

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

HOME EDUCATION APPLICATIONS

Responsibility of: School Support Services
Effective Date: December 2016
Next Review Date: December 2018
Target Audience: Parents and Community

DET File: FILE2014/131
EDOC2016/49392
Version Number: 2

This document should be read in conjunction with the [Home Education policy](#).

1. INTRODUCTION

The department has a responsibility under the *Northern Territory Education Act* (the Act) to ensure that students receive an education of a quality that is capable of enabling them to reach their potential, and so maximise their achievements and contribution to the community. As such the department has put a system in place to enable it to assess and monitor children being home educated.

Home education requires significant dedication and commitment to understand and deliver educational outcomes for children. Parents considering home education are encouraged to discuss this choice with their school principal and/or the department's Home Education Officer to determine whether home education is appropriate for both the parents and the child/ren.

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2. DEFINITIONS

[Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority \(ACARA\)](#) is an independent statutory authority responsible for the:

- development and implementation of a national curriculum
- management of the National Assessment Program including NAPLAN.

ACARA approved curriculum currently includes:

- Australian Curriculum Framework
- International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program and Middle Years Program
- Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework
- Montessori National Curriculum Framework.

Home visit refers to a visit to the residence, in which home education is being proposed or taking place, by a principal/departmental officer as part of the home education application process, or as a condition of approval.

Parent signifies a child's father, mother or any other person who has parental responsibility for the child, including a person who is regarded as a parent of the child under Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander customary law or tradition.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents (first time applicants) are responsible for:

- ensuring their child/ren remain enrolled in school until such time as a Home Education Approval Notice is received
- accommodating a home visit as part of the application process.

Parents (all) are responsible for:

- submitting timely and complete applications, including all relevant supporting documentation
- delivering home education in accordance with the approved home education and the conditions of approval
- accommodating a home visit to demonstrate the progress of their child/ren against the home education program
- informing the department of any changes to home education or when home education ceases.

4. APPLICATION PROCESS

A flow chart of the **application process for new families** is provided at Appendix A.

4.1 Develop a home education program for each child

As a part of your application you are required to provide the department with information about the proposed program for your child. Parents are encouraged to refer to the Home Education Curriculum and Teaching and Learning Requirements Information Sheet (Appendix B) for guidance on developing the home education program for their child/ren.

The department recommends that parents use the [Australian Curriculum](#) to find the curriculum and achievement standards appropriate for their child's year level to develop their child's home education program.

4.1.1 Exemptions from using ACARA approved curriculum

The Act requires that the curriculum used in a home education program must be one that is approved by ACARA.

Parents who, prior to 1 January 2016, have been approved to deliver home education to a child where the program did not use a curriculum approved by ACARA, are exempt from complying with this requirement for the duration of the home education of that child.

An exemption may also be granted where special circumstances exist. Special circumstances may include accommodations for a child with disability or special support needs, or a family temporarily living in Australia who wishes to continue using the curriculum program of their home country during their residency.

Exemptions are sought through completing the appropriate section on the Home Education Application Form for New Families (Attachment A).

4.3 Submitting your application

4.3.1 New families

The department accepts and assesses new home education applications twice a year. Application closing dates are published on the [Northern Territory Government Home Education website](#).

As a general guide, submission dates are as follows:

- Semester 1 Applications should be submitted in November/December and will close early January.
- Semester 2 Applications should be submitted in May/June and will close early July.

Parents must ensure that their children remain enrolled in, and attend, school until such time as they receive approval to home educate. New home education applications will be prioritised; however, final determinations may take up to 10 weeks.

4.3.2 Continuing families

Applications should be submitted by the end of November to allow the department sufficient time to process and assess the application prior to the commencement of the following school year. This will facilitate the continuation of the home education program for each child.

Late applications will only be accepted where extenuating circumstances exist. For example, a family who has approval to home educate in another jurisdiction and is moving to the NT and seeking to continue to home educate their children.

The Application Form for Continuing Families (Attachment B) refers.

4.4 Home visit for application assessment (new families)

A local principal or departmental officer will arrange an agreed time with the parents to conduct the required home visit.

