A NOTE FROM THE ACTING MANAGER OF THE HOME EDUCATION UNIT

Dear Families

I’d like to inform you of some recent changes to our website. We have updated our Home Education in Queensland procedure, the Application for Registration and the Reporting for Registration forms. We have also added a new Change of Personal details form which can be completed at any time. All forms are available to you at www.education.qld.gov.au/parents/home-education/index.html. The changes to these forms reflect recent amendments to the legislation regarding home education. The Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (the Act) is the primary Act that facilitates the registration of children for home education in Queensland. All Queensland legislation may be found at www.legislation.qld.gov.au.

Previous to the amendment, eligibility for home education registration ended when a child’s compulsory participation phase ended. This meant that eligibility could end when a child gained a certificate III or certificate IV or turned 17 years of age. The amendment simplifies this by extending the date that a child is eligible for registration for home education until 31 December of the year they turn 17 years of age. The Home Education Unit will contact families whose child or children turn 17 in 2018 to inform them of this.

Previously, where an application for registration was not granted, the child’s provisional registration ceased on the day the information notice about the decision was given to the parent. Similarly, where a child’s existing registration for home education was cancelled, the registration ceased on the day the information notice about the decision was given to the parent. The amendments provide for the child’s registration, or provisional registration, to continue until the person’s review rights in relation to the decision have been exhausted. This ensures the parents of the child registered for home education continue to satisfy the compulsory schooling obligations in section 176(1) of the Act while the review is being finalised.

Prior to the amendment to the legislation, applicant parents were required to provide a summary of the educational program to be used or learning philosophy to be followed, when applying for their child to be registered for home education. The amendment has removed the option of providing a learning philosophy only, in lieu of an educational plan. Your desired educational philosophy can be explored within the broader details of the educational plan.

Regards,
Paula Jervis-Tracey
Acting Manager

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SCOOTLE Access
Scootle is an online database of educational resources directly linked to the Australian Curriculum. Available resources include video clips, information sites, games and material to promote critical and creative thinking. Further information can be found here.

If you would like to access Scootle to support your child’s home education, please contact Senior Education Officer, Regina Nommensen at homeeducation@qed.qld.gov.au, providing your registered child’s name in your email. (Parents of children who are provisionally registered are ineligible to register for Scootle access.)

HEU ID CARDS
WHAT? A photographic identification card used to show a child is registered for home education.
WHO? Any child who is fully registered. (ID cards are not available to provisionally registered children)
WHEN? The card will be valid for your child’s registration year, or until the registration ceases.

TRANSPORT CONCESSION FARES
Department of Transport and Main Roads determine concessions. Children aged 5 to 14 years fall under the child concession category. Students aged 15 years or older are eligible for a concession fare and will need to show the HEU ID card when purchasing tickets.

HOW TO REQUEST AN ID CARD: Email an electronic passport style current photograph of your child to the Home Education Unit (blank background, head and shoulders, facing forward) homeeducation@qed.qld.gov.au
Unlike passport photos, smiles are permitted.
Please include a statement that, “This is a current photo of my child (full name). Their birthday is (date); and current postal address.”

What's on
- Premier's reading challenge (Queensland Government) - key dates for 2018:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Term 2, 2018</td>
<td>Online database registrations open.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 May 2018</td>
<td>Reading period commences for Prep to Year 9 students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 to 24 August 2018</td>
<td>Early childhood participation period.</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 August 2018</td>
<td>Reading period finishes for Prep to Year 9 students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 September 2018</td>
<td>All reading data must be finalised in the database Certificate of Participation available for download.</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2018</td>
<td>Certificates of Achievement issued.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 to 16 November 2018</td>
<td>Premier's Reading Challenge Celebration Weeks.</td>
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• **65th Queensland Science Contest 2018** presented by the [Science Teachers Association of Queensland](https://www.qtasa.com.au). The Queensland Science Contest is an opportunity for Queensland students from Prep to Grade 12 to have their scientific work judged for awards and prizes.

