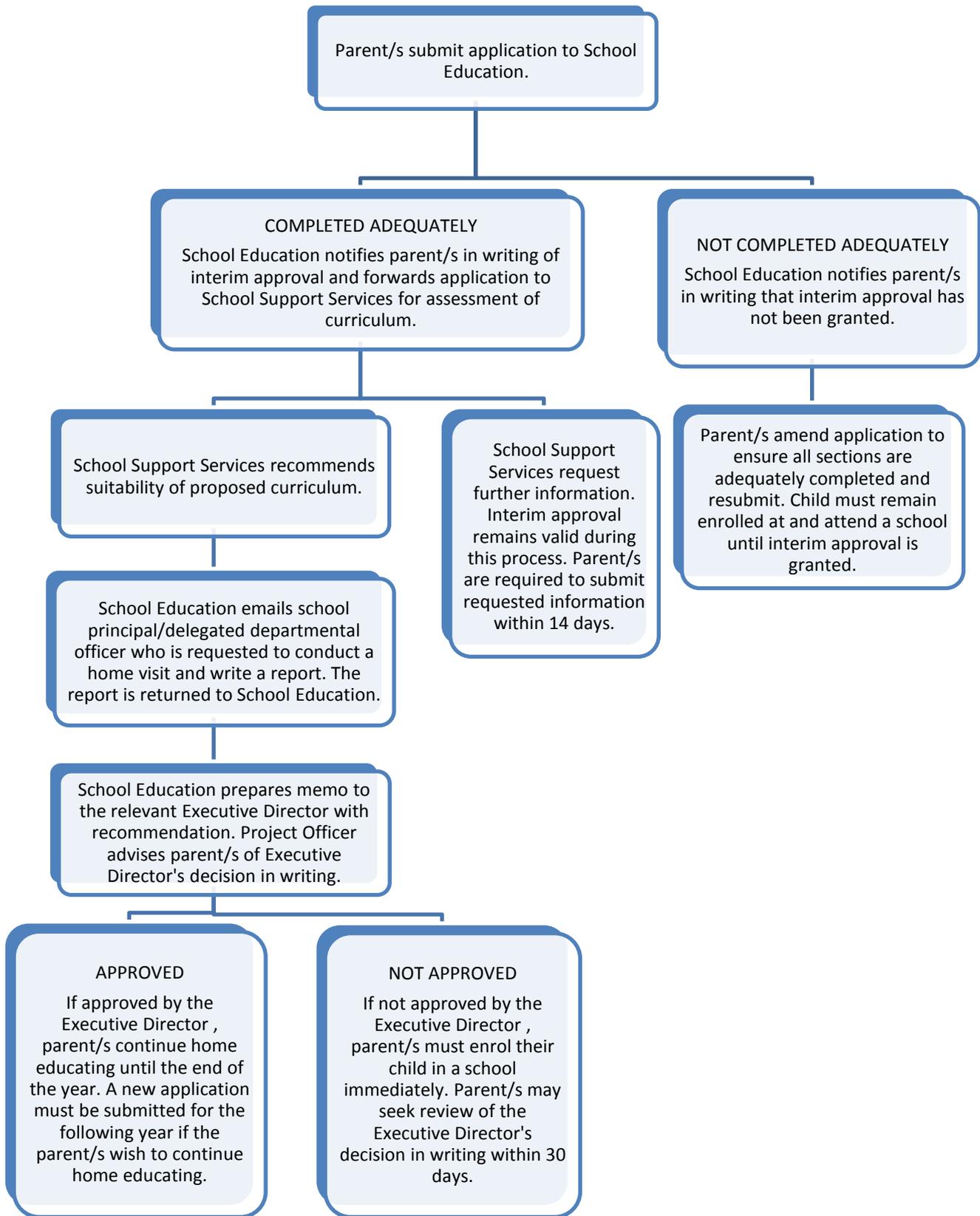
- a) Written a plan or outline of the educational program you intend to teach your child?
- b) Planned a method for recording learning activities completed by your child?
- c) Planned a method for recording achievement and progress in each area of study?
- d) Arranged sufficient access to resources and facilities to support the learning program?
- e) Found a suitable area for educational purposes taking into consideration light, ventilation and space?

## 7. NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM LITERACY AND NUMERACY (NAPLAN)

If parents wish to compare their child's progress in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 with the National Literacy and Numeracy Benchmarks, they can participate in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). There is a section on the home education application form to indicate whether parents wish for their children to participate in NAPLAN testing. If participating, School Support Services will send information and test materials to parents during the year.

