



## **Home Schooling**

### **# 200.16**

<b>Adopted:</b>	April 21, 2001
<b>Last Reviewed/Revised:</b>	January 26, 2021
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Superintendent of Education
<b>Next Scheduled Review:</b>	2024-2025

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#### **POLICY STATEMENT:**

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (BHNCDSB) recognizes the need to provide a distinctive Catholic Education for all of the students in its jurisdiction. The Board respects the rights of parent(s)/guardian(s) who decide to home school their children. Parent(s)/guardian(s) who home school are expected to provide satisfactory schooling. The Board respects the right of parent(s)/guardian(s) to educate their children in the home. The Board also sees the need to describe the expected working relationship and connection between staff of the Board and parent(s)/guardian(s) of home-schooled children. Furthermore, the BHNCDSB provides parent(s)/guardian(s) and students appropriate data, information, and educational considerations necessary to make an informed decision regarding homeschooling a child.

It is the responsibility of the Board to excuse children from attendance at school in accordance with Section 21(2) clause of the Education Act.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students continue to be invited to connect with their school Principal. Parent(s)/guardian(s) can also opt to be kept informed of school events through the regular electronic notification system. Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students will also be encouraged to maintain a connection with the school parish to continue in their faith formation especially in regard to preparation for the sacraments of Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation.

#### **APPLICATION AND SCOPE:**

To provide guidelines for schools and parent(s)/guardian(s) with respect to home schooling of children. At the parent(s)/guardian(s) request, a child can legally be excused from attendance at school for an academic year and a renewal request can be submitted each year in September.

See Appendix A for an Introduction to Home Schooling for parent(s)/guardian(s) and Appendix B for Frequently Asked Questions about Home Schooling.

#### **Responsibilities**

##### **School Board**

- Monitors the home schooling of students excused from daily attendance in accordance with the Education Act, Provincial Regulation and Administrative Procedures of this policy; and
- Provides timely and relevant educational information on request of the parent.

“When parent(s)/guardian(s) give a board written notification of their intent to provide home schooling for their child, the board should consider the child to be excused from attendance at school, in accordance with subsection 21(2), clause (a), of the Education Act. The board should accept the written notification of the parent(s)/guardian(s) each year as evidence that the parent(s)/guardian(s) are providing satisfactory instruction at home” PPM 131.”



### **Principal**

- Facilitates the application process ensuring adherence to subsection 21 (2), clause (a), of the Education Act;
- May invite the family to a discernment meeting and if following the meeting, the family is moving forward with homeschooling, forwards the request to the Superintendent for approval; and
- Invites the family to a meeting in June to review the family's intentions for the following school year.

### **Parent(s)/Guardian(s)**

- Completes the application process, plans, and implements the home-schooling program, and assesses and evaluates student achievement; and
- Initiates ongoing conversation with school board staff to ensure understanding or yearly educational opportunities.

### **Information**

#### **The Home-Schooling program should focus on the following:**

- A satisfactory plan for educating the child;
- Plan to ensure literacy and numeracy at developmentally appropriate levels;
- Plan for assessing the child's achievement;
- Transition plan (where applicable) for students who will enter Secondary school following home schooling during Elementary school years;
- Transition plan (where applicable) for students who will enter Post-secondary education following home schooling during Secondary school years; and
- The home-schooling parent has access to the student's OSR through the principal. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to retain an open working relationship with the school, in the best interest of the student(s).

#### **Ministry of Education Curriculum Material**

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) who are providing home schooling may obtain curriculum policy documents and curriculum support materials through the Ministry of Education ([www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca)). Requests for Religion and Family Life resources are processed at the Catholic Education Centre.

#### **Courses Offered through the Independent Learning Centre and other Sources Support by the Ministry of Education**

If a parent/guardian has notified the school of the intent to provide home schooling, the parent/guardian may enroll their child in secondary courses offered through the Independent Learning Centre (ILC) and other providers.

To enroll a child being home schooled with external providers, the parent/guardian must submit:

- the enrolment form to the provider;
- the written excusal from attendance provided by the school to the parent(s)/guardian(s) that acknowledges the parent(s)/guardian(s)' intent to home school the child;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) may obtain information pertaining to course fees directly from each specific provider; and
- Students taking courses through providers external to school Boards are normally required to pay an administration fee for each course taken.



**Parent(s)/guardian(s) who have given a school written notification of their intent to provide home schooling may request access to the following:**

#### **EQAO Assessments**

- Grades 3, 6, and 9 and/or the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (normally given to students in Grade 10), all of which are administered by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO).
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) must contact their home school by September 30 of the school year in which the assessments/tests are being conducted for information about the dates, times, and locations.
- It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to provide transportation to and from the assessment site. The school will provide space for these students at the time and on the dates that assessments/tests are being administered to the Board's regular day school students.
- The school will request sufficient assessment/test materials from the EQAO so that the students who are receiving home schooling can participate.
- Schools will send assessment/test results to their homes.
- Note: The results of students who are receiving home schooling will not be included in school and Board reports generated by the EQAO.

