



Student Reports

Frequently Asked Questions - Parents

What are the reporting regulations?

The ACT Department of Education and Training's policy for reporting student achievement is set out in the *Reporting on student achievement and progress to students and parents* policy (2006). The policy includes requirements that allow ACT schools to comply with the Australian Government's *Schools Assistance Act 2004* and *Schools Assistance Regulations 2005*. The key Australian Government requirements are that:

- Schools must provide parents with written reports on their child's achievement twice each year.
- Reports must use plain English.
- In years 1 – 12, for each learning area, subject or unit studied, a child's achievement will be reported against a grade A, B, C, D or E.
- In years 1 – 12, the number of students in a child's peer group (all children in a learning area, subject or unit in the same year level) attaining each of the identified A – E grades will be reported.

The policy also includes requirements based on recommendations of the ACT *Review of Government School Reporting 2004*. These are detailed in section 5.2 (e – h) of the policy and specify that reports should contain information about:

- student strengths, areas for further development and strategies to support and/or extend learning
- the student's social development and involvement in school programs and activities
- the student's attitude and commitment to learning
- the student's attendance at school.

The policy requires schools to determine their own procedures for reporting student achievement and progress in consultation with their school community, based on the Department's policy. The policy outlines principles of effective reporting to support schools in meeting these requirements.

Does the school have to report on my child using A – E grades?

The school must provide to parents an A – E Summary Report on each child, unless they fall into the exemption category (see below), or unless the parents indicate in writing that they do not wish to receive the A – E Summary Report.

The use of an A-E scale is one of the conditions set by the Australian Government for the provision of funding to schools.

Is anyone eligible for exemption from A – E reporting?

Students who satisfy the ACT exemption definition for the National Assessment Program-Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) are exempt from A -E reporting requirements. This refers to those students with a confirmed **intellectual disability** (i.e. those who meet the ACT Disability Criteria for Intellectual Disability) and those students who have been learning English in an Australian school for less than one year.

For those students with a confirmed intellectual disability, schools will report their progress against their Individual Learning Plan (ILP), along with any additional information that addresses the other requirements of the Department's policy.

Other students who are on ILPs will be reported using A-E grades with their cohort. Schools may also provide additional information as to the child's progress against the ILP.

ESL students who have been learning English in an Australian school for less than twelve months will be exempt from the A-E reporting. They will be assessed and reported using the ESL scales, along with any additional information that addresses the other requirements of the Department's policy.

Parents of students eligible for exemption who wish to receive an A-E report on their child's achievement should notify the school in writing in order for this to occur.

Can I compare my child's results with other children in the ACT?

No. You will only be able to compare your child's progress with others in the **same** school.

You cannot accurately compare your child's progress with that of another child in a different government or non-government school as each school has its own school developed curriculum, so students have had access to different curriculum or learning opportunities.

What about the children who get a 'D' or an 'E'? Won't they become demotivated?

The new reporting policy is designed to provide parents with a clear and transparent picture of their child's achievement at the time of reporting. This means providing a clear picture of achievement at or above the expected standard, as well as areas that are below so that timely action can be taken to help ensure improvements can be made.

The summary A-E Report is only part of the picture and schools will be providing information that will highlight the student's progress, commitment to learning, areas for development and strategies to improve learning. The goal of reporting is to identify areas for development to improve learning.

Any parent who does not want to receive an A-E Summary Report may withdraw their child by informing the principal in writing.

Will this be the only written report I receive from the school?

In addition to the A-E Summary Report ACT government schools must provide a written report for all students on

- strengths and areas for development
- strategies to assist the progress.
- attitude and commitment to learning
- information about their social development
- involvement in school programs and activities
- attendance.

When can I expect to receive the reports?

Parents will receive a written report at least twice in the school year.

Will schools still provide parent-teacher interviews?

Schools are required to offer the opportunity for parent/teacher interviews after the reports are distributed. This will allow parents an opportunity to become more involved in a child's learning and provide support where needed. Schools also often provide the opportunity for interviews at other times during the year.

Here are some useful tips for getting the most out of parent-teacher interviews:

- Revisit the written reports and determine what information you need before the interview to support your child.
- Ask your child whether there are any areas they would like followed up, for example, where they feel they need extra help, or have concerns. Be prepared to share this information with your child's teacher during the interview.

- Write a list of specific questions you wish to ask your child's teacher. During the interview, take notes so that you can share the comments with your child.
- If you need a translator arrange this with your school prior to the interview.
- If you want to know about a specific area of your child's progress (for example how they are progressing in English) let your child's teacher know this from the outset so you can focus the interview on this topic.
- Ask your child's teacher for more detail on what the expectations are in their subject area with regard, for example, to homework and assignments. How much time should they be spending on their homework? Are there any other suggestions or more details about how you can help your child at home?
- Find out more about how your child is participating in classroom activities and whether, for example, there are any general issues with behaviour or discipline that need discussing.
- Ask your child's teacher to clarify the extra support or extension activities mentioned in the report.
- End the interview on a positive note and keep in regular contact with the teacher to follow up on a mutually agreed plan.
- Talk with your child about what you have discussed and how you can work together to improve their learning.

You can also request interviews at other times. If you are concerned about your child's progress, you should discuss these concerns with their teacher. You can contact the school for an appointment and make a mutually convenient time to meet with your child's teacher.

Do schools provide other forms of reporting?

The policy states that schools should, in addition to written reports, provide opportunities to communicate to parents the range of learning and achievement that occurs in an appropriate and timely manner. Schools develop these procedures in consultation with their community and communicate them to their parent body.