Where there is more than one child being educated within the family home, it is at the principal/departmental officer's discretion to conduct one or more visits to report on the proposed home education program and facilities for each child. Principals may choose to delegate the home visit to the assistant principal or senior teacher within the school.

The home visit will focus on discussing and reviewing:

- the proposed teaching and learning program
- the resources and materials to be used to support the home education delivery
- the home education environment and facilities
- any recommendations that have been made within the Curriculum Assessment Report
- any concerns raised by the student check that aims to confirm that home education is an appropriate option for the child.

The home visit is also an opportunity for parents to seek advice on their home education program or to discuss any concerns they may have in relation to their child's learning needs. The child/ren must be present and are encouraged to participate and engage with the home visit process.

4.5 Application approved

Where the department is provided with sufficient information that meets the criteria for approval, the Executive Director School Support Services may approve the application. The parent/s will receive written notification of the approval.

4.6 Inability to complete a home visit

Where the principal/departmental officer has made three attempts to schedule a home visit and has been unsuccessful in securing a date and time with parents, the home education application may be declined due to an inability to complete the application assessment process.

4.7 Home education application declined

A home education application will be declined where an inquiry into the application through a curriculum assessment and home visit determines that:

- the proposed home education is not suitable, and/or
- there is no provision of appropriate resource and materials, and/or
- the learning environment and facilities are not suitable, and/or
- there is concern for the safety and wellbeing of the child (refer to [Mandatory Reporting guidelines](#)).

Where a home education application is not completed adequately, and no response is received within 30 days of a written request for additional information, the department may also decline the application.

Where a home education application is declined, parents are provided with a written notice that will outline the reasons for the decision to decline the application, and invite the parents to provide a written response, within 30 days, as to why the home education application should be approved.

4.8 Approved home education application cancelled

There may be situations where the department will need to consider cancelling approved home education. Circumstances leading to such a consideration include:

- home education is not being delivered in accordance with the Notice of Approval, and/or
- the child is not making satisfactory progress against the curriculum, and/or
- the learning environment and facilities are not suitable, and/or
- there is concern for the safety and wellbeing of the child (refer to [Mandatory Reporting guidelines](#))
- parents repeatedly fail to facilitate a home visit request.

Where a home education application is cancelled, parents are provided with a written notice that will outline the reasons for the decision to cancel the application, and invite the parents to provide a written response, within 30 days, as to why the home education application should be continued.

4.9 Application declined or cancelled review

Should parents choose to respond to the request to provide a written response to a declined or cancelled application, the response will be considered by a Home Education Review Panel. The decision of the panel will be final.

5. COMPLAINTS AND REVIEWS

Complaints relating to the home education process should be made in writing to homeeducation.det@nt.gov.au and will be processed in accordance with the department's [complaints processes](#).

5.1 Review by Tribunal

A parent may apply to the Northern Territory Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NTCAT) for a review of the decision made by the department.

For a matter to be referred to NTCAT it must have first been through the department's complaints process or a Home Education Review Panel.

6. PRIVACY PRINCIPLES AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

All information collected in relation to the home education of a child is to be used solely for the purpose of administering home education commensurate with the Act and in accordance with the [Information Act](#).

All records and information relating to home education will be maintained in the department's record management system (TRIM) under the security caveat Student Records in Confidence.

7. APPENDICES AND ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A – Application Process for New Families flowchart