Further information on NAPLAN is available on the DoE website.

## 8. HOME EDUCATION PROCEDURES



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q. In the Northern Territory (NT), is home education the same as distance education?**

A. No. Home education in the NT is usually delivered in the home by either a parent or guardian who is responsible for planning, implementing and assessing the learning program. Distance education is where a child is enrolled in a school registered in the NT or another State or Territory where the education program is delivered through correspondence methods such as mail, email, telephone and/or other electronic correspondence. The educational program is developed, delivered and evaluated by the distance education school.

**Q. What if my child is enrolled in an interstate distance education facility?**

A. Where a child is enrolled in a school or distance learning school registered in another State or Territory and receiving education or training that, if provided in the NT, would comply with the requirements of the Northern Territory *Education Act*, they are not required to register for home education in the NT.

**Q. Can my child be approved for part-time home education and enrolment in school?**

A. No. Part-time school enrolment and part-time home education is not a legal option in the NT.

**Q. Do I need formal teacher training or teaching experience to be a home educator?**

A. Parents do not need formal teacher training or teaching experience to be home educators. However, a capacity to plan and provide for the educational needs of the child must be demonstrated.

**Q. How and when do I apply for home education approval?**

A. You must complete the application form and provide information and documentation to support the application. If applying at the beginning of the school year, you are advised to submit your application well before the school year commences. If applying mid-year, your child must remain enrolled at and attend a government or non-government school until interim approval is granted.

**Q. Do I have to provide a plan of the curriculum to be used?**

A. Yes. You will be responsible for providing documentation of a program which, in the opinion of School Support Services and the Executive Director Schools, will provide adequately for the academic, social, emotional and physical development of the child.

**Q. When does my child have to be taught?**

A. You must outline the period of time your child is to receive instruction on each school day and the number of school days planned in each year. Schools generally operate for 5 hours and 20 minutes instruction time per day and approximately 40 weeks per year.

**Q. Who will notify me whether I am successful in my application for approval for home education?**

A. The Executive Director Schools will make a determination on your application and School Education will convey to you the Executive Director's decision in writing.

- Q. May I request a review of my application if it has been unsuccessful?**  
A. Yes. An applicant who feels aggrieved by a determination not to approve an application, may apply to the Executive Director Schools to review that determination by a request in writing within 30 days of notification. The applicant must clearly outline the grounds on which they consider the decision should be reviewed.
- Q. How long does the approval for home education last?**  
A. Approval to home educate is from the date of interim approval until 31 December in that year unless otherwise specified. A new application must be made for the following year.
- Q. If my child continues to be taught at home, will he/she be eligible for certification by NT accreditation authorities?**  
A. No, your child will receive no accreditation for home education. If you require certification for future employers, secondary, tertiary or vocational studies, your child must satisfactorily complete a program in a school offering Northern Territory Board of Studies Approved Courses of Study.
- Q. Am I eligible for financial assistance from DECS?**  
A. No. However, the NT Government's Back to School Payment Scheme provides financial assistance to parents who have current interim or final approval to home educate by the end of Term 1. The scheme helps to offset the cost of purchasing curriculum resources such as textbooks and stationery.
- Q. Am I eligible to obtain copies of NT curriculum documents, i.e. the Australian Curriculum and NT Curriculum Framework (NTCF), and related support and resource documents?**  
A. Information on the Australian Curriculum and NTCF is available on the DECS website.
- Q. May I return my child to a government or non-government school at any time?**  
A. Yes. Parents may seek entry, or re-entry, for their child to a government or non-government school at any time. Normal enrolment procedures apply.
- Q. What is the minimum school leaving age?**  
A. School is compulsory for students from the age of six until the minimum school leaving age. The 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 17 years even though they have completed Year 10 unless they are participating in one or more eligible options for a total of 25 hours per week or more. Eligible options include further education, approved training courses or employment, or a combination of those.
- Q. If I need more information or an application form, whom should I contact?**  
A. Project Officer  
School Education  
Department of Education  
GPO Box 4821  
DARWIN NT 0801  
Email: [homeeducation.det@nt.gov.au](mailto:homeeducation.det@nt.gov.au)  
Telephone: (08) 8944 9214  
Facsimile: (08) 8999 4363