



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Enquiries: Provincial/District Admissions Coordinators
Reference: L2.1.1.1.4
Date: 2 April 2025

**CHIEF DIRECTORS
DISTRICT DIRECTORS
SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES
PRINCIPALS AND PARENTS**

CIRCULAR NUMBER: 10 /2025

MANAGEMENT OF LEARNER ADMISSIONS TO ORDINARY PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Northern Cape Department of Education (NCDoE) regards early enrolment as a priority for the start of a successful school year. The full use of teaching time during an academic year is necessary for sound academic performance, it is therefore important that children are enrolled well before the end of 2025.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Circular is to:

- 2.1 Inform School Principals, School Governing Bodies, Parents and Districts on the manner in which Online Learner Admissions will be administered in all ordinary public schools in the Northern Cape Province for the 2025 academic year.

2.2 The Head of Department herewith directs that the Online Admission Application Period for all public schools in Northern Cape will commence on **14 April 2025 at 09:00 and will close at midnight (23:59) on 23 May 2025.**

2.3 The Online Learner Admission system will be open for a parent/guardian who wishes to apply for his or her child for the 2026 academic year in the following Grades:

Grade R, 1, and 8 only.

2.4 Meet the objectives of the Bill of Rights as contained in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996);

2.5 Facilitate the process of children entering school for the first time and those starting high school in a timely, efficient and coordinated manner;

2.6 Ensure the lawful administration of learner admissions and registration in schools;

2.7 Enable effective teaching and learning to commence on the first day of the school year and the first day of successive school terms; and

2.8 Align the admission processes to ensure uniformity within the Northern Cape Province.

3. STATUS

3.1 This circular replaces Circular 11 of 2024.

3.2 This circular will hold until it is withdrawn or replaced by the office of the Head of Department for Education.

4 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act No. 108 of 1996);
- Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (Act No. 3 of 2000);
- South African Schools Act (SASA), 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996) as amended;
- Admissions Policy for Ordinary Public Schools (Gazette No.19377 of 1998);

- Education White Paper 6: Special Need Education (Building an Inclusive Education and Training System, 2001);
- Northern Cape Schools Education Act (Act No. 6 of 1996);
- Norms and Standards for Language Policy in Public Schools (GN 665 in GG 18887 of 1998)
- National Education Policy Act 1996 (NEPA);
- Refugees Act, 1998 (Act No.130 of 1998) (reviewed);
- Aliens Control Act, 1991 (Act No. 96 of 1991);
- The Immigration Act, 13 of 2002 (reviewed);
- The Protection of Personal Information Act (Act No.4 of 2013).

5 ADMISSION OF LEARNERS TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- 5.1 In terms of Section 5(1) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 as amended, a public school must admit and provide education to learners and must serve their educational requirements for the duration of their school attendance without unfairly discriminating in any way. The admission policy of a public school and the administration of admissions by the Principal or officials may therefore not unfairly discriminate against an applicant who applies for admission to a school.

Subsection 5 (1) as amended states:

- (1A) Any learner whose parent or guardian has not provided any required documents, whether of the learner or such adult person acting on behalf of the learner, during the application for admission, shall nonetheless be allowed to attend school.
- (1B) The principal of the school must advise the parent or guardian to secure the required documents.

Required documentation:

Where a learner cannot provide an official birth certificate, the principal of the relevant school is directed to accept alternative proof of identity such as an affidavit or a sworn statement deposed to by the parent, caregiver or guardian of the learner wherein the learner is fully identified. *(See attached DBE Circular 1 of 2020)*

It is advisable for parents to have the required documentation with them when they submit their online applications especially those who will be visiting our walk-in centers as this will allow for a seamless process.

- 5.2 In terms of Section 5(7) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 as amended, **an application for admission** of a learner to a public school must be made to the **Education Department** in a manner determined by the Head of Department.
- 5.3 In terms of Section 5(8) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 as amended, the **Head of Department must inform the parent in writing** if the application is refused and provide a reason if an application for admission is refused. An SMS shall be deemed to serve this purpose.
- 5.4 In terms of Section 62(2) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, as amended, the **only** power that has been delegated to District Directors is the power to admit **underage learners** after following the requisite procedure set out in the South African Schools Act, as amended.

6. ADMISSION AND THE AGE REQUIREMENTS TO ORDINARY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

6.1 Compulsory education

- 6.1.1 Section 3 of the South African Schools Act, 1996, as amended states:

Every parent must cause every learner for whom he or she is responsible to attend school, starting from grade R on the first school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of **six years** and not leaving school until the last school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of **15 years** or will complete **grade nine**, whichever occurs first.

