

Enrolment procedures

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1. Policy statement

Quality early childhood education gives children the best start in life. Preschool helps provide children with important opportunities to learn and develop, make friends, develop independence and learn new routines. Research shows that children who regularly participate in a quality preschool program are more likely to arrive at school equipped with the social, cognitive and emotional skills they need to help them continue to learn. Although not compulsory under the Northern Territory (NT) *Education Act 2015* (the Act), the NT Government is committed to achieving the objectives of the national Preschool Reform Agreement which aims to ensure every child has access to, is enrolled in, and regularly attends a quality preschool program in the year before full-time school. The NT Department of Education and Training (department) encourages parents to engage their children in early learning programs delivered by schools including preschool, transition, and Families as First Teachers (FaFT). For enrolment in early learning, go to the department's Early childhood education and care webpage.

Under the Act, all children and young people of compulsory school age must be enrolled in an NT Government school or a registered non-government school. Compulsory school age refers to 6 years of age on or before the 30 June of the school year. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age when the first of the following occurs:

- they have completed year 10 and are participating in an eligible option
- they have completed year 10 and are exempt from participating in an eligible option
- they have reached 17 years of age.

It is a legal responsibility for a parent who has daily care and control of a child of compulsory school age and a child of compulsory school age who is living independently to ensure compulsory enrolment requirements are met.

This document outlines the procedures for enrolment in an NT Government school. These procedures also apply to prospective interstate, international, and mature age students.

2. Procedures for enrolment

2.1. Parents of children, children living independently, and mature age students

Parents of children, children living independently, and mature age students must:

1. complete and submit a student enrolment form for the first time they are enrolled in an NT Government school. Enrolment forms are available at the NT Government's Enrol your child at school webpage
2. take copies of all required supporting documentation to the school in which they wish to enrol. This documentation cannot be lodged online. Supporting documentation includes:
 - proof of identity that identifies a child or young person's
 - name
 - date of birth
 - citizenship, permanent residency, or visa status
 - documents supporting a child or young person's proof of identity may include:

- birth certificate
- citizenship certificate
- Medicare immunisation history statement
- Australian passport
- non-Australian passport that has been granted with an official Australian Government visa
- travel documentation specifying the visa subclass and date of expiry
- any appropriate document issued by a government agency such as a Tax File Number, an approved Aboriginal Corporations identification, a Certificate of Aboriginality, or an identity document issued by an Aboriginal Land Council that includes a photograph
- proof of an NT residential address, which may include:
 - telephone bill
 - electricity bill
 - rental agreement
 - Health Care Card
 - driver licence
 - NT motor vehicle registration certificate
 - Centrelink card with reference number
 - reference letter from Aboriginal Corporation
 - council rates notice
 - tax assessment notice
 - letter from a police station
 - letter from Community Engagement, Defence Member and Family Support for families of defence officers

The list above is not exhaustive, schools may suggest other documents as evidence of residential address. These supporting documents must include a residential address. Post office boxes are not acceptable.

The school may ask a parent of a child, a child living independently, or a prospective mature age student to complete a statutory declaration. And any person who makes a false declaration is liable to penalties.

- proof of immunisation status, which may include:
 - Medicare immunisation history statement
 - the child or young person's immunisation card

Children who are not immunised are still able to be enrolled dependent on specific public health measures at the time of enrolment, for example, the NT Chief Health Officer directions

- documentation for special family circumstances, such as documentation for relevant court orders and associated arrangements for:

- parental responsibility, including the authority to make decisions regarding a child or young person's welfare including education
 - sole or shared custody
 - access restrictions
 - living in out of home care
 - living apart from parental supervision
- a signed Student consent for media and intellectual property form if they agree for the child or young person to feature in any media coverage of school activities, student works and department and NT Government promotional events for the duration of their enrolment. The signed form only needs to be provided the first time the child or young person is enrolled in an NT Government school
3. provide any other relevant information to the school in relation to the child or young person's health and wellbeing. For example, the child or young person has been subject to bullying or may cause harm to self and or others
 4. attend the school with the enrolment form if not lodged online. Copies of supporting documentation cannot be submitted online and must be provided at the enrolment meeting. The enrolment form must be signed in front of a school staff witness.

Additional documentation and procedures are required for enrolment of interstate, international, mature age students, and students with intellectual disability and additional complex needs. Please ensure you follow the procedures and provide the documentation as identified in one of the below:

- Distance education enrolment procedures
- Mature age student enrolment procedures
- Enrolment in special schools and special centres guidelines.

2.2. Enrolling in an NT Government school for the first time

Principals or nominated staff members must ensure:

1. they accept eligible enrolments regardless of a child or young person's planned length of stay in the community
2. the approved and correct type of enrolment form has been used, all mandatory fields are completed, and the form is signed by both parents of a child unless there is a legal reason, a child living independently, or a mature age student
3. where a parent of a child, a child living independently, or a mature age student is unable to sign the enrolment form, they mark the form with an 'x' and that this is witnessed by a member of the school's office or teaching staff
4. they do not decline or delay a child or young person's commencement at school on the grounds that they have not received all the required supporting documentation. In these circumstances, schools must work with families to complete the paperwork
5. when enrolling a child living independently, they conduct diligent inquiries to verify that the child is genuinely living independently

6. originals of all required supporting documents are sighted, and copies are made, signed and dated by a member of the school's office or teaching staff for record keeping
7. no original documents are signed or dated by a member of the school's office or teaching staff and that they are duly returned
8. the enrolment form and copies of supporting documentation are kept in the student record file as per the Education and Care Services National Regulations
9. students are enrolled in the department's mandated student administration system or compliant third-party program preferably prior to or by the first day a child or young person attends school.

