

# REVIEWING TASMANIA'S EDUCATION ACT

Lift Education, Lift Tasmania

## Fact Sheet – Home Education

### Aim of proposed changes

To ensure home-educated children are receiving a level of education that provides them with the foundations to participate fully in society

**By** strengthening the framework for regulation of home education and allowing for partial enrolment in school.

### *What happens now?*

- Home education is the responsibility of the Minister with the support of the Tasmanian Home Education Advisory Council (THEAC).
- Council members are drawn from the home education and wider community and also include a Department of Education representative.
- THEAC monitors home education in Tasmania and makes recommendations to the Minister in relation to applications from parents to home educate their child.
- Home educators are required to submit regular reports to THEAC on both the educational progress of their child, and the educational plan for the following period.
- There are no standards against which an educational plan is assessed.
- New home educators are visited one or two months after the initial program is approved and then a year after that. If THEAC is satisfied, home educators are monitored once every two years thereafter. Monitoring can be more frequent if THEAC determines there is a need.
- THEAC monitoring officers visit families to verify that the approved program is being implemented. These monitoring officers report back to THEAC on the outcome of their visit, with the final recommendation to the Minister being made by the full Council.
- Monitoring officers are not required to have educational qualifications.
- There is no capacity for children who are home educated to partially enrol in a school.



## What is proposed in the Bill?

- Home education remains a legal option.
- The Tasmanian Home Education Advisory Council (THEAC) continues. Membership will continue to include people with experience or skills in home education and education generally.
- A registrar will manage the home education process and take advice from THEAC in regard to applications from parents seeking to home educate their child.
- Standards will be developed against which home education will be assessed and will be included in Regulations.
- Monitoring visits will occur at least annually. Registration officers with educational qualifications will undertake the reviews of home education.
- A parent who is registered to home educate his/her child may apply to a school to enrol their child for part-time attendance as part of home education program. This may occur when a parent considers he or she is unable to adequately provide a particular aspect of the program. However, the majority of the program must still be delivered by the parent, otherwise the parent should enrol the child full-time in school.
- Schools will evaluate applications for partial enrolment against guidelines that will include the process for assessing such applications. Principals will need to ascertain the child's capacity to undertake the proposed course. Principals will also take into account matters including class sizes, teacher/student ratios and the availability of facilities and equipment.
- Where a home-educated child is accepted into school part-time, attendance requirements and school policies will apply. If a child is withdrawn before completing the in-school component, the home education registrar will be advised so as to ensure alternative and appropriate educational provision is made.
- Part 3 of the Education Bill covers home education. The role of the registrar and the Tasmanian Home Education Advisory Council is covered in Part 7.

## Reasons for change

- The proposed changes will better ensure the delivery of best practice, quality home education, including by:
  - introducing standards against which an educational plan for home education is assessed
  - increasing the number of monitoring visits to at least annually
  - ensuring monitoring officers have educational qualifications as well as an understanding of the ethos of home education to enable them to assess the educational merits of the home education learning program.
- Enabling home-educated children to be partially enrolled in a school is in their best educational interests. Parents who home educate accept responsibility for planning, implementing and evaluating their child's educational program from home. However, there may be particular subjects that home educating parents do not feel equipped to offer at the level required, particularly in the more senior years.

Other Fact Sheets relevant to home education are:

- *Objects and Principles*
- *Starting and Leaving Age*
- *Approved Learning Program*
- *Legislation 101*

## *Previous consultation feedback*

- There was strong support from home educators to be able to partially enrol their children in school.
- There was mixed feedback in relation to changing the current system, with home educators generally supporting no change and other respondents supporting strengthening the system. There was mixed support for monitoring officers having an educational background, along similar lines.

### **Have your say**

Complete a web form

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