#### **Wellness Supports**

- Families in which children are receiving home schooling have access to Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care school health support and personal support services (and equipment) through the local Community Care Access Centres (CCACs) of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.
- Families can be directed to the Board's Mental Health Lead for information.

#### **Faith Formation**

- Requests for Religion and Family Life resources are processed through the Catholic Education Centre. There are also a number of resources available through the Institute for Catholic Education.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students are also encouraged to maintain a connection with the school parish to continue in their faith formation especially in regard to preparation for the sacraments of Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation.

#### **REFERENCES:**

- Education Act, Sections 21, 24, 25, 26, 30
- P/PM 131 (June 2002)
- Ministry of Education [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca)

#### **FORMS:**

- Appendix A
- Appendix B
- Home School Application Form A
- Home School Response Form B
- Home School Investigation Form C

#### **DEFINITIONS:**

**Part-Time Enrolment:** It is preferred for students to be enrolled full time. If a parent/guardian requests part-time enrolment, arrangements must be made with the Principal of the student's community school. Part-time student expectations in regard to attendance, course work, and assessment and evaluation, are the same for all students. The student will be enrolled on the part-time register.

**Full-time Enrolment/Return to School:** Should a Home-Schooled student wish to return to school on a full-time basis, parent(s)/guardian(s) need to meet with the Principal of the school. The Principal will determine whether an assessment will be required for educational placement.



**Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR):** Prior learning includes the knowledge and skills that students have acquired, in both formal and informal ways, outside secondary school. Where such learning has occurred outside Ontario classrooms, students enrolled in Ontario Secondary schools and inspected private schools may have their skills and knowledge evaluated against the expectations outlined in provincial curriculum policy documents in order to earn credits towards the secondary school diploma. This formal evaluation and accreditation process is known as PLAR. PLAR procedures are carried out under the direction of the school principal, who is responsible for granting credits.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:**

### **1.0 Parent(s)/Guardian(s)**

- a) Provides written notification to the school principal (Form A attached – *Letter to Superintendent Indicating Notification of Intent to Provide Home Schooling*), where the student is currently attending, or is eligible to attend, of their decision to home school. The principal will provide parent(s)/guardian(s) with the Board policy and appropriate forms.
- b) Completes the appropriate forms.
- c) Communicates to the school Administrator that a satisfactory plan is in place for home schooling.
- d) Keeps the school principal informed of any change in address or telephone number.
- e) Provides written notification each year prior to September 1st to the appropriate Superintendent of Education in whose jurisdiction the child is eligible to attend, as evidence of provision of satisfactory instruction at home.
- f) Plans and implements the home-schooling program and assesses and evaluates student achievement.

### **2.0 Superintendent of Education**

- a) The Superintendent of Education will excuse the student from attendance at school, in accordance with subsection 21(2), clause (a), of the Education Act, upon receipt of written notification.
- b) The Superintendent of Education will accept annual written notification as evidence that satisfactory instruction is being provided. The annual notification letter will be filed in the OSR at the student's home school.
- c) The Superintendent of Education provides a written excusal from school attendance as per the Education Act in the form of a letter of acknowledgment to the Parents/guardians/guardians (Form B).
- d) If the Superintendent of Education and school principal have reasonable grounds to believe that the instruction being provide is not satisfactory, an investigation should be initiated.

### **3.0 Principal**

- a) The principal will ensure that an Ontario School Record (OSR) is on file for the home-schooled student. The OSR will be established in accordance with the OSR Guidelines. All correspondence is to be filed in the OSR. The OSR is to be transferred at age appropriate times (e.g., Grade 8 to Grade 9).
- b) The principal will establish a part-time register for students who are participating in school programs on a part- time basis (i.e., music, French).
- c) The principal may invite home schooled students to participate in school-related activities as appropriate.
- d) Principals will maintain a list of all home-schooled students each year for management of OSR expectations.

## **Investigation of Satisfactory Schooling**

### **1.0 Reasons for an Investigation (Form C)**

- a) Refusal of a parent to notify the Board in writing of the intent to provide home schooling.
- b) A credible report of concern by a third party with respect to the instruction being provided in the home.
- c) Evidence that the child was removed from attendance at school because of ongoing conflicts with the school, not for the purpose of home schooling.
- d) A history of absenteeism by the child prior to the parent notifying the Board of their intent to provide home schooling.



