

Dear Parent/Caregiver

He mihi nui ki a koe,

Thank you for your request for information about homeschooling your child.

Please find below information about homeschooling and the key requirements you will need to include in your application. An application form is enclosed, should you decide to apply.

The Education Act 1989 says that the Secretary for Education must be satisfied that your child will be taught at least as regularly and well as in a registered school. This is to protect the rights of your child to an education. The information you provide with your application should be detailed enough to satisfy this requirement.

**Please note that if your child has turned 6 and has not yet turned 16 years old, he or she must be enrolled in *and* attending a registered school while an application for homeschooling is being processed**.

Finally, home schooling can be satisfying and rewarding. It is also a tremendous commitment for you as a parent. If you need more information before making an application, please contact your local Ministry of Education.

Heoi anō

## The Education Act 1989

In New Zealand it is the right of all children to have an education. Sections 20 and 25 of the Education Act 1989 state that children between the ages of 6 and 16 must at all times be enrolled at and attending a registered school whenever it is open.

However, as parents/guardians, you may apply for a Certificate of Exemption from enrolment at a registered school for your child under section 21 of the Education Act.

## Certificate of Exemption

Section 21 (1) (b) of the Education Act 1989, states that the child must be “**taught** at least as **regularly** and **well** as in a registered school” or “in the case of a person who would otherwise be likely to need special education, will be taught at least as regularly and well as in a special class or clinic or by a special service”.

When the application has been received by the Ministry of Education, the Manager will decide if the application shows that the child will be taught at least as regularly and well as in a registered school. The Ministry is required to be “satisfied” of this before issuing a certificate of exemption from enrolment in a registered school.

If the Ministry office needs further information they may write to you, telephone you or ask to see you. Please note that as part of the application process, the Ministry will contact the school your child attends. It is important to understand that asking for additional information is common practice in assessing applications for exemption.

On approval of your application, you will receive a Certificate of Exemption and you may begin homeschooling your child. A separate Certificate of Exemption is issued for each child.

If your application is declined, you will receive a letter explaining the reason for the decision. You have the right to appeal this decision. To appeal you should write to the Secretary for Education, PO Box 1666, Wellington 6140. The Secretary’s decision is final.

## Change of circumstances

You should contact your local Ministry of Education office if circumstances change after a Certificate of Exemption has been issued e.g. if you change your address, your child attends or enrols at school or you go overseas.

## Homeschooling Supervision Allowance

The homeschooling supervision allowance is paid in June and December each year and covers the preceding six months. The first payment for a child new to homeschooling will cover the period since the date of the issue of the Certificate of Exemption.

The annual amounts paid are:

* first child $743 second child $632
* third Child $521 subsequent children $372

Payment is subject to confirmation that you continue to meet the requirements under which the Certificate of Exemption was given. You must complete a statutory declaration to confirm this, twice a year.

## Statutory Declaration

The Statutory Declaration will be sent to your home address.

**Even if you do not wish to receive the supervision allowance, you must complete a statutory declaration twice each year. This assures the Ministry that homeschooling is continuing.**

The statutory declaration needs to be signed by a person authorised to do this by the Oaths and Declarations Act 1957. A list of authorised people is included on the statutory declaration.

If you do not return the statutory declaration by the date specified, you will receive a reminder. If the Ministry has still not received the statutory declaration by the date in the reminder letter, your child’s Certificate of Exemption will be automatically revoked. You will be responsible for managing the process if you are absent from your home address for any reason.

## The Education Review Office

The Education Review Office (ERO) monitors schooling in New Zealand including home schooling programmes, if requested by the Ministry of Education. Before visiting, an ERO staff member will contact you to provide information and arrange an appropriate time for a visit. Please note that to assist the ERO to perform its role, the Ministry will provide the ERO with a copy of your application. You are not required to provide the ERO with a separate copy. You may like to contact one of your local support groups for more information about how to prepare for an ERO review.

You will be given the opportunity to comment on the draft ERO report, but if the ERO report indicates concerns, the local Ministry office will ask you to show how you are addressing this.

If you cannot satisfy the ERO and the Ministry of Education regarding concerns, your Certificate of Exemption may be revoked.