• **Meet six mummies** and unlock the secrets behind their wrappings using the latest CT scanning technology in [Egyptian Mummies: Exploring Ancient Lives](https://london.britishmuseum.org/exhibitions/egypt/collection3) from 16 March - 26 August 2018.

Featuring more than 200 artefacts from the world famous Egyptian collections of the British Museum, gain insight into the life and death of those six individuals who lived in Egypt between 3000 and 1800 years ago.

Discover how they were embalmed and what life along the Nile valley was like. Explore visualisations based on the CT scans of the mummies, as well as ancient texts, coffins, masks and funerary objects to unravel their mysteries.

• **Aussie Educator – student competitions**


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### Out of the Box Festival

Queensland Performing Arts Centre’s (QPAC) biennial festival for children aged eight years and under is returning this year from **26 June to 1 July 2018**. Out of the Box takes participants on a journey through cultures, tales and playful moments.

For the first time, Out of the Box is offering a one-ticket entry to the festival enabling all children to participate in all the in-theatre experiences and activities that they can fit into one day.

Teachers and educators can access a special preview of 2018’s festival highlights to help plan their itinerary. The full program will be announced in coming months.

You can find out more at the [festival website](https://clarenceriverartsfestival.com.au/junioryouth-art/).


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### State Library of Queensland

#### The Corner: Children's Picture Diaries

Runs every day from 10:00am – 3:00pm until 30th Nov 2018 (free).

The Corner is for children aged to 8 years where they can interact with artists through art-making, facilitated play and sharing stories. [View more information about this event](https://www.slq.qld.gov.au/families/reading/the-corner). Free.

#### Q ANZAC 100 Indigenous soldiers forum

22nd Jun 2018 10:00am-12:00pm

This forum will showcase research in Australia’s and particularly Queensland’s Indigenous service personnel. [View more information about this event](https://www.slq.qld.gov.au/australian-days/q-anzac-100-100-indigenous-soldiers-forum). Free – bookings required.

#### Our Sporting Greats: Murri and Ailan athletes in the spotlight


Use the following State Library of Queensland link to find your local library and to see what’s happening in your region: http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/visit-us/find-a-public-library.

Queensland Youth Week 2018

Our department’s commitment to all young people — ensuring no young person falls short of their potential — was reaffirmed during Queensland Youth Week this month with a foyer display in Brisbane City’s Education House to engage visitors and employees.

There are many situations where a young person may become disengaged from education, leaving them with limited future plans or pathways. The Youth Engagement Plan unites portfolios, government agencies, and school communities to enable young people to re-engage in education pathways, and to ensure that every student succeeds on a path of lifelong learning. We all play an integral role in supporting Queensland youth to succeed.

For further information, visit Youth Engagement’s website.

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Feature Article from The Conversation

The following article focuses on the positive results of therapy dogs in a school setting. However, it is feasible that many of the benefits identified would be replicated in a home education environment.

Therapy dogs can help reduce stress, anxiety and improve school attendance

Authors: Christine Grove, Educational Psychologist and Lecturer, Monash University and Linda Henderson, Senior Lecturer, Monash University

In the wake of the school shootings in Florida, therapy dogs have been used as a way to provide comfort and support for students returning to school. Research has shown therapy dogs can reduce stress and provide a sense of connection in difficult situations.

Given the impact therapy dogs can have on student well-being, schools and universities are increasingly adopting therapy dog programs as an inexpensive way of providing social and emotional support for students.

What are therapy dogs?

It’s important to note therapy dogs are not service dogs. A service dog is an assistance dog that focuses on its owner to the exclusion of all else. Service dogs are trained to provide specific support for individuals with disabilities such as visual or hearing difficulties, seizure disorders, mobility challenges, and/or diabetes.

The role of therapy dogs is to react and respond to people and their environment, under the guidance and direction of their owner. For example, an individual might be encouraged to gently pat or talk to a dog to teach sensitive touch and help them be calm.
The human-animal bond can impact people and animals in positive ways.