**2.0 Guidelines for Conducting an Investigation**

- a) The Superintendent, in consultation with the school principal, will determine when an investigation should be initiated.
- b) If an investigation is to be conducted, the Superintendent will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) and follow up with written documentation (see Form C).
- c) The Superintendent and home school principal, through the principal, will meet with the family. The parent will be requested to submit in writing, information about the home schooling that focuses on the following:
  - i. A plan for educating the child.
  - ii. Plans to ensure literacy and numeracy at developmentally appropriate levels.
  - iii. Plans for assessing the child's achievement.
  - iv. Any appropriate plans for transition.
- d) The Superintendent will inform the Director of Education of the action taken.
- e) If a decision cannot be made based on the investigation to determine if the child is receiving satisfactory instruction at home, further action may be taken in accordance with subsection 24(2) of the Education Act (Inquiry by Provincial Attendance Counsellor).

**3.0 Placement Upon Return to an Ontario School**

- a) Should a home-schooled student wish to return to school on a full-time basis, parent(s)/guardian(s) need to meet with the Principal of the school.
- b) The Principal will determine whether an assessment will be required for educational placement.
  - i. In most cases, the student will be placed in an age-appropriate grade in Elementary.
  - ii. For a student returning to Secondary, an assessment of prior learning including the knowledge and skills that the student has acquired both formally and informally outside of an Ontario Secondary school. The Secondary school principal and in-school team will determine placement in courses.



# INTRODUCTION TO HOME SCHOOLING

## FOR PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S)

Parent(s)/guardian(s) in Ontario have a right to choose to educate their child(ren) at home. A child under the age of eighteen is excused from attendance if "...the child is receiving satisfactory instruction at home or elsewhere". The Ministry of Education does not define or describe "satisfactory instruction". It should not be assumed that home schooling must resemble regular day schooling in substance or format.

The following sections of the Education Act are relevant to this policy:

- Subsection 21(1) requires every child to attend school from the age of six until the age of eighteen.
- Subsection 21(2) lists the legal reasons that a child may be excused from attending school. One of the reasons is that "the child is receiving satisfactory instruction at home or elsewhere", stated in clause (a).
- Subsection 21(5) requires parent(s)/guardian(s) to send children to school.
- Subsection 21(1) deals with the appointment of the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor, and subsection 24(2) sets out the authority and mandate of the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor to conduct an inquiry into the reasons for, and other circumstances related to, a child's non-attendance at school.
- Section 25 deals with the appointment by school boards of school attendance counselors and authorizes a school attendance counselor to enforce compulsory school attendance.
- Section 26 sets out the duties and powers of school attendance counselors.
- Section 30 deals with prosecution of parent(s)/guardian(s) for a child's non-attendance at school.
- Subsection 30(7) authorizes a court to order an inquiry under subsection 24(2).

Our best mechanism to ensure that a child's developmental and educational needs are being met is to maintain a positive, open relationship with families who elect to home school their children to the best extent possible.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT HOME SCHOOLING

- Q. What is the difference between “home schooling” and “home instruction”?**
- A. Home schooling is the provision of satisfactory instruction by a parent outside of the regular school system. Home instruction is the provision of a limited amount of instruction to a pupil who is temporarily unable to attend school or a portion of school due to illness or injury.
- Q. Are Principals required to meet with parent(s)/guardians(s) to review their education plan for their child?**
- A. As the parent(s)/guardian(s) have made the decision to home school, responsibility for providing satisfactory instruction rests with them. The absence of articulated Ministry of Education standards for “satisfactory instruction” makes the assessment of the program arbitrary. Principals are encouraged to meet with families to offer support, answer questions and establish ongoing communication.
- Q. Does the school pay a role in evaluating the child’s progress?**
- A. No. Assessment and evaluation are an important part of the instructional process; therefore, the responsibility rests with the person(s) providing the homeschooling program.
- Q. Can parent(s)/guardian(s) ask that resources be provided to them?**
- A. The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board does not provide resources for home schooling. Parent(s)/guardian(s) can access the Ministry of Education website (<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>) to get program information, can contact publishers to purchase materials, or may purchase materials at a retail teachers’ store.
- Q. Where is a student placed on his/her return to our system after being home schooled?**
- A. It is the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board’s position that a child will be placed in the age- appropriate grade. Students of secondary school age will be placed in accordance with Ministry program and student placement policy.
- Q. What is the role of the School Attendance Counsellor with regard to children who are being home schooled?**
- A. When the school Board cannot confidently determine whether a child is receiving satisfactory instruction, a request to the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor may be made by the Family of Schools Superintendent of Education. Before requesting an inquiry by the Provincial School Attendance Counsellor, the Board will have exhausted all normal means and processes in communicating with the family to determine whether the child is receiving satisfactory instruction.





