

Fact Sheet Home Schooling and Special Education Services

Information provided by Ministry of Education, updated 17/04/2012

For Children who are home schooled and have identified special education needs, the following support is available on an individual need basis should parents wish to access it.

These services are generally provided by specialist support personnel, not teachers or support staff, and are to be provided directly to the student or through advice to the parent.

- Students who have been verified through the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) are able to access specialist support including therapy from Ministry of Education, Special Education.
- The Ministry of Education, Special Education Communication Service, which provides speech-language therapy, is available to students exempt from school if they meet the same priorities for service set by Ministry, Special Education for services for students attending school.
- Specialist services for children with moderate physical disability can be accessed from the providers of these services. Again students exempt from school must meet the same priorities for service as students attending school.
- Assistive equipment can be accessed if students are receiving one of the above services or provisions. Ministry of Education, Special Education will support the parent in the collection of information for the early stage assessment and provide the specialist assessment required to access the equipment. If Ministry, Special Education requires input from BLENNZ for Blind or Low Vision students, support can be requested from the local VRC manager. The support from BLENNZ can be advice only.
- Kelston Deaf Education Centre and van Asch Deaf Education Centre will repair and maintain hearing aids and FM systems, and provide hearing aid batteries for devices paid for by the government. The Deaf Education Centres do not have responsibility of cochlear implant repairs. The Deaf Education Centres can also provide limited advice services where the Advisor on Deaf Children has requested it. These services could include a specialist literacy assessment and literacy learning advice, or New Zealand Sign Language and Deaf Studies advice. The Deaf Education Centres support can include involvement in an IEP process. The Deaf Education Centres cannot provide teaching to students exempt from attending school. It does not include services that are school based, such as teacher time and teacher's aide time.
- BLENNZ will provide advice and guidance to whanau and other team members. Services could include a functional vision assessment and information about the learner's vision, explanation about the impact of vision loss, strategies for teaching and learning, and referral to other services, including BLENNZ National Assessment Service. BLENNZ support can include involvement in an IEP process. BLENNZ cannot provide teaching to students exempt from attending school.

Students exempt from school are **unable** to receive support through the following services, as they are 'school' based services:

- Ministry, Special Education Behaviour Service,
- Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour (RTL),
- Resource Teachers: Literacy,
- the School High Health Needs Fund,
- direct teaching services related to children who are blind or low vision and deaf or hearing impaired,
- additional teacher and teacher's aide time as part of ORS is also school based and therefore is not accessible to students who are exempt from school.

Enrolment at Te Aho o Kura Pounamu (Te Kura)

There is sometimes confusion between students who are homeschooled because they have an official exemption from attending school, and students who are enrolled at Te Aho o Kura Pounamu (Te Kura), previously known as The Correspondence School, and study at home.

- Students who are verified for ORS and enrolled at Te Kura can access all Ministry of Education, Special Education services.
- Te Kura receives the teacher staffing entitlement for ORS, as well as the teacher's aide and the consumables component of ORS. They also receive travel funding for ORS teachers.
- Te Kura can transfer their ORS teacher staffing so their enrolled student can receive teaching services from the Deaf Education Centres or BLENNZ for sensory students or from an Outreach service.
- Te Kura enrolled students cannot access the School High Health Need Fund as this fund is to ensure a student can attend a school safely.

Resourcing for the Non-Compulsory School Years (in relation to Home Schooling)

A certificate of exemption can not be issued for a child under the age of six years or for a young person over the age of sixteen years because an exemption applies only to the years of compulsory schooling.

A child before the age of six years is able to access the full range of Early Intervention Services regardless of their setting. School exemption is irrelevant at this stage.

A young person over the age of sixteen may continue to hold a previously issued certificate of exemption until the end of the year in which he or she reaches nineteen, for the purpose of qualifying for the supervision allowance.

A young person, who is verified through the ORS and has a certificate of exemption at the age of sixteen, may continue to hold this previously issued certificate of exemption until the end of the year in which he or she reaches the age of 21. This is for the purpose of qualifying for the supervision allowance and specialist services from Ministry of Education, Special Education.

To receive the home schooling allowance and any specialist services, young people who are exempt from enrolment at a registered school will need to hold an exemption certificate on their sixteenth birthday and be continuing a programme of study that would be similar to that of a registered school, special class, clinic or by a special service. Parents must inform the Ministry of Education that they wish to continue home schooling for their child beyond the compulsory age of school to receive the home schooling allowance. If a student is verified through the ORS then that allowance can continue to the end of the year in which the student turns 21.

For other students (non ORS) the allowance and their special education service or provisions will cease at the end of the year in which the student turns nineteen. Parents need to inform the Ministry of Education of the decision to keep home schooling their child after the age of 16 years by contacting their local Ministry of Education office.

To continue accessing specialist services from Ministry of Education, Special Education, parents also need to contact their local Ministry of Education, Special Education centre or current key worker and discuss the continuation of services beyond compulsory school age.