2.3. Transferring between NT Government schools

In addition to the actions outlined for enrolment in an NT Government school for the first time, when an NTG school receives a new enrolment for a student who was last enrolled at an NTG school, principals or their nominated staff members must ensure:

1. they request the student record file (SRF) containing all information about a student's enrolment and attendance from the previous school. Schools should only request an SRF once the student is no longer actively enrolled at the previous school.
2. they meet with the parent to confirm and update information on the enrolment form to ensure the student data is current and accurate
3. if the school has the operational capacity, they accept enrolment if the child or young person is visiting community or urban centre and is outside the school's priority enrolment area. The school should accept enrolment of the child who is outside the school's priority enrolment area.

3. Procedures for dual enrolment

Dual enrolment is where a child or young person is enrolled in 2 or more schools to accommodate the child or young person's specific circumstances. This section applies to dual enrolment that does not involve a distance education centre. For dual enrolment that involves a distance education centre, go to the department's Enrolment webpage.

For attendance recording and reporting in relation to dual enrolment, go to the department's Enrolment webpage.

3.1. Dual enrolment on the grounds of significant support needs

Principals must ensure:

- resources, extensive adjustments, and interventions at school and regional levels have not been able to meet the child or young person's additional needs
- sufficient evidence demonstrates that the child or young person cannot attend mainstream schooling on a regular basis
- effective collaboration has been undertaken between the school and the parent regarding the child or young person's needs
- parental consent has been received for the child or young person's enrolment with another school for the purpose of accessing a specific program such as an autism spectrum disorder program, and

appropriate facilities and resources as well as suitable supervision and support to complete the learning program will be provided

- education, training and wellbeing related information is collated and shared between schools
- in terms of short-term dual enrolment, a personalised plan has been developed to support the child or young person's re-entry into mainstream schooling that outlines the roles of both main and subsidiary schools in the transition process
- in terms of ongoing dual enrolment, principals review the enrolment every 12 months.

3.2. Dual enrolment on the grounds of established mobility patterns

There are various reasons for which children and young people may have established mobility patterns. For example, if they have strong cultural connections to other communities they may require frequent temporary relocations, or may live in 2 different locations due to a shared custody arrangement, either formal or informal, in place. Dual enrolments for children and young people with established mobility patterns require negotiation and agreement between 2 or more schools on a case-by-case basis. All decisions on dual enrolment must be made in the best interest of the child or young person.

4. Supplementary preschool enrolment form

Many early childhood programs, including preschool, operate under the National Quality Framework (NQF). This places additional requirements on these programs including the collection of additional information during enrolment.

The Supplementary preschool enrolment form must also be completed in addition to the student enrolment form for each preschool enrolment.

To access enrolment forms, go to the department's Enrol your child at school webpage or visit your local school. Schools staff will assist families to complete these enrolment forms where required.

5. Student record management

School, regional and corporate staff are responsible and accountable for the security and integrity of records created by the department, which includes student reports. The management of records must be in accordance with the Records Management Standards for Public Sector Organisations in the Northern Territory. Records including student reports and information cannot be destroyed or disposed of unless in compliance with the School management records disposal schedule and subject to any records disposal freezes in place from time-to-time. School, regional and corporate staff have an obligation to know and understand their responsibilities under the Records Management Standards

6. Information sharing

Under section 170A of the *Education Act 2015*, a school principal may share information with another principal or school where a student has transferred or is transferring to. This will assist the new school to best support the student in their new learning environment to keep them engaged in education and achieve academic success.

This applies across government and non-government schools.

This information must be related to:

- the student transfer
- the safety and wellbeing of the student or other students attending the other school.

Related information may include:

- advice of academic history
- advice of any aids used by the student
- positive behaviour support plans
- strategies applied to:
 - assist with the student's learning
 - manage the student's behaviour.

7. Related legislation, procedures and information

7.1. Legislation

- *Education Act 2015* – <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/Legislation/EDUCATION-ACT-2015>
- *Education and Care Services (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011*, which adopts the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2011* in the NT – <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/en/Legislation/EDUCATION-AND-CARE-SERVICES-NATIONAL-UNIFORM-LEGISLATION-ACT-2011>
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations* – <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653>

7.2. Guidelines and Procedures

- Enrolment management priority enrolment guidelines – <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/student-enrolment/enrolment/priority-enrolment-area>
- Attendance recording and reporting procedures – <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/student-enrolment>
- Distance education enrolment procedures – <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/student-enrolment/enrolment>
- Mature age student enrolment procedures – <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/student-enrolment/enrolment>
- Enrolment in special schools and special centres guidelines – <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/student-enrolment/enrolment>
- Enrolment and orientation of new children and their families in preschool guidelines – <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/early-childhood-education-and-care/preschool-specific-policy>
- Families as First Teachers policy, procedures and guidelines – <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/early-childhood-education-and-care>
- Record and information management standards – <https://dcdd.nt.gov.au/government-records/records-information-management-standards>

- School management records disposal schedule - https://dpssc.nt.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/593749/Disposal-Schedule-2018-10-School-Management.pdf

7.3. Other relevant policy

- Preschool Reform Agreement – <https://federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/agreements/preschool-reform-agreement>

7.4. Information

- Enrol your child at school – <https://nt.gov.au/learning/primary-and-secondary-students/enrol-your-child-at-school>
- Information-sharing requirements for schools – <https://education.nt.gov.au/publications/legislation/changes-to-the-education-act-2015/information-sharing-requirements-for-government-and-non-government-schools>

Acronyms	Full form
FaFT	Families as First Teachers
NT	Northern Territory
NQF	National Quality Framework
SRF	Student record file

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