## Healthcare services

Your child may be entitled to some of the same health services as children attending registered schools, such as health nurse, dental, hearing and vision services, but this depends on the nature of the service being requested. Queries regarding health services (e.g. access to dental therapists) should be directed to local health providers. The Ministry of Education is not able to advise on healthcare services and it is important that parents seek information where it might be reliably found.

## Te Aho O Te Kura Pounamu - The Correspondence School (Te Kura)

Homeschoolers with a Certificate of Exemption may purchase tuition from Te Kura. However, your child can take only two Te Kura courses at any one time. Taking more than two courses at a time constitutes full time enrolment at Te Kura and your Certificate of Exemption will expire.

If you wish to take Te Kura courses you will need to explain in your application to them that you will be using Te Kura to support part of your homeschooling programme. You remain responsible for your child’s overall programme.

## Making an application

Before deciding to apply, there are a number of things you should consider.

The Education Act 1989 says that the Secretary for Education must be satisfied that your child will be taught at least as regularly and well as in a registered school. This is to protect the rights of your child to an education. The information you provide with your application (Appendix A) should be detailed enough to satisfy this requirement.

Please provide the information, which is outlined below, in support of your application. The information is needed to assist the Ministry of Education to make an informed decision about issuing a Certificate of Exemption from enrolment. The Ministry cannot issue a Certificate of Exemption unless it is totally satisfied that you are willing and able to be responsible for an appropriate programme of education for your child.

To help you in your application, you will find enclosed:

* an explanation of the Ministry’s interpretation of the key words “at least as regularly and well as in a registered school”, referred to above (Appendix B)
* some notes to help you to complete the question on ethnicity (Appendix C)
* a checklist is also included for your convenience (Appendix D)
* frequently asked questions (Appendix E).

## Key requirements to outline in your application

### Special education needs

Many children and young people have special education needs. This can include children with learning difficulties, communication, emotional or behaviour difficulties, or intellectual, sensory or physical impairments. Section 21(1)(b)(ii) of the Education Act requires that before an exemption certificate is issued, the Ministry must be satisfied that a child ‘who would otherwise be likely to need special education, will be taught at least as regularly and well as in a special class or clinic or by a special service’.

The question to ask yourself is: If enrolled in a registered school, would your child be likely to need special education, for example in a special class or clinic or by a special service? If yes, how do you plan to meet and review your child’s special educational needs?

The Ministry will ask for an assessment report from the Ministry of Education’s Special Education division (especially for a new entrant 6 year old) in order to ascertain your child’s level of needs. The report will also assist the Ministry in establishing your ability to teach “at least as regularly and as well” as a school that would provide appropriate special education assistance.

Parents who are granted an exemption to homeschool a child with special education needs can seek advice and guidance from the Ministry’s Special Education division and some support may be available, for example, under the Ongoing and Resourcing Schemes (ORS). If your child is verified on one of the Ongoing and Resourcing Schemes, you will already have an assessment from Special Education that you may attach to your application.

Section 21(8) of the Act states that ‘if the Secretary thinks any person exempted under subsection (1) [of the Act] would be better off *“being taught in a special class or clinic or by a special service”*, the Secretary may revoke the certificate and issue a direction under section 9 of the Education Act.

Information is available from the Special Education pages on the Ministry’s website [www.minedu.govt.nz](http://www.minedu.govt.nz). For advice or referral you can email the Ministry at [special.education@minedu.govt.nz](mailto:special.education@minedu.govt.nz), or you can call the Special Education Information Line on 0800 622 222.

### Key requirement - broad curriculum areas

In your own words describe your **knowledge and understanding** of the broad curriculum you intend to cover as you educate your child.

**Curriculum** a**reas** – In your own words describe your **curriculum** or **programme**. Detail what you intend to cover with your child in different areas of your stated curriculum. Please provide an overview of your curriculum plan for the following year/s as well.

The New Zealand Curriculum or Te Marautanga o Aotearoa may serve as a guide but there use is not compulsory.

The New Zealand Curriculum lists eight learning areas and five key competencies.

Te Marautanga o Aotearoa describes the essential knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that kura and Māori-medium can use to ensure they achieve success for their learners. An English interpretation of the document is available online as well.