Appendix B – Curriculum and Teaching and Learning Requirements information sheet

Attachment A – Home Education Application Form for New Families

Attachment B – Home Education Application Form for Continuing Families

8. RELATED POLICY, LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

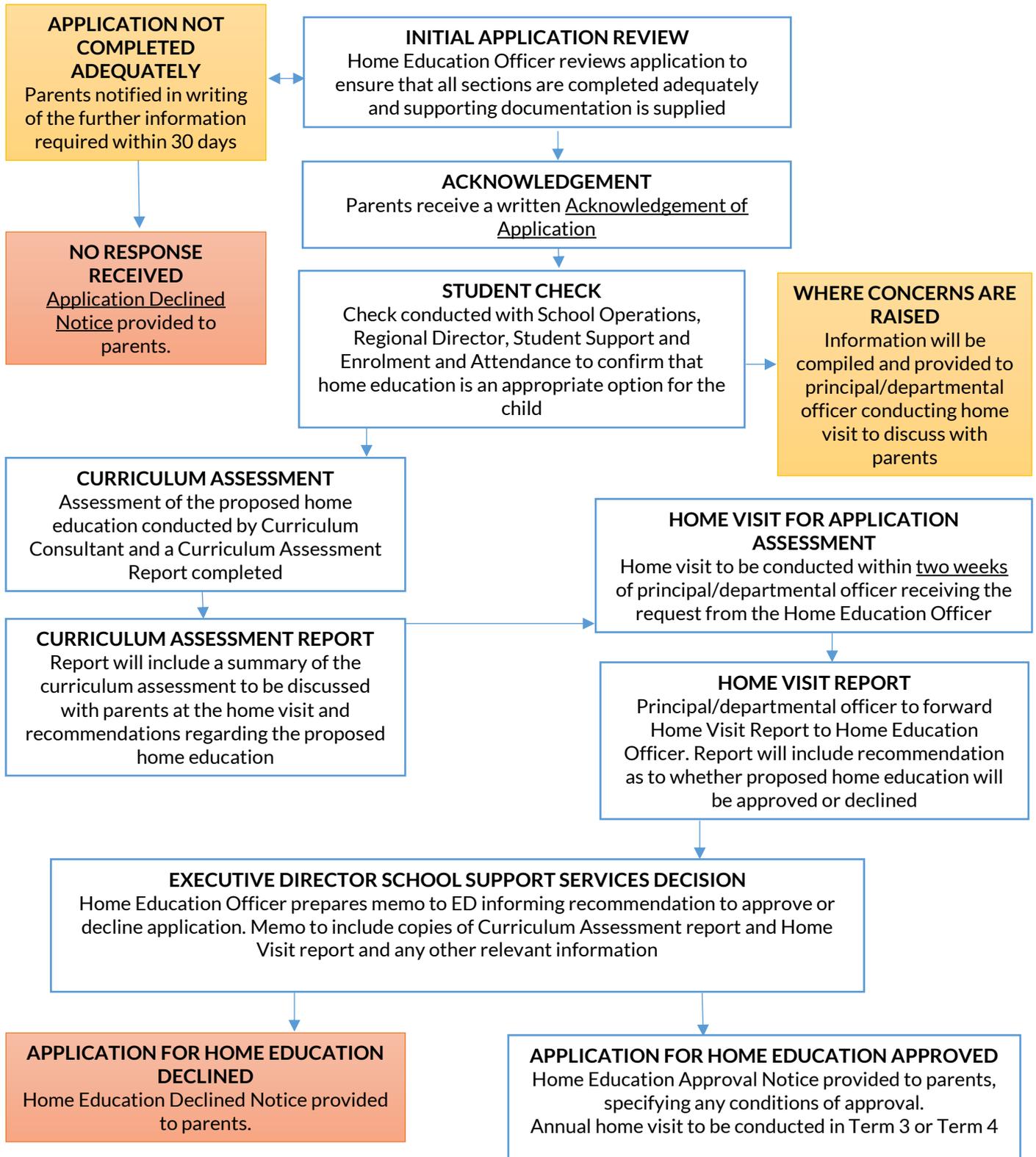
Department of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enrolment policy• Mandatory Reporting of Harm and Exploitation of children guidelines
Northern Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education Act• Information Act• Care and Protection of Children Act• Teacher Registration (Northern Territory) Act• Northern Territory Teacher Registration Board
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Australian Curriculum

APPENDIX A

Application Process for New Families

PARENTS SUBMIT APPLICATION





HOME EDUCATION CURRICULUM AND TEACHING AND LEARNING REQUIREMENTS

Home education requires parents to accept responsibility for planning, teaching, assessing, recording and evaluating a teaching and learning plan for each child. Consideration must be given to each of the following curriculum and teaching and learning planning requirements when undertaking to home educate.

WHAT IS A CURRICULUM?

