

Select Committee on Home Schooling

# Home Schooling in New South Wales

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Order 231

## Summary of recommendations

- Recommendation 1** **6**  
 That relevant provisions of the *Education Act 1990* be amended to ensure the practice of home schooling is referred to as non-institution based education.
- Recommendation 2** **16**  
 That the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards commission research into ‘unschooling’ as an educational approach used by some members of the home schooling population, with a focus on whether this approach achieves acceptable education outcomes for the child.
- Recommendation 3** **22**  
 That the Minister for Education write to the Federal Minister responsible for the Australian Bureau of Statistics, recommending that the Census form be amended to capture more information relevant to identifying the extent of home schooling within Australia.
- Recommendation 4** **33**  
 That the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards review their registration forms and include a mandatory provision of the reason as to why an applicant has decided to home school their child, with this data being extracted and reviewed annually.
- Recommendation 5** **41**  
 That the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards pursue opportunities for home schooling students to participate in NAPLAN testing, except in cases where it has been demonstrated that a student has a learning difficulty, disability or other special need.
- Recommendation 6** **41**  
 That the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards undertake further research into the outcomes of home schooling in three years’ time.
- Recommendation 7** **57**  
 That the Minister for Education review the registration requirements for home schooling so as to allow students from 4.5 years to 19 years to be registered for home schooling.
- Recommendation 8** **60**  
 That the Minister for Education undertake a comprehensive review of the requirements and registration process for home schooling, in order to improve rigour, consistency and transparency and further work with stakeholders to ensure this outcome.
- The committee believes that the outcomes of the review should include a registration system that incorporates the following features:
- an interim registration period of between six (as the minimum) and 12 months to be imposed, subject to the applicant demonstrating that they meet the relevant requirements for home schooling
  - on expiry of an interim registration period, an additional registration period for the balance of the child’s primary or secondary education (whichever is relevant) to be

imposed, subject to the applicant demonstrating that they meet the relevant requirements for home schooling at the end of the interim registration period

- the requirement that applicants renew their registration for home schooling if their child is transitioning from primary to secondary education, such that the applicant has to demonstrate that they continue to meet the registration requirements
- a requirement that applicants participate in at least annual 'home support visits' in circumstances where they have been granted a registration period for the balance of their child's primary or secondary education, with the purpose of this visit to ensure that the family is delivering an educational program that meets the syllabus requirements and child's needs
- that applicants be provided with written reasons in circumstances where a minimum period of registration has been imposed, or where they have been directed to formally renew their registration for home schooling
- the ability for applicants to be able to apply for an external review of a decision, if dissatisfied after an initial review, in circumstances where a minimum period of registration has been imposed, or where they have been directed to formally renew their registration for home schooling.

**Recommendation 9****61**

That the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards review the roles of staff involved in the regulation of home schooling, so as to create a new position of an Assessment and Support Officer, whose primary purpose is to provide guidance and support to home schooling applicants, to ensure they are providing an educational program that meets the syllabus requirements and child's needs.

**Recommendation 10****75**

That the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards develop and commit to a professional development and training policy for all staff involved in the regulation of home schooling, with regular involvement from representatives of the home schooling population.

**Recommendation 11****80**

That the NSW Government investigate mechanisms to identify children who are not receiving compulsory education.

**Recommendation 12****101**

That the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards Board establish a consultative group to:

- oversee consultation between the BOSTES and home schooling population
- provide input to and review the design and implementation of home schooling policies and procedures
- provide ongoing advice and assistance to the BOSTES.

That the consultative group be chaired by the Executive Director of Regulation and Governance from the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards Board. Membership of the consultative group to include at least four home schooling representatives and at least four others nominated by BOSTES for their knowledge and expertise in primary and secondary education and the education of children with disabilities.

- Recommendation 13** 123  
That the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards continue with consultation with the home schooling population and ensure that this happens on a regular basis.
- Recommendation 14** 124  
That the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards undertake a review of the *Registration for Home Schooling in NSW – Information Package*, in consultation with key stakeholders, with this review to be finalised by June 2016.
- Recommendation 15** 124  
That the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards ensure that any registration assessment recognise that educational experiences outside of the home can be valuable and incorporated into an educational program, subject to these activities contributing to syllabus outcomes
- Recommendation 16** 130  
That the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards develop, in consultation with stakeholders, a strategy that promotes membership of home schooling organisations to applicants of home schooling.
- Recommendation 17** 148  
That the Department of Family and Community Services review their policies and systems, with the objective of identifying and improving the collection and reporting of data related to child protection matters within the home schooling population.
- Recommendation 18** 161  
That the Minister for Education investigate and report on the barriers to home schooling students participating in and being awarded a Higher School Certificate.
- Recommendation 19** 161  
That the Department of Education and Communities review their policies to ensure that home school students can access and participate in Hospital School Programs.
- Recommendation 20** 162  
That the Department of Education and Communities investigate and report on the impacts of home schooling students accessing schools, either on a part time basis, or for particular components, on schools educational delivery and child protection and safety.
- Recommendation 21** 171  
That the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards provide information to home schooling applicants about options that exist for financial assistance.
- Recommendation 22** 171  
That the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards and the Minister for Education take whatever action is necessary to ensure students registered for home schooling receive a student card for the purpose of obtaining student concessions.

**Recommendation 23**

**173**

That the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards identify and develop, in consultation with parents and students, additional resources that may provide assistance to home schoolers in providing quality educational programs.

**Recommendation 24**

**176**

That home schooling organisations be encouraged to develop and implement strategies that promote increased support for home schooling parents and students.