

Guidelines for Partial Enrolment for Registered Home Schooled Students

1. Background

The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (the Act) requires that all children of compulsory school age (6 to 17 years) are enrolled in a school or registered for home schooling. Under the Act, the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) has responsibility for the registration of home schooling students. It is a requirement of registration that a home schooled child receives regular and efficient instruction that, taken as a whole, substantially addresses the eight learning areas in the Act (unless the VRQA grants an exemption); and is consistent with the principles and practice of Australian democracy. Parents must also submit a learning plan that is appropriate to the educational needs of the child with their application for registration. Further information on registration requirements is provided in the *Guide to Home Education in Victoria*.

The Department of Education and Training (the Department) is committed to making various support mechanisms available to home education families. This includes allowing home education students to partially enrol at their neighbourhood Government school for specific activities, as agreed by the school and parent. The intent of this policy is to enable home educated students to access specialised equipment or expertise that a home schooling family may not ordinarily be able to access.

These Guidelines clarify the requirements and processes associated with partial enrolment arrangements.

2. Guiding principles

A partial enrolment arrangement should be based on the following principles:

- the parent/s registered for home education retain/s responsibility for providing an education program for their child (as per the requirements of registration)
- a partnership approach between the school and the parent of a home educated student
- full inclusion and participation in all aspects of the program or activity in which the child is enrolled.

3. Enrolment conditions and responsibilities

A parent of a home educated student may approach their neighbourhood Government school to request to partially enrol their child (of compulsory school age) to participate in specific subjects or activities as they are provided to full-time students, including sport, art, maths, science, a language or the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) test. Post-compulsory school age subjects and activities do not form part of partial enrolment arrangements.

Principals should accept a partial enrolment arrangement where they are able to do so, e.g. having regard to the class size limit in a particular year level and/or subject area. The appropriate year level for the partial enrolment should be determined in consultation with the parent. Principals have the discretion to decline or cancel an enrolment where there are reasonable grounds for doing so, such as where the school's capacity to accept the enrolment changes. Complaints regarding declined or cancelled partial enrolments that are unable to be resolved at the school level should be referred to the relevant DET Regional Office.

Parents and school principals each have responsibilities in establishing a partial enrolment arrangement, which differ slightly depending on whether or not the student is already registered for home schooling, as outlined below.

a. *Students already registered for home schooling*

Parents of students already registered for home schooling must:

- provide the school with a copy of the official letter issued by the VRQA confirming their child's registration for home schooling. This letter is provided to parents by the VRQA upon successful registration, and is the only form of evidence the principal can accept that proves the child is registered for home schooling

- discuss with the school principal the conditions of the arrangement, including the enrolment and review period, attendance requirements, expectations around adherence to school-level policies and access to extracurricular activities
- advise the VRQA in writing of the agreed partial enrolment arrangement
- make relevant parent payments for essential education items (see section 7 below).

School principals, in consultation with the parents of the home schooled student, determine:

- the enrolment period and frequency in which the enrolment arrangement may be reviewed (e.g. annually), noting that a school's capacity to enrol a student in specified activities may change from year to year
- the educational program to be delivered for the relevant subject/s
- the attendance requirements, including whether a partially enrolled student is permitted to remain at the school before or after the specific activity (e.g. during lunch and recess breaks, or where the child may be reliant on intermittent public transport, such as rural buses)
- the level of adherence that is expected towards school-level policies and procedures, including in relation to student dress code and student welfare and management policies
- what, if any, student support programs or extracurricular activities partially enrolled home schooled students can access (e.g. student wellbeing support, out of school hours care, camps, excursions, school concerts and performances).

b. Students not yet registered for home schooling

Parents seeking partial enrolment as part of their home schooling registration application should:

- approach a school principal to seek in-principle agreement to a partial enrolment arrangement before they apply for registration from the VRQA
- discuss with the school principal the conditions of the arrangement, including the enrolment and review period, attendance requirements, expectations around adherence to school-level policies and access to extracurricular activities
- if agreed in principle, indicate this arrangement on their home schooling registration form and provide the principal's completed *Notice of Intention to Partially Enrol a Student (template attached)* as part of their application
- if the application is approved by the VRQA, provide a copy of their official registration letter from the VRQA to the school principal as evidence, and work with the principal to finalise the details of the partial enrolment arrangement
- advise the VRQA in writing of any subsequent changes to the agreed partial enrolment arrangements
- make relevant parent payments for essential education items (see section 7 below).

