

# Supervisor Guidebook

Learning Together by Bridging the Gap

2011



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# Welcome

To *North East Public School of Distance Education (NEPSODE)*. We trust that you will find this booklet of help to you as you and your child / children commence the DE program. We would like to take this opportunity to wish you success during your enrolment with us.

## 1) ABOUT US

We are a split site NSW Public School with campuses located at Casino and Port Macquarie. We service 3 school regions stretching from the Swansea channel to the Queensland border and west to Wialalda.

NEPSODE was established in June 2004. At present there are 18 full time teachers. The teachers have a wide range of resources available to them to provide the supervisor with the necessary guidance and to coordinate an individually designed program that will be supporting the students at home or while travelling.

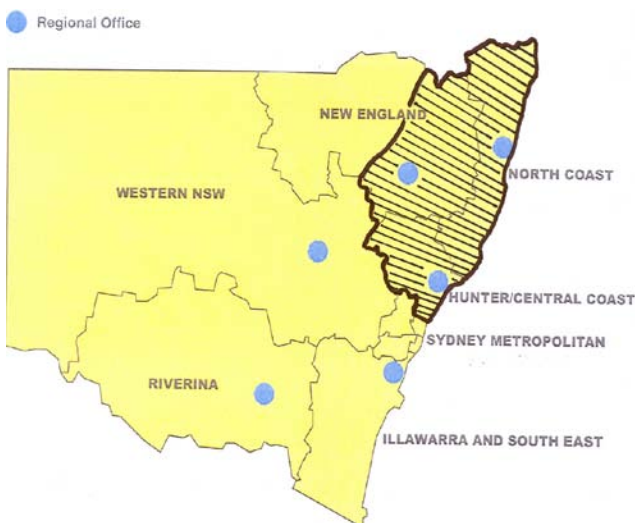
## 2) WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION?

Distance education (DE) at *North East Public School of Distance Education* is an 'equity provision' through the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET) and is only available to students who

- are geographically isolated
- have a medical condition which prevents them from attending school
- are on an extended travelling holiday for 10 weeks or more
- are travelling overseas for up to 12 months duration
- Have been recommended for distance education through their School Education Area Office

Our school caters for families who have a home base in our school's drawing area.

Our school area extends north from Newcastle to the Queensland border and west towards Wialalda.



Representation of NEPSODE drawing area

### 3) VISITING THE SCHOOL

Parents, supervisors, students and visitors are welcome to visit either of our NEPSODE campuses.

Appointments can be made by phoning your DE class teacher or contacting the NEPSODE Principal or Deputy Principal

Port Macquarie Campus office number 02 6584 1118.

Casino Campus office number 02 6662 6414



Part of our Port Macquarie Campus

### 4) ENROLMENT PROCEDURE

Parents seeking to enrol students with NEPSODE will be directed to one of several procedures that they need to follow depending on the category of enrolment.

A detailed overview of the enrolment categories and the associated requirements can be found in the enrolment section of our school web site [www.nepsode.org.au](http://www.nepsode.org.au)

To discuss the category and procedure that best suit your context please contact the Principal or Deputy Principal at the Port Macquarie Campus office on - 02 6584 1118.

### 5) FEES

All categories are presently \$40.00 per child or \$60.00 per family

\$40.00 bond per student for materials, refunded when materials are returned to the school at the conclusion of enrolment.

\$15.00 per student text book fee

For the Overseas category there is an additional \$100.00 per child per term for administration.

## 6) MINI SCHOOLS & GROUP DAYS

A mini school or group day involves inviting parents and students from within the Isolated and Medical categories of enrolment to Port Macquarie or Casino campuses. At times a central location may be used to combine the campuses.

Mini schools may involve one two or three day 'face to face' teaching and learning opportunities for our students, supervisors and teachers. There are usually two mini schools / group days per year - Term 2 and Term 4 are most commonly used for these school events.

The primary aims of mini schools / group days are:

1. To provide a venue and activities conducive to the development of socialisation skills
2. To enable teachers, parents and students to work together in group-work activities
3. To workshop parents/supervisors in the philosophies behind KLA's and education in general
4. To create a sense of whole school identity among students enrolled in distance education
5. To enable teachers to work directly with their student/s, covering areas of learning that are difficult to assess through the standard DE mode
6. For teachers to discuss student progress with the supervisors

## 7) FIELD VISITS

Visiting the homes and families of children (primarily enrolled in the Isolated category of enrolment) is an important aspect of the philosophy of DE.

Field visits enable teachers to better:

1. Understand the students, their personalities, hobbies, likes, and dislikes, thus helping to remove the barrier of isolation.
2. Know the student's contextual environment and working conditions.
3. Understand, cater to the supervisor in their educational role.
4. Assist the student with problem areas of learning with equipment and face-to-face teaching.
5. Assist the supervisor with techniques that may enhance home learning via DE.

