

# Education in the Northern Territory

## Going to school in the Territory

Education is compulsory for children aged between 6 and 15 years in the Territory.

All schools in the Northern Territory teach a common curriculum, which emphasises the physical, intellectual and social development of children. Individual schools also develop their own school-based programs to meet the needs of their students.

There are 189 primary and secondary schools in the Territory, of which 36 are non-government. Most non-government schools are operated by church organisations. These schools teach the common curriculum taught by government schools, and schools with church affiliations also teach religious education.

## The school year

For children attending government schools, the school year starts in late January and is divided into four terms of 10 weeks. There is a one-week vacation at the end of Term 1, a four-week break at the end of Term 2, a one-week vacation at the end of Term 3 and a six-week vacation from December to January.

Non-government schools often have shorter terms.

## Choosing a school for your child

You can enrol your child in any government school unless the school has reached or is about to reach capacity. If a school is full or almost full, children from within the school's local area will have priority.

To choose a school for your child, call the schools that may be suitable and arrange a time to visit or speak with the principal or a senior staff member.

Contact details for all Territory schools, including non-government schools, are available from the Department of Employment, Education and Training's website at [www.deet.nt.gov.au](http://www.deet.nt.gov.au) or on 08 8999 5659.

## Starting school through to Primary School

Northern Territory government schools provide preschool programs for four-year-old children for up to 12 hours per week. Contact your local school for availability of places and current intake policy. Some non-government schools accept preschool students from the age of three.

The first year of full-time schooling in the Northern Territory is known as Transition, a period which helps prepare children for formal learning. Children then begin compulsory schooling in Year 1 in primary school. To access Transition, children must have turned five by 30 June in a school year. Further information is available online at [www.ageofentry.nt.gov.au](http://www.ageofentry.nt.gov.au). Alternatively, contact your local school for current intake policy.

## Middle Years

From 2008, students in Years 7, 8 and 9 will be grouped together in middle schools, delivering tailored Middle Years approaches designed to meet their learning and development needs.

## Senior Years

In 2007, students in Year 10 will form part of the Senior Years of schooling and will join students in Years 11 and 12 in senior colleges or senior sub-schools.

Senior secondary students study courses leading to the Northern Territory Certificate of Education (NTCE). Courses are accredited by the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia for most at Stage 1 (generally Year 11) and Stage 2 (generally Year 12).

The Northern Territory Certificate of Education is recognised as an entry qualification by all Australian universities and colleges.

## Monitoring and reporting

From 2008, students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 will be assessed in the National Multilevel Assessment Program (MAP) in the areas of literacy and numeracy. Data from this program provides information on one aspect of student achievement. Students and parents also receive detailed information about other aspects of student achievement through school reporting processes.

## Distance and home education

The Northern Territory Distance Learning Service consists of three schools, the NT Open Education Centre (NTOEC), the Katherine School of the Air and Alice Springs School of the Air. The service provides a primary, middle years and senior years educational program to students who reside in isolated locations.

Additionally, NTOEC provides indirect support to remote schools to assist on-site teachers with the delivery of a comprehensive secondary educational program, which includes Vocational Education and Training (VET).

Each of the distance education schools have an Interactive Distance Learning (IDL) studio to enable students to access educational programs using the latest technology.

In special cases, home education is another option for some families. Parents considering a home education program for their children must apply to the Northern Territory Department of Employment, Education and Training.

## Fees and other costs

Government schools do not charge tuition fees. However, most schools ask parents or guardians to pay an annual school levy. The levy is not compulsory but, since it is used to complement existing programs and provide additional resources for students, most parents are willing to pay. The amount of the levy is determined by the school's council or parent body.

Parents are also responsible for funding school excursions, camps and extracurricular activities.

Fees at non-government schools vary. You should contact the school direct to inquire about fees.

To help offset the cost of essential school items such as books and uniforms, the Territory Government will issue a \$50 voucher per student to parents or guardians of children attending any Territory school from Transition to Year 12.

## School uniforms

There is no Territory-wide uniform policy for government schools. Each school has its own school uniform policy and a sun safety policy.

How to be involved in your child's education

Parental involvement is encouraged. You are welcome to discuss your child's needs and progress with teachers and the school principal, or join the school council.

## For further information, contact:

### Government schools

Northern Territory Department of Employment, Education and Training

GPO Box 4821 Darwin NT 0801

Telephone: 08 8999 5659

Facsimile: 08 8999 5711

Email: [infocentre.deet@nt.gov.au](mailto:infocentre.deet@nt.gov.au)

Website: [www.deet.nt.gov.au](http://www.deet.nt.gov.au)

### Independent Schools

Association of the Independent Schools of the Northern Territory

GPO Box 2085 DARWIN NT 0801

Telephone: 08 8981 8668

Facsimile: 08 8941 3061

Email: [admin@aisnt.asn.au](mailto:admin@aisnt.asn.au)

Website: [www.aisnt.asn.au](http://www.aisnt.asn.au)

### Catholic Schools

Catholic Education Office

PO Box 219 Berrimah NT 0828

Telephone: 08 8984 1400

Facsimile: 08 8984 1444

Email: [admin@ceo.nt.catholic.edu.au](mailto:admin@ceo.nt.catholic.edu.au)

Website: [www.ceo.nt.catholic.edu.au](http://www.ceo.nt.catholic.edu.au)