Therapy dogs can also be used as part of animal assisted therapy. This aims to improve a person’s social, cognitive and emotional functioning. A health care professional who uses a therapy dog in treatment may be viewed as less threatening, potentially increasing the connection between the client and professional.

There are also animal-assisted activities, which is an umbrella term covering many different ways animals can be used to help humans. One example is to facilitate emotional or physical mental health and wellbeing through pet therapy or the presence of therapy dogs. These activities aren’t necessarily overseen by a professional, nor are they specific psychological interventions.

Read more: More children are starting school depressed and anxious – without help, it will only get worse

Research suggests using therapy dogs in response to traumatic events can help reduce symptoms of depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and anxiety.

So, what can happen psychologically for people using therapy dogs?

The human-animal bond

The human-animal bond can impact people and animals in positive ways. Research shows therapy dogs can reduce stress physiologically (cortisol levels) and increase attachment responses that trigger oxytocin – a hormone that increases trust in humans.

Dogs also react positively to animal-assisted activities. In response to the human-animal bond, dogs produce oxytocin and decrease their cortisol levels when connecting with their owner. Often dogs feel the same when engaging in animal assisted activities as if they were at home, depending on the environmental context.

Benefits of therapy dogs

Animal assisted therapy can:
- teach empathy and appropriate interpersonal skills
- help individuals develop social skills
- be soothing and the presence of animals can more quickly build rapport between the professional and client
- improve individual’s skills to pick up social cues imperative to human relationships. Professionals can process that information and use it to help clients see how their behaviour affects others.

More recently, therapy dogs are being used as a form of engagement with students at school and university.

Benefits of therapy dogs at school

Research shows therapy dogs can be used to assist with social/emotional learning needs.

A recent report highlighted children working with therapy dogs experienced increased motivation for learning, resulting in improved outcomes.
Therapy dogs are being used to support children with social and emotional learning needs, which in turn can assist with literacy development.

Research into the effects of therapy dogs in schools is showing a range of benefits including:

- increase in school attendance
- gains in confidence
- decreases in learner anxiety behaviours resulting in improved learning outcomes, such as increases in reading and writing levels
- positive changes towards learning and improved motivation
- enhanced relationships with peers and teachers due to experiencing trust and unconditional love from a therapy dog. This in turn helps students learn how to express their feelings and enter into more trusting relationships.

To read the full article, please click on this link The Conversation.

CSIRO Science for kids
Many of our home educators love to subscribe to the CSIRO Double Helix magazine:
https://doublehelixshop.csiro.au/

CSIRO Double Helix webpage has loads of fun science information for children of all ages:

- Double Helix Lessons provides units of work and ideas to explore. Great for home educators.
- Cool Stuff – Stories and Activities - explore science concepts and discover the world around you using simple ingredients found in the home or at school.
- Register to receive the weekly Science by Email newsletter with great ideas for doing experiments, exploring scientific concepts and just learning about Science.
- Register to receive the weekly Maths by Email newsletter with great activities and ideas for exploring mathematical concepts.

Some Australian Apprenticeship Support Networks provide free services to job seekers.

The MEGT Website is an example of one group that provides assistance at no cost. A New Employment Services email is distributed weekly with general vacancies for all job seekers. Gateway Services provide a free-to-register online jobs board to help job seekers find an apprenticeship or traineeship.
Other great and free Science activities to promote Science learning and follow-up activities:

- **Watch** one of the many excellent Science programs available on ABC TV - you can find their schedule online:
  
  Go to the Teacher’s section to have a look at ideas for implementing the TV programs into lessons, [http://www.abc.net.au/schoolstv/](http://www.abc.net.au/schoolstv/) or
  
  Build a whole unit of work around the TV shows: [http://www.abc.net.au/tveducation/teachers/](http://www.abc.net.au/tveducation/teachers/)

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**Feature Article**

**The power of effective feedback**

Providing well-constructed feedback to students is an effective method for affirming effort, correcting and directing learning, identifying processes and encouraging self-evaluation (Hattie, 2009). Feedback provides educators and learners with information about past and current learning experiences and should inform future teaching and learning opportunities. Written feedback in particular, focused on content and processes, provides a reference tool to which learners can refer while completing future tasks. This will help to develop independence with learning and ensure continued engagement and progress.

