

Sydney Distance Education Primary School



ENROLMENT INFORMATION BOOKLET

Updated February 2019

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Introduction

The Sydney Distance Education Primary School (SDEPS) was established in 1991. It is part of a network of schools throughout NSW which is responsible for educating students who, for a variety of reasons, are unable to attend their local schools.

Our school caters for students from Kindergarten to Year 6 from the Greater Sydney area, Wollongong, Blue Mountains, Central Coast and Lower Hunter areas. The vast majority of our students are temporarily overseas or travelling around Australia. Smaller numbers are confined due to medical conditions. Our students are from both government and non-government schools.

The SDEPS teaching program provides students with an excellent opportunity to maintain their education during their extended absence.

Important

Your local school must be notified of your intention to enrol with SDEPS, and an endorsement form will be sent to the Principal of your local school.

While a student is enrolled with SDEPS they cannot be enrolled with any other school. Students may attend a school on a casual basis for socialisation or, in a non-English speaking country, for language studies.

SDEPS offers both paper based and digital learning materials. To access these materials it is essential that the student have a computer or tablet device. The software that will be required can be installed for you here at SDEPS, or provided for you to install yourself. You will need to discuss these options with a teacher or the support staff.

Our school has a student portal called mySDEPS. This is a web based platform where students and supervisors can access our IT Helpdesk and software support, video tutorials and user guides, mail management system and software downloads and user guides.

Further information will be provided if you contact the school.

What Is Distance Education and How Does It Work?

Distance Education is a different form of teaching. Lessons are provided weekly/fortnightly with specially designed materials. They are delivered by mail or electronically through our student management system.

The learning program is designed to suit the specific needs and circumstances of your child. The parent or an appropriate supervisor is responsible for supervising the child's learning and ensuring regular contact between the school and the child.

Distance Education works best when there is a strong, co-operative relationship between the school and the supervisor. Distance Education can provide a personal, challenging and rewarding educational program which is equal or better than that provided in a regular classroom. The relationship between student and supervisor, and between student and teachers, is highly conducive to quality learning, self-confidence and the development of new skills.

Learning Areas

The staff of SDEPS is committed to providing a balanced comprehensive educational program covering all Learning Areas as determined by the NSW Board of Studies. These are:

Mathematics, English, Science and Technology, History / Geography, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

Where possible, we encourage students who are travelling to take advantage of their travel experiences and unique locations for learning opportunities. We know that circumstances can often change. Please notify us should you need to vary your child's educational program. **We are more than willing to temporarily modify programs to suit the needs of you and your child.**

Who Can Enrol In Distance Education?

To be considered for enrolment with Sydney Distance Education Primary School, the student must:

- be a NSW resident who is unable to attend their local school
- be eligible for enrolment in Kindergarten up to Year 6
- have an adult English-speaking supervisor
- qualify in one of the following categories:

1. Overseas Students

This is a time limited enrolment category.

This type of enrolment is available to students who are temporarily living overseas in areas where there are no suitable English-speaking schools. The enrolment will generally be for a minimum of three months (1 term) and a maximum of two years (8 terms).

Students who are travelling while overseas must provide an itinerary with addresses for a minimum of six weeks in advance to ensure the continuity of the students learning program. All lesson material should be returned by airmail to the school with the cost of postage paid by the family. We require a copy of confirmed airline bookings before commencing overseas travel.

2. Travelling Students

This is a time limited enrolment category.

Families travelling around Australia for business or holiday reasons may enrol their children. The enrolment will generally be for a minimum of three months (1 term) and a maximum of two years (8 terms).

A comprehensive itinerary should be submitted to ensure continuity of the learning program. Using a third party to forward materials is not acceptable. Should your itinerary change, please phone us as soon as possible, to avoid lessons going astray. All postage costs are paid by the school, except where redirection is necessary because of failure to inform the school of a change of itinerary.

2. Medical Students

This is a time limited enrolment category.

Students requiring education while they are undergoing medical assessment or treatment, which prevents their attending a local school, may be able to enrol in this category.

When applying for enrolment it will be necessary to supply a letter from the **student's medical specialist**. It should outline the student's medical condition and how it impacts on their ability to attend their school or other local education provision. This letter should include an assessment of the length of time it is expected that the student will require distance education.

4. Students with Additional Learning and Support Needs

Students with additional learning and support needs which prevent them from attending school on a regular basis may be eligible for enrolment at Sydney Distance Education Primary School.

Enrolment in Distance Education must be recommended by your local school principal and the local DoE area office. You must contact them to get a recommendation to enrol.

The enrolment will be reviewed at least every 6 months, to assess and monitor student individual needs and review the appropriateness of continued enrolment with SDEPS.