**Brant Haldimand Norfolk  
Catholic District School Board**

**Administrative Procedure  
Home Schooling  
Form B**

**LETTER IN RESPONSE TO A PARENT'S NOTIFICATION**

Dear

Thank you for notifying the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board of your intent to provide home schooling for your children:

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Your child(ren) is/are excused from attendance at school for the year \_\_\_\_\_ under subsection 21(2) clause (a) of the Education Act, because your child(ren) is/are receiving satisfactory schooling at home.

If you would like your child(ren) to participate in the assessments for students in Grades 3, 6, and 9, and/or in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (normally given to student in Grade 10), that are administered by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO), contact the school board by September 30 *[or another date specified by the school board]* for information about the dates, times and locations.

Enclosed please find a copy of Policy/Program Memorandum No. 131, "Home Schooling", issued by the Ministry of Education.

Sincerely,

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Signature of School Board Official

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Name of School Board Official (Print)

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Title of School Board Official

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Date

Attachment

Copy: Principal of Home School  
S01 OSR (each student listed above)



**INVESTIGATION INTO HOME SCHOOLING**

Please complete this form and return it to the school board, along with the additional material requested below. If you need more space, attach additional sheets.

<b>Name of Parent/Guardian:</b>	
<b>Home Address:</b>	
	<b>Postal Code:</b>
<b>Home Telephone:</b>	(       )
<b>Child's Name:</b>	

**Program Planning:**

This section is intended to give the Board information on your short and long range plans for your child's education.

Please describe your plan for your child's learning by answering the following questions:

Do you make instructional plans?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you spend regularly planned instructional time with your child?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a daily work schedule for your child's home schooling?	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

If yes, please describe the schedule:

1. What subjects are you teaching?

2. What do you expect to accomplish with your child(ren) in English, mathematics, and other subject areas this year?



**Instructional Program:**

This section is intended to give the Board information on the curriculum you follow.

Is your instructional program based on any of the elementary or secondary curriculum policy documents published by the Ontario Ministry of Education?

YES  NO

Are you registered with a course(s) through the Independent Learning Centre or other Ministry Approved Online learning?

YES  NO

If you are using the Independent Learning Centre or other Ministry Approved Online learning, list the specific courses:

If yes, please check the appropriate boxes below:

Elementary Curriculum Policy Documents:

- Language
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- Social Studies/History and Geography
- The Arts
- Health and Physical Education
- French as a Second Language
- Other (please specify)

Note: Ministry of Education curriculum policy documents and curriculum support material may be downloaded free of charge from the Ministry's website at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca>. This material may also be obtained through Publications Ontario by using its toll-free telephone number, 1-800-668-9938, or visit its website at <http://www.publications.gov.on.ca> for more information.

**Other Materials**

Please list any other curriculum documents that you use to help design your instructional program.

**Instructional Activities:**

This section is intended to give the Board information on the types of planned activities that you provide for your child to help him or her meet the learning expectations you have established.

Please describe the typical activities you use to help your child learn. For example, what types of activities does your child do while learning English, mathematics and other subjects? Please include samples of your child's work in each subject area.



**Instructional Materials:**

This section is intended to give the Board information on the types of materials you use to help your child meet the learning expectations you have established.

Please indicate the resources you use to support your instruction.

Encyclopedia/reference books (please list):

Textbooks:

- English
- Mathematics
- Other subjects

Please list:

Names of textbooks used:



**Supplementary Materials Used:**

	Very Often	Often	Seldom	Never
Magazines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newspapers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Science Kits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Films	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Slides	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tape Recordings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Charts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Models/Mock-ups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Television Programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Radio Programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Posters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer Programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other supplementary materials (please specify):

**Assessment of Student Learning:**

This section is intended to give the Board information on how you evaluate your child's progress in learning.

What techniques do you use to assess student learning? Please describe them.



**Resources:**

This section is intended to give the Board information on the resources you use to support your instructional program.

Please indicate the community and other resources you use:

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Public library   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| YMCA/YWCA  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Community centre   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Local gym facilities   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Public swimming pool   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Museums  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Art galleries  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Recreational/educational/social groups (e.g. Scouts, Guides) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Nature interpretive centres                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Camping areas  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Youth groups (please specify)                                | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Networking with other families that provide home schooling can offer valuable support. Please indicate if you are a member of any of the following provincial associations.

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Ontario Federation of Teaching Parents         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ontario Christian Home Educators' Connection   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Catholic Home Schoolers' Association-Ontario   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other organizations or groups (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Other Information:**

Please provide below any other information that would help the Board determine whether the instruction being provided to your child is satisfactory.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's / Guardian's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date