

# Frequently asked Questions & Answers

**1. Is home-schooling legal in South Africa?** Yes, home schooling is legal in South Africa and was incorporated into the South African Schools Act in 1996.

The Association for Home Schooling was established in 1992, when home schooling was still actively repressed by the previous government. It was incorporated into the SA Schools Act of 1996 only after a heavy battle, also in parliament, and after the Home School Legal Defence Association of the USA exercised political pressure to have home-schooling recognized in South Africa.

Historically, therefore, legal recognition of home education came against the will of a reluctant government. As a result, education departments and officials persist in placing a wide variety of unlawful stumbling blocks in the path of home-schooling families.

**2. Should my children be registered with the Department of Education?** 99% of home school families have refused to register with the Department of Education due to education officials who refuse to comply with the law continue to infringe the rights of children and their families. Source: <http://pestalozzi.org/web2/en/home/about-us/>

Home schooling has been legal since 1996 and it is estimated that there are well in excess of 200,000 South African families who are home schooling and **are doing so within the law**. In the last decades before 1994, however, home education was subjected to progressively greater limitations. In the end, it could only be (and was) practiced under extremely restrictive requirements set by the then government. Only a handful of families could meet the requirements.

***This was overturned by the interim constitution.*** The constitution guaranteed the “right to education”, but what is not generally understood, is that the right to education does not mean that everyone has the right to be subjected to the state’s notions of what education is. The right to education means that everyone has the right to choose whether:

1. to be educated;
2. what education to receive;
3. when to be educated;
4. where to be educated;
5. by whom and with whom to be educated; and
6. for how long to be educated.

Adults exercise this right freely, but in the case of children, the parents must guide, direct and secure the education of the child.

Note: The constitution and international law specify that the parents’ guide and direct the education of the child – not the teacher, the school principal, the education department or the minister of education. The only authority that may overrule a parental decision about the

education of a child is a court of law, and then only when it has been proven that the parents are acting contrary to the best interests of the child. In principle, therefore, the right to education is the right to freely choose one's education.

Home education is perfectly legal, therefore, but serious problems arise because education officials refuse to comply with the law. They place unreasonable and unjustifiable preconditions for the registration of learners for home education in accordance with the Schools Act. These preconditions, more often than not, are contrary to the best interests of the children.

In order to protect the rights of their children, many home-schoolers have joined the Pestalozzi Trust to back them up in the event that the education authorities challenge their rights and responsibilities to provide their children with that education that is in the best interests of each child. To the best of our knowledge none of our home-schoolers have registered with any organisation but ourselves. To the best of our knowledge none of our home-schoolers have joined any other organisation than Syllabis.

Should you wish to apply for membership of the fund which will protect you from any interference from the Department please complete the membership application form available on: <http://pestalozzi.org/web2/en/home/about-us/>

**4. What do I need to home-school my children?** There are ample learning materials available for home schooling in South Africa from a number of reputable curriculum suppliers. A number are on computer, some are partially computerised, while others make use of textbooks. The materials available are usually easy to use, for parents too.

**5. What qualifications do I need to home-school?** You know your children better than anyone and have the deepest love and concern for them. You also have the most direct and long-term responsibility for your children. Your example and enthusiasm in learning with your children will motivate and encourage them far more than striving to appear you know it all. You do not need to know everything in order to teach.

Tutoring children has always been superior to the typical classroom. Home-schooling epitomises this method, providing the essentials for success and a close relationship between the student and the teacher, motivation, flexibility, and individualization. [tutormaster.co.za/](http://tutormaster.co.za/)

**6. Is learning computer based?** Most schooling curriculums place strong emphasis on children accessing information themselves, and computer-based learning is becoming a daily feature of school life, where affordable. This should also, to a large degree, be the case in the home-schooling environment because, after all, computers have become an integral part of life so why not get an early start. <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-34174796>

**7. What happens when my child has difficulty in one or more subjects?** Most parents organise their home schooling in such a way that they provide for their children's specific needs and abilities. One does not have to do all the subjects at the same level. If a child has an aptitude for Maths, there is nothing to stop him or her from continuing with the next grade's work once this grade's work has been finished. Or vice versa: if the child/children have not mastered this year's Afrikaans, they simply return to the previous year's books and together with their parents/tutor start looking for the cause of the problems.

