

MINISTERIAL INSTRUCTION

NO 15 EARLY ENTRY TO SCHOOL

Statement

This Ministerial Instruction applies to state and non-government schools. The purpose of this Ministerial Instruction is to specify the requirements for early enrolment of children who, due to their age, do not satisfy the school starting age requirements in the *Education Act 2016*.

Date published: 25 January 2018

Ministerial Instruction No 15 Early Entry to School

I, Jeremy Rockliff, being the Minister for Education and Training, make the following instruction, for the purposes of Section 6 (2)(a) of the *Education Act 2016*.

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this Ministerial Instruction is to specify the requirements for early enrolment of children who, due to their age, do not satisfy the school starting age requirements in the *Education Act 2016*.

2. Scope

This Instruction applies to all state schools and non-government schools.

This Instruction comes into effect on 25 January 2018.

3. Instructions

3.1. School starting age – The *Education Act 2016* specifies that:

- 3.1.1. A child who attains the age of 4 years on or before January 1 in any year is entitled to be enrolled and attend a State school in that year for kindergarten.
- 3.1.2. A child who attains the age of 4 years on or before 1 January in any year may be enrolled at and attend a non-government school in that year for kindergarten in accordance with the policy of the school.
- 3.1.3. A child who attains the age of 5 years on or before 1 January in any year must be enrolled at and attend a school in that year for Prep.

3.2. Criteria for Early Entry

A child who does not satisfy the school starting age requirements can only be accepted for early entry into a school for Kindergarten or Prep if they are;

- (a) Eligible under the Mobile Category Agreement for interstate students, or
- (b) Eligible under the Gifted Category and accepted for enrolment by the *Early Entry to School Cross Sectoral Placement Committee*.

3.3. Mobile Category Agreement

- 3.3.1. To ensure a child moving to Tasmania from interstate is not disadvantaged in their progress through the school system, a child can seek early entry under the national Mobile Category Agreement.
- 3.3.2. A child who has previously been enrolled in a school in another state or territory is eligible to apply.

3.3.3. A Principal is to accept the enrolment if satisfied:

- (a) that evidence of an interstate enrolment is provided, and
- (b) the enrolment is in the best interests of the child.

3.3.5 A child whose family can demonstrate that they are likely to move to another state or territory during, or soon after, their first year of school is eligible to apply.

3.3.6 A Principal is to accept the enrolment if satisfied that:

- a) the evidence of an interstate move that is provided demonstrates that they are likely to move to another state or territory during, or soon after their first year old schooling; and
- b) the enrolment is in the best interests of the child.

3.4. Gifted Category

3.4.1. To be considered for early to Kindergarten or Prep in the gifted category a child must:

- (i) be aged at least 3 years and 6 months of age as at 1 January of the year of commencing kindergarten; or
- (ii) be aged at least 4 years and 6 months of age as at 1 January of the year of commencing Prep;

and either

- (i) be assessed in the top two percent of the population for cognitive function, through an assessment by a registered psychologist. The recommended testing instrument is the Wechsler Preschool & Primary Scale of Intelligence – Fourth Edition Australian Standardised Edition (WPPSI-IV Australian), or
- (ii) be close to the top two percent and be considered by the Early Entry to School Cross Sectoral Placement Committee to have special circumstances that justify the early entry. Where Early Entry for kindergarten is approved in this circumstance, the approval may be granted as provisional, subject to the condition of a review by the Committee before commencing Prep.

3.4.2. Early Entry to School Cross Sectoral Placement Committee (the Committee)

3.4.2.1. The purpose of the Committee is to assess applications for Early Entry under the Gifted Category.

- 3.4.2.2. The Committee is to operate in accordance with the *Early Entry to School Cross Sectoral Placement Committee – Terms of Reference*.
- 3.4.2.3. The Committee is to be chaired by a Deputy Secretary of the Department of Education.
- 3.4.2.4. The committee must include three appointed positions and three advertised positions.
- 3.4.2.5. Appointed positions are ongoing positions and filled by people nominated by the organisations they represent. Appointed positions on the Committee include;
 - i. A representative from the Catholic Education Office
 - ii. A representative from Independent Schools Tasmania
 - iii. A parent representative, nominated by the Tasmanian Association for the Gifted (TAG)
- 3.4.2.6. Advertised positions are for a period of two years and are filled through an expression of interest process managed by the Chair. The maximum period for serving on the Committee is three consecutive periods. Initiations for expressions of interest are to be circulated to all school sectors and private psychologists before the end of July in the year of appointment. Advertised positions on the Committee include;
 - i. A school principal
 - ii. An early childhood teacher
 - iii. A registered psychologist

3.4.3. Application process

- 3.4.4. The Committee will establish and manage the annual application process for Early Entry to school under the Gifted Category.
- 3.4.5. Parents must complete the *Early Entry to School for Gifted Students Application form* and submit to the School of enrolment by August 31 in the year prior to the child attending Kindergarten or Prep.
- 3.4.6. A psychologist must complete the *Psychologists Assessment Summary form*. This form must be submitted to the Committee in support of the application prior to the Committee meeting in October.
- 3.4.7. The Committee must assess applications in accordance with the criteria in 3.4.1 of this Instruction and the assessment process in the *Early Entry to School Cross Sectoral Placement Committee – Terms of Reference*
- 3.4.8. The Committee must notify the Parent and school Principal in writing with the outcome of the application.

3.5. Review of decision

- 3.5.1. A Parent is entitled to discuss the decision made by the Committee with the Chair of the Committee.
- 3.5.2. A Parent may apply to the Education Registrar for a review on the basis that the process set out in this Ministerial Instruction was not followed by the Committee.
- 3.5.3. The Education Registrar, upon application from a Parent must review the process that the Committee undertook to make the decision. This review is to determine whether the process for considering an application for Gifted Early entry was followed.
- 3.5.4. The Registrar may request such information considered necessary to undertake the review.
- 3.5.5. Should the Registrar determine that the committee did not follow the process set out in this Ministerial Instruction, the Registrar is to refer the matter back to the Committee.

4. Definitions

As per the *Education Act 2016*.

5. Details

Minister Authorisation:	Jeremy Rockliff
Date authorised:	25 January 2018
Contact Business Unit:	Education Act Implementation
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6. History of Changes

Effective date	Last update date	Policy version no.	Notes
29 September 2017	22 January 2018	3	Amended Section 3.3 to ensure Tasmanian students moving interstate are able to apply for early entry under the Mobile Category Agreement.

Please refer to the online version located on the Department's Intranet to ensure this is the most recent copy.