

GUIDELINES

HOME INSPECTION FOR APPROVED HOME EDUCATION

Responsibility of: School Support Services

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Next Review Date: August 2018

Target Audience: Corporate and School Staff, Parents and Community

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

1. INTRODUCTION

The department works with parents who choose to home education their children to ensure that home education programs are lawful and enable Northern Territory (NT) children to experience appropriate education.

Home inspections are a condition of all home education approvals and must occur at least once a year in accordance with section 47 of the [Education Act](#) (the Act). The purpose of the home inspection is to ensure that suitable home education is being provided in accordance with the approved home education program, and any additional conditions of the Home Education Approval Notice.

Home inspections also provide parents with the opportunity to seek advice on their home education program or to discuss any concerns that they may have in relation to their child's progress.

These guidelines support parents and department staff to comply with this requirement by:

- advising parents of the process for conducting a home inspection and the information that they will be required to provide during a home inspection, and
- advising department officers/principals of their responsibilities in relation to scheduling, conducting and reporting on home inspections.

Appendix A provides a flow chart of the home inspection process.

2. DEFINITIONS

Daily care and control of a child (in regards to the definition of parent) refers to a person who is entitled to exercise all the powers and rights, and has all the responsibilities, in relation to the day-to-day care and control of the child.

Home inspection for approved home education refers to a requirement under section 47 of the Act for an annual home inspection to be undertaken for all approved home education to ensure that suitable home education is being provided in accordance with the conditions of approval to home educate.

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.

Parental responsibility (in regards to the definition of parent) refers to a person who has:

- a) daily care and control of the child, or
 - b) is entitled to exercise all the powers and rights, and has all the responsibilities, in relation to the long-term care and development of the child, or
 - c) has daily care and control of the child and the entitlement and responsibilities at (b)
- and includes a person who has been given the above responsibilities under another state or territory law.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive Director School Support Services is responsible for:

- overseeing the administration of home education in the NT in accordance with the *Education Act*
- acting as the delegate of the Chief Executive, make determinations to:
 - approve or decline a home education application
 - place conditions on an approval
 - cancel a home education approval
 - finalise a review conducted by the Home Education Review Panel.

Home Education Project Officer is responsible for:

- providing information and advice to parents and department staff in relation to the home education
- coordinating home inspections for approved home education
- maintaining secure and accurate records relevant to the administration home education .

Director and Senior Manager for NT Curriculum T-9 and 10-12 are responsible for:

- overseeing the assessment of home education applications by senior teachers
- preparing Curriculum Assessment Reports on applications for home education.

Regional Directors are responsible for:

- ensuring that home inspections are conducted in accordance with the required timelines within their region
- ensuring that principals complete and submit Home Inspection Reports to the Home Education Officer within the required timelines.

Principals are responsible for:

- scheduling and conducting home inspections as requested by the Home Education Officer
- preparing Home Inspection Reports that provide a recommendation to the Executive Director on whether an approved home education is being conducted in accordance with the approval.

Parents are responsible for:

- delivering home education in accordance with the approved home education and the conditions of approval
- accommodating a home inspection to demonstrate the progress of the child against the home education program.

4. HOME INSPECTION SCHEDULE

Home inspections for approved home education are conducted during Term 3 of the school year (or Term 4 for Semester 2 approved applications) by the local school principal.

For oversight purposes the Home Education Officer will maintain a home inspection schedule and provide reports to Regional Directors of the inspections required in their respective regions.

The Home Education Officer will notify the relevant principals of the home inspection/s that they are required to conduct and provide them with the following information for each child:

- Home Education Application
- Curriculum Assessment Report
- Home Inspection Report for Application Assessment (for new home educators only)
- Home Education Approval Notice.

4.1 Home inspection appointments

The principal will review the home education information for each child and arrange an agreed time to conduct the home inspection with the parents.

Where there is more than one child being home educated within a family home, it is at the principal's discretion to conduct one or more inspections to review and report on the home education for each child. The principal may also delegate home inspections to the assistant principal or other senior teacher at the school.

As the home inspection is a condition of approval, repeated failure by a parent to comply with a home inspection request may result in a cancellation of home education approval. Refer to the [Declined or Cancel Home Education guidelines](#) for further information.

Principals should maintain a record of the attempts to schedule a home inspection and report to the Home Education Officer where there have been three unsuccessful attempts to secure a date and time.

5. CONDUCTING THE HOME INSPECTION

The parent's input into the home inspection is very important as they are aware of the progress that has occurred and if there are any learning problems to be addressed. The child/ren must be present and are encouraged to participate and engage with the home inspection process. Where a teacher is employed to deliver the home education it is advised that they are also present for the home inspection.

Some parents may wish to prepare a report outlining the child's program and progress prior to the home inspection. Such a report can be included in the Home Inspection Report as a statement on the child's progress.

If the principal has concerns about the home education program or the child's educational progress, they should discuss these with the parents during the home inspection and make recommendations on how the concerns can be addressed.