6.2 Compulsory school attendance for admission

- 6.2.1 Compulsory school attendance age for Grade R is 5 turning 6 years in the year of admission. Admission of underage Grade R learners has been delegated to District Directors as set out above and after the requisite processes in the South African Schools Act, as amended have been followed for admission of underage learners (4 turning 5 by 30th June in the year of admission).
- 6.2.2 Admission to Grade 1 is 6 turning 7 years in the year of admission.
- 6.3 **Parents must further take note and be informed that they can be convicted, fined or imprisoned if they fail to cause their children to attend school who are in the compulsory school going age.**

- 6.3 It must be noted that the NCDOE Online Learner Admissions excludes Special Schools. Admission of learners to a special school/resource centre or a full service school is the responsibility of the Director – Institutional Development and Support. All Mainstream learner applications to identified full service schools (public ordinary schools) must be done online.
- 6.4 To ensure that there is uniformity in the system of admissions the following processes and procedures will immediately apply to all public schools:
- 6.4.1 Parents are required to apply to more than one school, when applying to a high in demand school, including the ones closest to their home. Parents should note that learners might not be placed at the preferred schools of choice, but, where there is a schooling space, given the limited school spaces. In cases where there are only one option, they can then apply to that school only (One school town).
- 6.4.2 Parents must log on to the NCDoe Online Learner Admissions website at www.ncdoeadmissions.org and follow the process outlined on the system.
- 6.4.3 There is no need for parents to apply online for learner admission if their child/ren are already in a school offering the next grade. These learners will be automatically accepted by the school and provisionally placed in the relevant higher grades, awaiting the November 2025 results.
- 6.4.4 The application process consists of 3 steps, which include (1) Parent/ guardian registration; (2) Learner profiling and (3) Application. Parents must complete all three steps for the application to be completed. **Failure to complete all three steps will result in incomplete applications.**
- 6.5 All required documents that accompany the application must be uploaded within 7 days of making the application. The uploading of documents will be done through the NCDoe Online Admission Application System. Schools will be able to access those uploaded documents from the system.
- 6.5.1 **South African citizens:**
- A copy of the Parent/Legal guardian ID (or sworn affidavit in a case where the parent / legal guardian does not have an identity document);

- Proof of Home Address (A Municipal Account in the name of the parent with the home address used during application or A legal lease agreement between the tenant and the owner of the property/Landlord);
- An Unabridged Birth certificate of the learner or an affidavit or a sworn statement;
- Clinic Card / Proof of immunization (Grade R and 1);
- The most recent Grade 7 (March 2025) learner progress report.
- Where either or both parents are deceased, the relevant death certificates

6.5.2. Non-South African citizens:

6.5.2.1 Parents of the learner who are foreign nationals with permanent residence permits or temporary residence visas:

- Learner's foreign issued birth certificate
- Learner's passport
- Study visa or permanent residence permit issued to the learner by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA);
- Parents' passports
- Parents' temporary residence visas or permanent residence permits issued by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA);
- Proof of Home address (A Municipal Account in the name of the parent with the home address used during application or A legal lease agreement between the tenant and the owner of the property / Landlord)
- Proof of immunization (Gr R and 1)
- The most recent Grade 7 (March 2025) learner progress report

6.5.2.2 Parents of the learner who are refugees or asylum seekers:

- Parent's Asylum Seeker or Refugee Visa issued by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA);
- Learner's Asylum Seeker or Refugee Visa issued by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA);
- Learner's Birth Certificate if the learner was born in the Republic
- Where Asylum Seeker Visas are provided, a Refugee or long term Study Visa must be provided within three years of admissions of the learner

- Proof of Home address (A Municipal Account in the name of the parent with the home address used during application or A legal lease agreement between the tenant and the owner of the property / Landlord)
- Proof of immunization (Gr R and 1)
- The most recent Grade 7 (March 2025) learner progress report

6.5.2.3 Learner in Alternative Care:

- The relevant Court Order granting Guardianship or Custody; and
Learner's Unabridged Birth Certificate. (Act 32 of 2024; 1(n)(d)(i) ;(ii)

6.6 A learner who is sixteen (16) years or older and who has never attended school, must be advised and referred to the respective District Office for immediate placement at an Adult Education and Training Centre.

7. FEEDER ZONES

The Head of Department, after consultation with representatives of governing bodies, may determine feeder zones for ordinary public schools, in order to control the learner numbers of schools and coordinate parental preferences. The Head of Department has not done so for the Northern Cape. As a result, there are no feeder zones and therefore no feeder schools in the Northern Cape Province.