## **8. How do assessments work?**

### **Grade R – 11**

**Self -assessment'** The Self-assessment method comes in the form of June/July and November /December tests. (Recommended from grades R to 4)

**Movement to the next Grade** It is the parent's decision to move the learned to the next grade from grades R to 10. This decision can be made with the help of one of our professional consultants

### **External-assessment**

External assessment is arranged with your dedicated educational consultant. This comes in the form of 2 annual examinations written under parental/tutor/invigilator supervision. (Compulsory from grade 10 onwards).

*Option A* – We provide you with the question papers and answer sheets and you mark the papers. A report is issued but the parent may decide to move the learner to the next grade or not.

*Option B* – We provide you with the question papers and we mark the papers. A report is issued and we decide to move the learner to the next grade or not.

*Option C* - External Assessment. We appoint an invigilator who supervises the exams. A report is issued, and we decide to move the learner to the next grade.

NOTE:

*You may select options A or B for the mid-year assessment and C for the end of year assessment if you so wish.*

### **Report**

A Report is issued only when the learner is registered for options B or C above.

### **Grade 12**

The final grade 12 examination is written at registered exam centres around South Africa. All exams, except grade 12, are written at the student's home or alternative location, in the presence of an independent invigilator / teacher.

**9. What happens if I don't have any knowledge of a subject I need to teach?** Most home-schooling materials are designed to be used by parents and students who are not familiar with the subject matter. They are therefore self-explanatory. In most cases a teacher's guide is provided for the subject.

**10. How much time does home-schooling take?** It has been found that primary school age children in home schooling on average take more or less 3 to 4 hours per day to complete all their work and secondary school age children on average more or less 3 to 5 hours per day. As a result, children have more time to play, read, dream, socialize, get involved in hobbies, help in the house and in the garden, and make music. In short: they have time to live a normal life.

Home-schooling requires a time commitment, although not as much as you might expect. One-to-one tutoring is more efficient than classroom instruction and, therefore, requires less time. The time requirement varies according to the students' abilities, number of children in the family, and ages of the children. With the Syllabis curriculum there is a study plan. As a parent, you are there to supervise and make sure the student completes his or her work for the day.

**11. Can we teach several children at once?** The Syllabis curriculum makes it easy to teach more than one child at a time. Because you are basically, their supervisor, you can oversee a number of children at one time.

**12. What about socialisation?** This is perhaps the most misunderstood aspect of home-schooling. It is the positive aspects of socialization through the home that attracts many families to this lifestyle. Popular opinion assumes that children need periods on interaction with a group of peers to acquire social skills. By contrast, however, many believe that extensive peer contact during childhood can cause undesirable and negative peer dependency.

Young children are more likely to be influenced by the majority than to be independent and an example to others. Children who receive their education outside the home are prone to accept their peers; and teachers' values over those of their parents. Some advantages of freedom from peer pressure can be self-confidence, independent thinking, the ability to relate to people of all ages, and better family relationships. Moral principles of interaction can be taught, demonstrated, and reinforced at home by parents.

Children can learn needed social skills by interaction with siblings or other children and adults under their parent's supervision. Young people who have had this type of training have adjusted very well to adult life. You can help your children build and maintain lasting friendships with people of all ages through church and family friends.

Do you want our child to model after you or after his peers, after his teachers at school or his teachers at home? What kind of socialisation do you want for your child, positive or negative?

**13. What if we are South Africans living, working or traveling abroad?** – Home-schoolers have access to our curriculum and services from anywhere in the world. All exams, except for the final grade 12 NSC year-end exam, are written at the student's home or alternative location, in the presence of an approved parent/tutor/ independent invigilator. The home-schooler has to write the final grade 12 exam in South Africa at the same time as the rest of the grade 12 are completing the exams.

**14. Home School Curriculums.** What is a Curriculum? Technically, a curriculum is a list of topics, concepts, ideas, etc. that will be taught. A home-school curriculum usually also includes the texts, workbooks, and other materials used to teach that subject, and "directions for parents.