These field visits are coordinated by the class teacher through consultation with supervisors and NEPSODE executive structures.



## 8) COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES

The DE teachers will use a range of blended technologies to maintain regular communications as part of the educational programme. Tools such as: Teleconferences, email, online blogs, class webpages, USBs and web cams are a sample of the teaching tools used to communicate between the teacher, supervisors and students.

These technologies are applied where appropriate, between teachers, student and supervisor to support the teaching/learning program and maintain regular communication.

## 9) THE CURRICULUM

NEPSODE covers the same NSW DET curriculum as mainstream public schools.

The curriculum is divided into six Key Learning Areas. These are:



- English, reading, writing, spelling, hand writing, computer skills talking and listening.
- Mathematics, number, patterns & algebra, data & measurement, space & geometry.
- Human Society and its Environment.
- Science and Technology (Computers)
- Creative & Performing Arts
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

## 10) OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

The Board of Studies produces syllabuses for primary schools for each of the Key Learning Areas. The content in these syllabuses is arranged in three broad curriculum stages. Each stage outlines the desired learning outcomes for students to achieve.

- Early Stage 1: Kindergarten
- Stage 1: Years 1 and 2
- Stage 2: Years 3 and 4
- Stage 3: Years 5 and 6

*NSW Department Of Education And Training link* <https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/home/>

*NSW Board of Studies link* <http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/>

## 11) THE ROLE OF THE SUPERVISOR

The role played by the supervisor as part of the DE enrolment is a vital one. It is hoped that supervisors will find their role rewarding. Confidence increases with experience. When a pupil enrolls he/she is allocated to a class teacher. It is the teacher's responsibility to design and deliver an effective teaching and learning program for the student. They work in partnership with the supervisor and utilise a blend of technologies and resources where appropriate.

The relationship between the teacher and supervisor is a very important one. It is expected that regular contact is maintained and that the teacher is kept informed of the school situation at home. How much help to give the student is often a concern of supervisors. The work the pupil completes should be his/her own. However, assistance to gain answers, or to re-explain a concept may need to be given. Supervisors are encouraged to contact the school with any concerns. One of the DE teacher's prime responsibilities is to support the supervisor in meeting the educational needs of the student and their DE program.

## 12) THE ROLE OF THE SUPERVISOR FROM THE NSW DISTANCE EDUCATION GUIDELINES DOCUMENTATION

Every DE student must have a supervisor who will give support and guidance. The role of the supervisor will include:

- supervising the student during schoolwork activities
- supporting and encouraging the student through assistance with locating materials and resources needed for lessons, development of a timetable for work, provision of suitable workplace and basic equipment
- monitoring the student's completion of set tasks and the return of work to the DE school
- interacting with the student as required in the learning materials
- interpreting and explaining to the student the spirit and intention of instructions or comments included in lesson materials or in messages from the DE teacher
- providing (regular) feedback to the distance education teacher on the student's responses to the lesson activities and on their performance and interest, including advice about illnesses or absences which have affected the student's ability to complete set activities
- monitoring the student's participation in satellite, computer-based or teleconference lessons as appropriate (also includes the blend of technologies that may be applied)
- maintaining appropriate conditions for and supervising all examinations and assessment tasks, as requested.



### **13) THE WORK AREA**

It is advisable to have a special area set aside for daily work. Aspects to be considered include correct size chair, work area, ventilation, noise, light, possible distraction and temperature. As concentration by the pupil is essential all possible distractions should be removed. All necessary equipment should be at hand each day. For travellers this is obviously context specific and supervisors will need to establish the most appropriate conditions relevant to their situation.

### **14) WORK HABITS**

From the start pupils are encouraged to give their best efforts. Lessons must be set out neatly and clearly. It is suggested that supervisors establish a routine and where possible keep to it. Thus, they should have regular starting times and set times for breaks. Some supervisors follow a timetable however, this may still be flexible. A staggered start timetable is one suggestion for families with more than one DE pupil to supervise.

Subjects that require more focused concentration may be best undertaken in the morning. It is most important that supervisors make every effort to have sets of work returned to the school on time. The return pattern will be coordinated by the class teacher and is specific to the program for each student and context.

Where the normal home routine has to be varied because of illness or occasional family business, supervisors should contact the teacher to discuss flexibility and options for adapting the set of work. Please remember that where extended absences are anticipated, the school must be notified as soon as possible about the nature and duration of the absence.

Should problems be encountered, children and /or supervisors are encouraged to telephone or contact their teacher via email for assistance.

As in mainstream school a roll of attendance is maintained. As the enrolment is an agreement to participate fully in a formal NSW education program - consistent unexplained absences and or less than satisfactory participation may result in follow up by the teacher with possible referral to Home School Liaison Officer.

### **15) MY CHILD'S PROGRESS**

Parents of DE children have the opportunity to be closely involved in the day-to-day basis of their child's education. They are in weekly or regular contact with the teacher, observe most of the child's responses to work, and see/hear comments and assessment made by the teacher each week. In line with NSW DET policy, half yearly and yearly reports are issued.