A curriculum describes the knowledge, skills and capabilities that a child is expected to demonstrate in a developmental sequence. It supports a child to develop the capacity to think creatively, innovate, solve problems and engage with new disciplines and includes:

- the learning standards or outcomes that children are expected to demonstrate
- the units and lessons that are to be taught
- the assignments and projects that children complete, as well as assessment tasks
- the methods or tools that are used to monitor the child's progress towards the learning standards, and form an on-balance judgement to describe the level of the child's achievement.

CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

The department recommends that parents use the [Australian Curriculum](#) to find the curriculum and achievement standards appropriate for their child's year level to develop their child's home education program.

The *Education Act* requires that the curriculum used in a home education program must be one that is approved by the [Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority \(ACARA\)](#).

An exemption from using an ACARA approved curriculum may be granted where special circumstances exist. Special circumstances may include accommodations for a child with disability or special support needs or a family temporarily living in Australia who wishes to continue using the curriculum program of their home country during their residency.

Where parents wish to seek an exemption, details of the special circumstances must be provided in the [Home Education Application Form](#) along with supporting documentation to inform the department's decision.

WHAT ARE RESOURCES, MATERIALS AND FACILITIES?

Curriculum resources, materials and facilities support the delivery of the curriculum and a child's ability to understand and explore new concepts. The home education application should provide details regarding the resources, materials and facilities that will be used to support the curriculum delivery. Some examples may include:

Resources	Materials	Facilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> referencing items (e.g. dictionaries and encyclopedias) library texts (e.g. picture books, novels and readers) technology (e.g. internet access, computer hardware and software) text books films and media performances, exhibitions and excursions worksheets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> writing materials (e.g. pens, paper, ruler) art materials (e.g. paints, glue, scissors, textiles) counters and scales calculators microscopes science equipment (e.g. test tubes and beacons, batteries, sport equipment (e.g. balls, cricket set) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sport oval swimming pool music hall dance studio trampoline

DEVELOPING A TEACHING AND LEARNING PLAN

A teaching and learning plan is developed with consideration of the child's age, ability, aptitude and development. A teaching and learning plan provides the following details for each learning area:

- the knowledge and skills to be learned
- how understandings and skills will be assessed
- what resources, materials and facilities will be used
- teaching and learning time allocations.

The Home Education Application Form guides parents through the development of a teaching and learning plan. Sufficient detail must be provided to enable the department to determine that the proposed home education is appropriate for the child.

ASSESSING AND RECORDING PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

Parents must assess their child's progress and achievement across all learning areas as a part of the home education program. Parents are expected to use and record a range of assessment opportunities to monitor their child's progress and inform their teaching strategies.

A child's progress and achievement is measured against the curriculum and may be demonstrated in a number of ways including:

- draft notes on a report, story, letter or other project
- dated writing samples that show progress over time
- test results that show progress
- research projects: planning, note-taking, draft writing, editing and final presentation
- a diary or other records of the activities where learning achievements have occurred including PowerPoint presentations, photography, internet searches
- progress and/or test results from online learning programs.

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM FOR LITERACY AND NUMERACY (NAPLAN)

Parents may also choose to have their child participate in NAPLAN by indicating their participation on the Home Education Application Form. This will provide parents with a snapshot of their child's literacy and numeracy capabilities and a comparison against the national average.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Parents are required to provide an appropriate learning space and environment for home education. This encompasses both a well-lit and ventilated space for the student to work in, and the absence of interruptions to the child's learning. Every child requires:

- a desk and learning space
- learning resources and materials
- an area to store and display work
- computer and internet access.

Additionally the child should be provided with, or have access to, outdoor learning facilities, particularly in relation to fitness and physical education activities.

TEACHER REGISTRATION AND WORKING WITH CHILDREN CLEARANCE (OCHRE CARD)

Parents may choose to employ a teacher to develop and deliver all or part of the teaching and learning plan. Parents must ensure that the any teacher conducting the home education is registered with the [Northern Territory Teacher Registration Board](#).

Additionally, where a teacher, tutor or instructor is employed to deliver all or part of a teaching and learning plan or specific learning area, parents must observe the requirements of the [Northern Territory Care and Protection of Children Act](#) by ensuring that the person holds a current [Working with Children Clearance](#).