

## Recipient Details

Name of organisation or individual: [I] Walmsley, Anna

Reference Type: Home tutor of a distance education child

State or territory: NT

Serial Identification Number: 481391

## Responses

### Curriculum and assessment

Curriculum for distance education should be based on a multi-age classroom and be written such that as much work can be done together as is possible. This makes the delivery more achievable for families but also allows them to lever off kids natural inclination to enjoy working in groups. The curriculum should be written to cover the required educational outcomes and NOT to be required to fill a normal school week in time. Distance education students do not take as much time to complete work as those in mainstream classrooms and should not have to do more work just to pad out the time requirements. It is important for families to understand where their children are at compared to their Australian counterparts but I don't think continued assessment (PAT and NAPLAN) is the way to go for primary students. The teachers should conduct this kind of assessment via skype or at contact events or on patrols.

Rating: 7

### Teachers and teaching

In a distance education setting the teaching is delivered by the Home tutor on the ground whether that be a parent or governess. These positions are crucial in the education process and should be better supported (through funding for the work of these often unpaid positions and through upskilling opportunities). As a supplement to this are the teachers in the home base of the school of the air. These teachers deliver most of their teaching via IDL. Currently class sizes (15-20) are too big and students do not get to participate subsequently disengaging from the class and rendering it little more than baby sitting. Class sizes should be no more than about 10 students for them to be effective teaching periods. In addition some teachers deliver extra teaching through one on one skype lessons. Where these are used as targeting teaching time (rather than non directed catch up time) they are incredibly effective and boost the lessons delivered at home. Teachers who do well in this environment are those who are responsive to the individual needs of the students, provide clear, targeted and timely feedback and who engage with the child through ICT well. An excellent teacher can mean the difference between families and students thriving in the distance education environment or imploding.

Rating: 7

### Leaders and leadership

Effective school leadership occurs when they listen and respond to the needs of the school population and is supportive of the families and students. Where this is lacking the culture of the school can become toxic and difficult for families already in difficult situations to deal with.

Rating: 4

### School and Community

For distance education students it is important that they feel they are a part of a community of children and teachers. When this is fostered the children are more likely to commit to their school work.

Rating: 4

### Information and Communication Technology

For distance education students IT is the number 1 way they interact with their teachers and classmates. It is essential that this is done well, with high enough speeds and a high enough level of consistency of it working.

Rating: 7

### Entrepreneurship and schools

I think exposing kids to this type of pursuit could broaden their experience would be difficult to conduct for distance education students.

Rating: 4

### Improving access – enrolments, clusters, distance education and boarding

Smaller class sizes would improve distance education students access to their teachers. Better financial support for the cost of boarding and governesses. Support for travel to sporting and/or other extra curricular events.

Rating for enrolments: 5

Rating for clusters: 0

Rating for distance education: 7

Rating for boarding: 7

### Diversity

Indigenous Australians living on outstations that are not catered for by schools should be enabled to access distance education options. This means better funding for the schools of the air to produce appropriate ESL/bilingual curriculum and the support to families to deliver it.

Rating: 7

### Transitioning beyond school

It is a big gap to life beyond school but more so for remote kids transitioning to the city for further education. There should be more support for remote kids in terms of helping them manage culture shock and guide them through the process of living in the city.

Rating: 5

### Additional Comments