



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 280

WRITTEN QUESTION

J Davis to the Minister for Education and Training, Hon Jo-Anne Hersey MLA:

School Staffing and Teacher Housing

1. **How many senior teacher positions are currently allocated within corporate or departmental business units, and what is their function in supporting teacher development and workforce growth?**

As at Pay 06 2026 (10 September 2026), there were 81 senior teachers within corporate or departmental business units.

The identified senior teachers have the following main functions: curriculum, pedagogy and teaching practice; inclusion, wellbeing and transition support; leadership, school improvement and capability; early childhood development; assessment, quality and accreditation; and workforce growth and development.

These roles apply professional teaching expertise to curriculum and assessment development, professional learning, coaching and mentoring, inclusive education, school improvement, accreditation, workforce pipeline initiatives and teacher pathways. They work with schools, principals and educators to strengthen capability and teaching practice, inform evidence-based improvement and keep departmental strategies responsive to school needs, while creating opportunities for experienced teachers to contribute to system-wide improvement and workforce growth.

2. **How does the Department retain the expertise of senior teachers who do not move into principal roles or remain in classroom-based positions?**

- a. **What structured career pathways exist for senior teachers into corporate or policy roles?**

The Department of Education and Training (the department) provides opportunities for experienced senior teachers to pursue a range of corporate and strategic roles where their professional expertise can be applied beyond the classroom. These opportunities are available across a number of business units and

may involve policy and program development, curriculum and professional learning, workforce initiatives, strategic reform, school improvement, and coaching and mentoring of educators and school leaders. They enable experienced teachers to broaden their professional experience while continuing to contribute to improved outcomes for students and schools.

b. How does the Department respond to concerns that professional teaching expertise is only valued when delivered directly in front of students?

The department values the expertise and contributions of senior teachers throughout their careers, both within and beyond the classroom. Experienced teachers make valuable contributions through direct classroom teaching and through roles that support teachers, leaders and schools across the education system. Maintaining a strong and capable teaching workforce is a core priority, and experienced educators contribute to improved student outcomes through a range of professional pathways.

3. What is the current teacher vacancy rate across NT schools?

As at 25 August 2026, there were 39 reported classroom teacher vacancies across NT Government schools, compared with 55 vacancies at the same time in 2025.

a. How many teaching positions remained unfilled at the start of Terms 1 and 2 of 2026?

Reported teacher vacancies were significantly lower in 2026 than in 2025.

Term 1, 2026

- 6 January 2026: 66 vacancies (117 in 2025)
- 31 March 2026: 44 vacancies (108 in 2025)
- Between 8 January and 30 March 2026, 104 positions were filled

Term 2, 2026

- 7 April 2026: 52 vacancies (104 in 2025)
 - 23 June 2026: 23 vacancies (49 in 2025)
 - Between 15 June and 22 June 2026, 60 positions were filled
- These figures demonstrate a continued reduction in teacher vacancies throughout the first half of 2026.

b. How many classes are being taught by relief, temporary or non-teaching staff because permanent teachers could not be recruited?

Under NT legislative and regulatory requirements, teaching duties in government schools must be undertaken by appropriately qualified and registered teachers. Individuals who do not hold the required teacher registration cannot be employed to teach classes.

Where a permanent teacher has not yet been recruited, principals may engage suitably qualified and registered temporary, contract or relief teachers to ensure continuity of learning and maintain educational programs while recruitment processes continue.

The department does not centrally report the number of classes being taught by relief teachers.

These figures include ongoing employees temporarily transferred to schools and therefore do not solely represent teachers engaged to fill vacancies.

The department's permanency strategies continue to support workforce stability, with classroom teacher permanency increasing from 67.4% in August 2025 to 69.6% in August 2026.

c. What is the average time a teaching vacancy remains unfilled in remote schools?

Based on recruitment transactions finalised during 2026, teacher recruitment requests were completed in an average of approximately 17 calendar days.

This measure includes a range of recruitment activities, including temporary engagements, contract appointments and permanency processes. Recruitment timeframes vary depending on vacancy type, location, advertising requirements and labour market conditions. Specific data on vacancy duration in remote schools is not currently reported separately.

d. Where a figure for an individual school or region is too small to report, please provide the Territory-wide total.

Responses have been provided at the Territory-wide level where school or regional-level reporting is not available or appropriate.

e. If vacancies are not recorded against established positions, in which system is the school staffing establishment held, and in what format?

The department maintains approved school staffing establishments through its workforce planning, school budget and establishment management, and human resource information systems.

4. How many teacher houses are currently vacant, uninhabitable or awaiting maintenance?

Currently there are 38 vacant Government Employee Houses allocated to the Department of Education and Training across six regions. The regional breakdown outlined below:

Big Rivers: 10

Central: 6

Barkly: 7

Top End: 8

Arnhem: 7

Darwin: 0

GEH advises that it does not allocate any dwellings that are uninhabitable.

a. How many teacher housing maintenance requests are outstanding?

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development is responsible for this matter. The question should be directed to Minister for Housing, Local Government and Community Development.

b. What is the average time taken to complete repairs?

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development is responsible for this matter. The question should be directed to Minister for Housing, Local Government and Community Development.

c. How much funding has been allocated to teacher housing upgrades?

In 2025/26 \$3.316M was expended on Government Employee Housing improvements for remote teachers and principals, as part of the Northern Territory Remote Aboriginal Investment Agreement.

d. If the condition and availability of teacher housing is not centrally recorded, in which system is it held, and in what format?

All information of Government Employee Housing dwellings are recorded in the Tenancy Management System (TMS).