What Does Distance Education Cost?

- **General School Contribution is \$50** per student and is payable at the time of enrolment.
- **Resource Fee of \$100** per student, or **\$200** per family (2 or more students), is payable at the time of enrolment.

This is a fee that goes towards the cost of text books, resources, such as maths and art supplies and printed materials, postage of resources and the production of resources. This fee is non-refundable.

Return postage from overseas is at the family's expense. Returning work in a digital format can greatly reduce costs.

Payment can be made by Cash, Bank Cheque, Money Order or Credit Card.

How and When Should I Apply For Enrolment?

A suggested **minimum** timetable for those leaving on a trip would be:

6 weeks before departure (or earlier if there are school holidays within the next six weeks). Contact the SDEPS enrolment officer and request enrolment forms or download them from the website.

5 weeks before departure. Complete the 'Application to Enrol in NSW Government School' form, the 'Application form' for the applicable category and 'About Me' booklet. Gather all required documents together.

4 weeks before departure. Inform your present school of your plans to enrol with Sydney Distance Education Primary School. Return all forms, required documents, fees and itinerary to SDEPS.

Note: A request will be sent to your student's present school for the Principal's Endorsement and for a report to be completed outlining your student's performance and attainments.

3 weeks before departure. You will be contacted to make an appointment to visit our school.

1 week before departure. Visit our school to meet the teacher who will conduct an assessment of student needs.

If you are not leaving on a trip but you think you may meet the enrolment criteria: Contact the SDEPS enrolment officer and discuss your situation.

If requiring lessons from the start of the school year, you should apply as early as possible (i.e. Term 3 or early Term 4) in the previous year.

How Do I Contact The School?

- Phone* (02) 9207 6300
From overseas + 61 2 9207 6300
- Fax* (02) 9207 6303
From overseas + 61 2 9207 6303
- Email* syddisted-d.school@det.nsw.edu.au
- Post* Sydney Distance Education Primary School
Private Bag 2
NEWTOWN NSW 2042
Australia
- Visit* 1 Collins Street
SURRY HILLS NSW 2010
- Our Website:* www.sdeps.nsw.edu.au

What Happens If Your Child Is Absent?

- Continued and unexplained absences may result in cancellation of the enrolment. If you know in advance of a likely absence, please notify the school as soon as possible.
- **If you decide to discontinue enrolment with our school, please notify us immediately and return all outstanding resources at that time.**

How Will The Teacher Know What Work To Give My Child?

- The more information you can provide at the time of enrolment, the easier and quicker it is for us to get to know your child. With the 'Application to Enrol in a NSW Government School' you will be sent a 'Supplementary Enrolment Application' and a booklet called 'About Me'. These will assist the school in gaining knowledge of the resources available to you and in getting to know your child.
- We also send a blank 'Report' form and 'Principal's Endorsement' form to your child's present school to complete.
- The best way of all to get to know children is to meet them. It is helpful if you visit the school with your child to meet with a teacher.

What is Required for Distance Education to be Successful?

Adult English-Speaking Supervisor

- The parent will be required to agree to supervise and assist the student. This will require a reasonable commitment of time.
This is a very important role, both challenging and rewarding.
- The lesson materials are very thorough and come complete with notes to assist the supervisor and student.
- A teacher always provides support, guidance and advice.
- A teacher uses the feedback provided by the supervisor to determine the student's progress.

Return of Work

- Upon enrolment, the student is supplied with several weeks of work.
- The student should complete one set of lessons per fortnight for return to the teacher.
- A teacher corrects the work, and provides feedback.
- The student should only work during regular school days, not on NSW school or public holidays.
- If, for some reason, your child is unable to do lessons in a particular fortnight, please notify the school so the educational program can be adjusted.
- Failure to return work that is part of the program may result in the school being unable to write a comprehensive progress report.

Work Area

- Each student will require a comfortable, well-lit, well-ventilated work place.
- They will need a flat desk area on which to work and spread out materials.
- You will also need space to store unused or completed lesson material.
- A separate area where the student can do art or craft activities would be useful.

Essential Resources

- A computer or tablet device with Internet access for efficient communication, digital lesson delivery and access to our web-site, and the DEC Portal
- An email address for communication
- Phone with a message bank for students based in Australia
- Handwriting textbooks, maths resources & art resources will be paid for by the Resource Fee.

Adherence to Customs Regulations

Local and international customs regulations should be adhered to at all times. This means that items containing seeds or nuts, plant material, meat or dairy products, fur etc. must not be mailed to the school. It also prevents tourists or family acquaintances from carrying parcels into Australia, on behalf of the family, for local posting.

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