School principals, in consultation with the parents, determine:

- whether to agree in principle to accept a partial enrolment and the details, including the enrolment period and frequency in which the enrolment arrangement may be reviewed (e.g. annually), noting that a school's capacity to enrol a student in specified activities may change from year to year
- if agreed in principle, complete a *Notice of Intention to Partially Enrol a Student (template attached)* and provide it to the parents for them to submit as part of their home schooling registration application
- if the application is approved by the VRQA and the parent provides evidence of this in the form of the official VRQA registration letter, work with the parent to finalise the details of the partial enrolment arrangement, including determining:
 - the attendance requirements, including whether a partially enrolled student is permitted to remain at the school before or after the specific activity (e.g. during lunch and recess breaks, or where the child may be reliant on intermittent public transport, such as rural buses)
 - the educational program to be delivered for the relevant subject/s
 - the level of adherence that is expected towards school-level policies and procedures, including in relation to student dress code and student welfare and management policies

- what, if any, student support programs or extracurricular activities partially enrolled home schooled students can access (e.g. student wellbeing support, out of school hours care, camps, excursions, school concerts and performances).

In circumstances where the principal agrees to enrol the student, normal enrolment policies and procedures apply, including completion of all relevant forms.

4. Attendance requirements

All usual attendance procedures and requirements apply to partial enrolments:

- home education students are expected to attend at all times when the activity in which they have enrolled is delivered by the school
- unless otherwise agreed, they are also expected to participate in all aspects of the program in which they are enrolled (including related camps and excursions).

As noted in section 3, the school principal, in consultation with the parent, has the discretion to decide whether a partially enrolled student is permitted to remain at the school before or after the specified activity, including during lunch-time and recess breaks or where the child may be reliant on intermittent public transport, such as rural buses.

5. Assessment and reporting

If the activity the student is enrolled to undertake is the subject of assessment, then it is expected that standard assessment and reporting policies and procedures apply. That is, parents of partially enrolled students will be eligible to receive a report on their child's progress in the specified activity.

Partially enrolled students will be eligible to sit the NAPLAN test. This can only be administered in a school-based setting. Students sitting the NAPLAN test will receive an Individual Student Report, which will be delivered to the school the student was partially enrolled at. The student's results will be confidential to the parent and will not be included in the school results (e.g. myschool -- <https://www.myschool.edu.au/>).

For more information on student reporting see:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/support/Pages/studentreports.aspx>

6. Funding implications

Subject to existing conditions, students enrolled as at the February Census will attract funding through the Student Resource Package (SRP) on a pro-rata basis.

A government school wishing to partially enrol a registered home education student with a disability may be eligible for supplementary funding through the Program for Students with Disabilities on a pro-rata basis, if the student meets the relevant eligibility criteria.

For more information on the SRP see:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/management/finance/Pages/srp.aspx>

7. Parent payments

The *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* affirms that students of compulsory school age enrolled in Victorian government schools are entitled to free instruction in the standard curriculum program. In accordance with the Department's policy:

- Parents of partially enrolled students are expected to make relevant parent payments for essential education items. This should be on a pro-rata basis, where appropriate.
- Parents can also be invited to make voluntary financial contributions, subject to existing legislative principles.

For more information on parent payments see:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/management/Pages/parentpayments.aspx>

8. Student transport

Access to student bus services and/or a conveyance allowance is subject to normal eligibility criteria. In accordance with existing procedures, this is dependent on the authorisation of the school principal.

9. Further information

Additional information on home education is available on the Department's website at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/primary/Pages/homeschool.aspx>

Further details regarding the registration requirements for can be accessed on the VRQA's website at www.vrqa.vic.gov.au

[TEMPLATE]

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority
Home Schooling Officer
GPO Box 2317
Melbourne VIC 3001

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO PARTIALLY ENROL A STUDENT

This letter confirms that I have agreed to accept a partial enrolment request from [name of applicant] for [student's name] as part of their proposed home education program.

This partial enrolment arrangement will allow [student's name] to attend [name of school] for the following subjects and/or activities:

- [List each subject/activity and the indicative number of hours/days the student will attend each week]
- [Refer to the *Guidelines for Partial Enrolment for Registered Home Schooled Students* for further information about the roles and responsibilities of parents and Principals in establishing a partial enrolment arrangement].

This arrangement is valid from [start date] until [end date].

I will finalise the details of this arrangement with [name of applicant] once they provide a copy of the official letter issued by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) confirming their child's home schooling registration.

Yours sincerely

[Name]

Principal, [Name of school]

/ /2018

Disclaimer: This form is to be provided by the parent/s as an attachment to the registration for home schooling request form and does not in itself constitute registration for home schooling.