5.1 Use of teaching and learning plan and appropriate resources and materials

The home inspection will look at progress against the teaching and learning plans and the use of resources and materials to support the curriculum delivery.

5.2 Demonstrated progress against the curriculum program

The focus of the home inspection is on what the child can do, has achieved, and can understand rather than just the work that has been completed. Parents may choose to demonstrate a child's progress and achievement against the curriculum in a number of ways including:

- showing some first draft notes on a report, story, letter or other project
- providing dated writing samples which show progress over time
- providing test results which show progress
- providing records of research projects: planning, note-taking, draft writing, editing and final presentation
- showing some completed projects that incorporate learning achievements that have occurred
- showing a diary or other records of the activities where learning achievements have occurred including PowerPoint presentations, photographs, internet searches
- showing a reflective journal (where the child records what they learnt about a topic or experience or describes a concept)
- showing evidence of progress in an online learning program e.g. copy of progress results
- providing certificates of participation and achievement in courses
- describing or having the child describe some home education experiences and achievements
- showing photographs to support engagement in natural learning activities supported with a description of the activity and a comment about what was learnt
- presenting an art portfolio
- showing short video clips (or photographs) of drama performances, recitals, participation in concerts
- having the child read an age appropriate passage of text.

The parent can decide how to demonstrate progress; however, the principal must be satisfied that the program and progress are satisfactory, and will indicate the kind of evidence needed in order to make that judgement in their report.

5.3 Learning environment and facilities

The home inspection will include a general inspection of the learning environment and facilities. A general check list is provided in the Home Inspection Report for the principal to report on the facilities and make recommendations on any improvements.

6. HOME INSPECTION REPORT

The principal must complete a [Home Inspection Report for Approved Home Education](#) (Attachment A) for each child and submit the report/s to the Home Education Officer within five working days of conducting the home inspection.

The report will provide an assessment of the home education delivery and the child's progress along with a one of the following recommendations:

- Home education is being conducted in accordance with approval and child is making satisfactory progress.
- A follow up inspection is recommended as areas of the program require improvement and/or the child is not making satisfactory progress (principal to conduct follow up inspection).
- Home education approval should be cancelled as home education is not being conducted in accordance with the approval and/or the child is not making satisfactory progress.

The Home Education Officer is responsible for reviewing the recommendations of each report and, where required, referring to the Executive Director for a determination. Where a Home Inspection Report recommends that the home education continue for the child, the report does not need to be referred to the Executive Director and a copy will be forwarded to the parents for their records.

7. DETERMINATION ON HOME INSPECTION RECOMMENDATIONS

Where a Home Inspection Report recommends that a home education approval be cancelled, it must be forwarded to the Executive Director for consideration and a final determination. The Executive Director will make one of the following determinations:

Determination	Action
Home education to continue	1. Parents will receive a copy of the Home Inspection Report and no further action required for the remainder of the school year.
Home Education to continue with special conditions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parents will receive a copy of the Home Inspection Report which provides details of the areas for improvement and specific recommendations to be implemented. 2. Principal or department officer will arrange a follow up home inspection with the parents. The home inspection date should allow time for the recommendations to be implemented. 3. Upon completion of the home inspection the principal or department officer will prepare a second Home Inspection Report that details if improvements and recommendations have been applied and a recommendation as to whether home education should continue or be cancelled.
Home education to be cancelled	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Home Education Approval Cancelled Notice is provided to the parents. The Notice will; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) outline the reasons for the decision to decline the application b) invite the parents to provide a written response, within 30 days, with reasons as to why the home education should be approved and an outline of how they are able to accommodate the recommendations made in the Curriculum Assessment and Home Inspection reports c) include a copy of the Curriculum Assessment Report and the Home Inspection Report. 2. Refer to Declined or Cancelled Home Education guidelines

8. COMPLAINTS

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 [complaint process](#).

Where parents wish to seek a review of a home education decision they should refer to the [Declined or Canceled Home Education guidelines](#).

6.1 Review by Tribunal

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

- decline a home education application, or
- impose conditions on an approval to home educate, or
- cancel an approval to home educate.

For a matter to be referred to NTCAT, it must have first been through the department [complaint process](#) or a Home Education Review Panel as outlined in the [Declined or Canceled Home Education guidelines](#).

9. PRIVACY PRINCIPALS 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 (Tower Records and Information Management – TRIM) under the security caveat Student Records in Confidence.

10. APPENDICES AND ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A – Home Inspection for Approved Home Education process

Attachment A – Home Inspection Report for Approved Home Education

11. RELATED POLICY, LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

Department of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Home Education policy• New Home Education Application guidelines• Continuing Home Education Application guidelines• Declined or Cancelled Home Education guidelines• Mandatory Reporting of Harm and Exploitation of children guidelines
Northern Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education Act• Education Regulations• Information Act• Care and Protection of Children Act
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority

Appendix A – Home Inspection for Approved Home Education Process