## 16) SATELLITE EDUCATION

Students in the Geographically Home Isolated category may qualify for the Satellite Education Program pending a site survey for suitability. DET computer equipment is loaned and installed at the home site. Students may then access scheduled 2 way interactive satellite. These lessons are broadcast from our studios at the both the Casino and Port Macquarie campus. These satellite education lessons involve class groups in session with the class teacher. Supervisors may be required to assist younger students in operating the equipment for the first few lessons. Students quickly learn to use the equipment.

Supervisors can request that suitability is looked at if they feel they might qualify for this service as part of the enrolment with NEPSODE.

## 17) IS THERE OTHER EQUIPMENT SUPPLIED?

NEPSODE supplies the majority of educational resources required by the student to participate in their program of work. Isolated parents may receive assistance in the form of an isolated children's allowance (per year per child) and forms are available on request from your local Centrelink Office. Parents are encouraged to use this assistance, to attend mini school and purchase additional necessities such as stationery.

When enrolled students may receive:

- Visual Art Kit
- Maths Kit

All postage costs for NEPSODE students within Australia are covered by the NSW DET and the school. Please note: Once overseas however, return postage is at the expense of the parent.



## 18) PROVIDING FEEDBACK (USUALLY IN DIGITAL FORM)

Teachers at NEPSODE use a range of blended technologies specific to a student's context and educational needs. A commonly used resource to obtain feedback from students and supervisors is through the use of digital voice files and web cam videos where available.

When using this feedback process there are several skills involved in providing any oral feedback. It would be helpful for the pupil to remember

1. To identify who is speaking at the beginning of the recording.
2. Speak as clearly as possible – try not to go too fast.
3. Speak close to the microphone or recording device so that you can be heard.
4. Tell your teacher any news that you have.
5. Answer questions by giving the subject and the number of the question you are addressing as well as the date.
6. Clearly indicate when your recording work is finished.

Many supervisors choose to record themselves / students summarising the completed work and student engagement. The teachers find this supervisor feedback extremely useful in understanding circumstances surrounding students' effort and achievements in the set of DE work.

### Some useful technology tools to discuss with your DE teacher/s to support this feedback

- *Audacity or similar voice recording software*
- *USB or Thumbdrives*
- *DET Portal access for students via KIDSPACE*
- *Online Blogs via Blog Ed*
- *Web Cam*



## 19) HOW TO TACKLE EACH WEEK

Each DE enrolment is unique in category type and context. The DE programmes are designed to cater for the individual educational needs of the student/s. With this in mind the best organisational structure will vary accordingly. The hints below are a generic look at what might be appropriate.

This is a direct extract from the “Distance Education handbook categories and procedures guidelines for enrolment.” This information may act as a guide for supervisors

- Open marked work as it is returned (either hard copy or digital).
- Look for any important notices or inclusions.
- Listen to the teachers messages.
- File that set away, start the new work enclosed in the correct week.
- Continue the daily routine.
- Start work at the same time each day if possible.
- Do a little of each subject each day.
- Each student should work for no more than six hours per day. This includes regular breaks.
- Look for signs of fatigue (in you and your student). Provide appropriate breaks as part of the daily routine.
- Guide and encourage your pupil to do his/her best.
- Listen and make helpful suggestions when you respond.
- Allow time for your pupil to provide feedback to the teacher (usually digitally).
- Encourage cleanest, neatest, best work always.
- Double check that all work is done and collated for return.
- Return all work with your signature and date (where available).
- Stay in touch with your pupil’s teacher by completing supervisor evaluation sheets, recording digital messages or responding on comment sheet each week.
- Carefully pack the work into the mailbag. Include any extras that your pupil might like to send to his/her teacher.
- Mail the work.
- Have a well earned break.

### USEFUL WEB SITES

*NSW Board of Studies* <http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au>

*NSW Department of Education and Training* <https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/home>

*North East Public School of Distance Education web site* <http://www.nepsode.org.au>

*Isolated Children’s Parents’ Association of Australia* <http://www.icpa.com.au>

## 20) CONTACTING US

A successful DE enrolment requires regular communications. There are a number of ways this might be achieved and maintained. The DE teacher will use context specific tools and technologies as appropriate. Some examples of the way this communication might be maintained are listed below.

- Mail
- Phone
- Teleconferences
- Email
- SMS
- Online via Blogs etc
- Web Pages
- Satellite (where appropriate)
- Mobile technologies
- Mini Schools
- Group Days
- Field Visits



### SOME USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

School web site [www.nepsode.org.au](http://www.nepsode.org.au)

Port Macquarie campus phone number 02 65841118

Casino campus phone number 02 66626414

Port Macquarie campus email [northeast-d.school@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:northeast-d.school@det.nsw.edu.au)