8. LEARNER ADMISSION CRITERIA

- 8.1 If the applicant learner(s) already has (have) a sibling attending the school of application in the year of submission (sibling means a learner who has at least one parent who is also the parent of the learner already attending that school).
- 8.2 If the place of residence of the applicant learner(s) is in the same suburb as the school applied to;
- 8.3 If the place of residence (residential suburb) of the applicant learner(s) is adjacent to the suburb of the school applied to;
- 8.4 Applicant learner(s) whose parent/guardian is an employee at the school applied to;
- 8.5 If places remain after all the above-mentioned applicants have been offered places, other applicants, in the order of the position of the application will be considered.
- 8.6 The above-mentioned directives with regard to the criteria shall not apply to special schools, technical schools, agricultural schools, schools of skill, or industrial schools.

9. UNLAWFUL PRACTICES

The Principal of a school is responsible for ensuring that these or any other illegal practices do not take place at a school.

9.1 The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, Section 5(3) determines that no learner may be refused admission to a public school on the grounds that his or her parent:

- (i) is unable to pay or has not paid the school fees determined by the governing body;
- (ii) does not subscribe to the mission statement of the school; or
- (iii) has refused to enter into a contract in terms of which the parent waives any claim for damages arising out of the education of the learner.

9.2 Testing of Learners

9.2.1 In terms of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, Section 5(2), the **governing body** of a public school may not administer any **test (including an interview)**, related to the admission of a **learner** to a public school, or direct or authorize the **Principal** of the school or any other person to administer such test.

9.3 Registration fees, deposits, administration fees, admission fees, school fees

9.3.1 The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, Section 39(5), determines that **no school may charge any registration, administration or other fee at the time of application. School fees, if applicable, may only be charged after the learner has been admitted to the school.**

9.4 Academic Performance

9.4.1 Schools may not use the academic performance of learners to determine admission to a school.

9.5 Sport or Cultural Achievements

- 9.5.1 Schools may not use sport or cultural achievements (like representation at provincial or national level) of learners to determine admission to a school.

9.6 Interviews

- 9.6.1 Schools must not use the process of interviewing parents or learners prior to the admission of the learner as a screening mechanism for admission.

9.7 Unpaid school fees

- 9.7.1 The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, Section 5(3) (a), stipulates that no learner may be refused admission to a public school because his/her parent has not paid the school fees.

9.8 Disciplinary Record and Confidential Report of the learner

- 9.8.1 When a learner **has applied for admission to a school**, neither the governing body of that school nor any person employed at that school may request the learner's current school or any person employed at that school, to furnish it with a **disciplinary record or a confidential report** in relation to that learner. **Requesting and/or issuing a disciplinary record or a confidential report to another school during the admissions period will be regarded as misconduct.**

10. NEW APPLICATIONS ABOVE THE AGE NORM

- 10.1 In cases where a learner is three years older than the norm age per grade, the Principal, in consultation with the Circuit Manager will seek direction from the Head of Department or a delegated official whether the learner will be admitted to that grade. Admission to a school will only be allowed if written consent is received from the Head of Department or delegated authority.

11. APPLICATIONS FOR RE-ADMISSION OF LEARNERS FROM HOME EDUCATION TO AN ORDINARY PUBLIC SCHOOL

- 11.1 A parent who wishes to de-register his/her child from a home education programme in order to register his or her child into a public school, must request and complete a withdrawal letter received from the Inclusive Education unit at the NCDoe to ensure that the child is removed

from the home education data list and to prevent a situation where the child is registered twice (no learner should be registered twice).

11.2 Parents are required to submit the following documents when applying to a public school:

11.2.1 The certificate of registration which reflects the NCDoe registration number of the learner;

11.2.2 The learner's portfolio of evidence;

11.2.3 Certified copies of the annual assessment reports of the relevant grade from when the learner was registered for home education to the last grade the learner completed, including external assessment reports completed by competent assessors.

11.3 The District Director must establish a team to evaluate the documentation and decide on the correct grade for placement by the relevant officials. The team must comprise of the relevant experts.

12. LATE APPLICATIONS

12.1 All applications received after 23 May 2025 will be classified as late applications. Parents must take note that if they apply late they may not get preferred schools.

12.2 Late applications for grade R, 1, and 8 must be done online as per the scheduled period .

12.3 Late applications will be acknowledged and recorded as late on the system. **Parents should note that their child(ren) shall be accommodated where school places exist, but not necessarily at the nearest school to the learner's place of residence or the school of their choice.** The system will automatically place a learner at school that has available space for the grade applied for once the application for admission is fully completed on the system.