Although the key competencies, outlined in the New Zealand Curriculum, are acknowledged throughout Te Marautanga o Aotearoa they are not explicitly outlined in the document. Learners in kura and Māori-medium are encouraged to be guided by the development of a graduate profile. Details of this are outlined in the document.

Below are links if you wish to use the New Zealand Curriculum or Te Marautanga o Aotearoa as a guide.

<http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/> and <http://tmoa.tki.org.nz>

If your application for exemption is approved, you will be eligible to receive The New Zealand Curriculum or Te Marautanga o Aotearoa free of charge on production of a copy of your Certificate of Exemption. You can also receive the Literacy Learning Progressions and the Number Framework for a small charge.

The documents are available from <http://www.thechair.minedu.govt.nz>

They are also available on the Ministry’s TKI website [www.tki.org.nz](http://www.tki.org.nz)

**The learning areas used in New Zealand Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **New Zealand Curriculum**  **Learning areas** | **Te Marautanga o Aotearoa**  **Wahanga Ako** |
| English  The Arts  Health and physical education  Learning languages  Mathematics and statistics  Science  Social sciences  Technology | Te Reo Māori  Ngā Toi  Hauora  Ngā Reo  Pāngarau  Pūtaiao  Tikanga ā Iwi  Hāngarau  Te Reo Pākehā |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Key competencies** | **Te āhua o ā tātou ākonga** |
| Thinking  Using language, symbols and text  Managing self  Relating to others  Participating and contributing | Ngā tino traumata mātauranga, me ngā tikanga Māori  Te whānuitanga o ngā tūmomo pūkenga waiora  Te whānuitanga o ngā kōwhiringa tūranga mahi |

Many year 11 -13 students may wish to take NCEA subjects. If so, you will need to contact the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) to arrange this.

Whatever curriculum you select, you should specify the skills you want your child to learn and you should be clear about matching your child’s learning needs to your programme.

### Key requirement - topic plan

To help the Ministry understand how your curriculum vision translates into practical terms, we ask you to include a description of how you would approach the teaching of one topic of your choosing. We are looking for the following elements in your statement:

### The topic title

### The learning goals - what you are going to teach your child? What learning goals are you setting for your child?

### Resources - what materials you would use to teach the topic?

### Methods - what steps would you take to communicate/teach the material to your child?

### Progress and achievement How will you know that your child has met the aims you have set in this topic? How will you know that the learning goals have been achieved?

### Key requirement - resources and reference material

Please provide a comprehensive list of all **resources and reference material** available to you. Also list the type of material you may intend to include in the future. Do not list the titles of every publication.

### Key requirement - environment, community and social contact

State how you will use the **environment** and your **community** to extend and enrich your child’s education. Please include in this a description of educational visits you intend to undertake and how you will provide for your child’s need for **social contact**.

### Key requirement - progress and achievement

In your own words describe your plan for how you will assess your child’s progress and therefore the teaching and learning programme. Aims or learning objectives should be specific, measureable, appropriate, achievable and regularly assessed.

Remember, you will need to have a record of progress and achievement over time i.e. weekly, termly, annually. This may also be needed when your child goes on to further education or training.

### Key requirement - regularity

Section 21 of the Education Act requires a commitment to **regularity**.In explaining your routines, show how you will meet the requirement that your child will be taught **at least as regularly**as in a registered school. Some applicants provide a timetable to meet this request, some describe their integrated approach. You may like to include one of the following:

* timetable or
* integrated curriculum description or
* description of typical routines used.

### Other information

Please make any other comments you consider relevant.

### Advice and guidance

Many groups and organisations of homeschoolers operate throughout New Zealand. They are able to provide assistance and support to homeschooling parents in many ways. To find out about such groups, the Google website (using search words such as *homeschooling NZ or home educating*) or your local telephone book is likely to provide contact details. The Ministry of Education local offices may also have a list of local groups.

Contact your local Ministry office if you have any questions relating to the application form.

**Local offices and telephone numbers**

Whangarei (09) 436 8900

Auckland (09) 632 9400

Hamilton (07) 858 7130

Rotorua (07) 349 7399

Napier (06) 833 6730

Wanganui (06) 349 6300

Lower Hutt (04) 463 8699

Nelson (03) 546 3470

Christchurch (03) 378 7300

Dunedin (03) 471 5200

Invercargill (03) 211 8000