Equally important, research has highlighted that feedback has more impact on student results than any other teaching strategy (Hattie, 2009). It is important, then, to understand how to provide effective feedback in order to maximise student understanding and educational outcomes in the home learning environment.

The following information summarises recommendations from various sources including Hattie (2009), Stenger (2014), The Australian Society for Evidence Based Teaching (2017) and the NSW Education Standards Authority (2018).

**How do you provide effective feedback?**

According to Hattie (2009) there are two key elements in providing effective feedback to learners: informing them of their current level of performance/understanding and telling them how they can improve their practice and/or content. How you deliver this feedback will vary depending on the task being completed and the learning abilities and needs of your child. It is important therefore to consider in detail how and when feedback becomes effective in helping your child’s understanding and learning progress.

1. **Affirming what has been done well**

   It is essential to tell your child what they have done well, or more accurately, what they have done correctly in completing a particular task (as well as telling them what they have done incorrectly if applicable). This affirmation is different from praising your child such as ‘good work’, ‘great effort’, or ‘well done’ as these comments focus on the person, not the work completed. Specifically outlining what has contributed to constructing a successful text including correct generic structure, having consideration of the audience or enhanced vocabulary/language features will help to reinforce the positive aspects of your child’s practice.

*Feedback provides learners with information about how well they are performing and how they could do better.*
2. Correcting and directing

Making errors when completing tasks is a normal part of learning. It is important, however, to ensure any mistakes are corrected and further direction is provided to ensure your child’s learning progresses. For example, if a Maths calculation is incorrect, highlight the error and write the correct method and/or calculation. For more complex tasks like research projects, you may need to give more detailed information, highlighting any information that is missing and providing relevant suggestions to strengthen findings.

3. Pointing out the process

Assisting your child’s understanding of correct processes in completing particular tasks will improve educational outcomes. While correcting and directing helps with specific tasks, adding point out the process feedback will assist students when they perform similar tasks in the future. For example, showing students the correct process for calculating the volume of a rectangular prism will be useful when they encounter another problem in future requiring these skills. If your child understands the importance and effectiveness of following correct procedures (to complete any task across the curriculum), their comprehension and outcomes will improve.

4. Coaching students to critique their own efforts

For more experienced and advanced learners, this strategy is effective when revision or evaluation is required for a particular process or generic structure. For example, a student may have been previously taught the generic process of writing a paragraph using the TEEL method (topic sentence, explanation, evidence, link), but still require further support. By encouraging self-evaluation, students will take greater ownership of the whole process of learning. Students could be asked questions like:

- What is the structure of a paragraph (using TEEL)?
- What aspects of this structure have you included and/or omitted?
- How could you improve your paragraph?

In conclusion, providing effective feedback is a powerful evidence-based teaching strategy that will improve student understanding and educational outcomes. Whether it is written or spoken, formal or informal, feedback should be timely and focused on particular knowledge, understanding and skills related to content and/or processes applied to an activity. This strategy, which allows for the monitoring or checking of student knowledge and understanding, is a critical element for an educator, as reflection on these interactions should inform future planning and lead to improved outcomes.

Acknowledgements

Effective Feedback (online)
http://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/support-materials/effective-feedback/
[accessed 2 November 2017]

Feedback: The First Secret John Hattie Revealed (online)
[accessed 2 November 2017]


Stenger, M 2014, 5 Research-Based Tips for Providing Students with Meaningful Feedback (online)
https://www.edutopia.org/blog/tips-providing-students-meaningful-feedback-marianne-stenger
[accessed 2 November 2017]