13. TRANSFERS AND RELOCATIONS

13.1 **Parents, who are relocating or transferring, seeking admission to grades R, 1, and 8 must apply online at www.ncdoeadmissions.org, as a normal application during the admission period.**

13.2 Transferring/relocating parents applying to any other middle grade/s (Middle grades refers to Grade 2 – 7 and Grade 9 – 12), must apply directly at the school/s. It will be the responsibility of parents to apply directly to schools for admission and placements for these grades. Schools must ensure that parents complete the NCK-A2 form (Control Form). Accepting application forms from parents does not create any expectation for acceptance. All middle grade applications must be captured on the Online Admissions System before any placement by the school. This will assist the school in communicating with parents via the admission system.

13.3 Parents should note that their child(ren) shall be accommodated where school places exist, but not necessarily at the nearest school to the learner's place of residence or the school of their choice.

14. DECENTRALISED ONLINE WALK - IN CENTRES

14.1 The NCDoe (Districts) has identified schools and strategic areas as online admissions walk-in centres to assist parent with no access to the internet or inadequate data with the online admissions applications.

14.2 Admission Call center

The department has established an admission call center which is already operative. This is not a walk-in center but a Call Center. The following telephone numbers can be contacted for the Province to reach the call center:

Contact number:

- 053 874 7012/64
- 053 874 7161/89
- 053 874 7239/92

Email addresses:

- admissionsqueries@ncdoe.school.za

15. APPEALS TO THE MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (MEC)

- 15.1 In terms of Section 5(9) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, any learner or parent of a learner who has been refused admission to a public school may appeal against the decision to the Member of the Executive Council within **14 days** of receiving the notification of the refusal of admission to the public school.
- 15.2 In terms of SASA, Section 5(9) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 as amended, the Member of the Executive Council must, within **14 days** after receiving such an appeal, consider and decide on the matter and inform the learner or the parent of the learner of the outcome of the appeal.,
- 15.3 Parents will appeal online using their profiles by clicking on the school they wish to appeal to and selecting the reason or criteria the appeal is based on.
- 15.4 Appeals for grades **R, 1, and 8** will be administered online by providing the following information:
- a) Reference number or ID number of the child for whom the appeal is made
 - b) The school to which the appeal is made
 - c) Provide reasons for your appeal based on the criteria.
 - d) Application outcome from the NCDoe Online Learner Admissions System.
- 15.5 **Appeals for other grades must be done in writing to the office of the MEC**

16. MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR LEARNER ADMISSIONS

The following Management Plan shall apply:

NO	ACTIVITY	TIME –FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
1	Application period	14 April 2025	Parents
2	Closing date for learner admission applications.	23 May 2025	Provincial Admission Team

3	SMS's sent to parents informing them of their application progress and placements.	31 July 2025	Online Admissions System
4	Appeals period for learners placed in the 1 st round of placements. All appeals received after the 1 st round of placements will be opened for 1 week.	31 July – 14 August 2025	Provincial Admission Team
5	Appeals outcome SMSs sent to parents after the 1 st round of placements. The outcome SMSs for appeals received after the 1 st round will be released 2 weeks after the closing date.	04 August – 28 August 2025	IT Unit

17 CONCLUSION

17.1 Principals are requested to ensure that the information contained in this Circular is **immediately** brought to the attention of all educators, the school governing body, all parents/guardians, caregivers and learners.

17.2 The NCDoe Online system does have a section with frequently asked questions with their possible answers to assist all users.

17.3 Should any uncertainty prevail as to any aspect of this **instruction** you may contact the **District Director** or the **Provincial/District Admissions Team Coordinator** for further clarity at:

Provincial Office:	Admissions Team	Contact Details:
	Ms. Z. Hopley	053 839 6661/6803 071 389 7694
District Office:	Admissions Team Coordinator:	Contact Details:
Frances Baard	Mr. T. Daniels	053 830 1644/5/7/8

		079 196 7707
John Taolo Gaetsewe	Mr. D.J. Disang	053 773 9626 067 421 3046
Namakwa	Mr. D. Farmer	027 718 8735 066 294 7048
Pixley ka Seme	Ms. L. Mdekazi	053 632 9286 082 042 9715
Z.F. Mgcawu	Mr. D.L de Wee	054 339 0079 060 836 8744

YOURS IN EDUCATION



DR MI ISHMAIL

ACTING HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: EDUCATION

DATE: 04.04.2025.