



HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

PARLIAMENT HOUSE, HOBART

Jurisdiction Report: House of Assembly Education Office Parliament of Tasmania

Australian Parliamentary Educators' Conference 2017

The Education Office

The House of Assembly Education Office aims to deliver Parliamentary Education to Tasmanian School Students. As at 30 June 2017 the Education Office staffing allocation was increased to 1.6 FTE after a successful submission to the Department of Treasury and Finance. This load is shared between two Education Officers. The Education Office works under the supervision of the Second Clerk-Assistant.

School Programmes

Schools have four options when visiting the Parliament of Tasmania. They are:

Option 1: See Parliament in Action

Option 2: Take a Guided Tour

Option 3: Engage in a role-play in the House of Assembly Chamber

Option 4: Take a Guided Tour and participate in a House of Assembly role-play

Depending on their availability, all four options may include a question and answer session with a Member of Parliament.

Tour Numbers

During the 2016-2017 financial year, the Education Office hosted 2746 students. Over two-thirds of schools opted for a tour and role-play. In addition, another 909 students and teachers observed Parliament from the House of Assembly Public Gallery, with half of these observers participating in a modified tour of Parliament House. These numbers have been steadily increasing since the establishment of the Education Office in October 2015.

Resources

The Education Office is developing a suite of education resources such as: facts sheets, learning tasks, certificates, treasure hunt cards and history timelines to supplement the education programmes.

Special Groups

The Education Office has hosted several special interest groups including the Children's University and the Stepping Up event.

Children's University

The Children's University Tasmania is affiliated with the University of Tasmania and the Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment, a specialist centre established to better understand the issues that constrain Tasmanian educational outcomes. The Children's University offers educational experiences for children aged between 7 and 14 years outside of school and recognises their achievements through the award of formal certificates and graduations.

During the 2017 Term 3 School Holidays, the Governor of Tasmania and the Parliament of Tasmania co-hosted the Children's University. The event aimed to introduce children to the role of Parliament. The children were able to meet the Governor of Tasmania, have a picnic lunch at Government House, tour Government House and Parliament House, and participate in a House of Assembly role-play. These children were from some of the most disadvantaged schools in Hobart, and for many participants it was their first visit to both venues. The feedback from the participants and staff was very positive.

Stepping Up

The Stepping Up event aims to encourage young women to consider a career in politics. The event targeted Year 9 female students. The day's activities were designed to give insight into the work of a female parliamentarian and included: a role-play, a mini role-play about constituent issues, observing Parliament sitting, meeting the first female Speaker of the House and a panel discussion with female Members of Parliament.

The inaugural event was held in November 2016 after a grant from the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP). Due to the overwhelming success of the 2016 event, and the biennial availability of the CWP grant, the House of Assembly agreed to fund the 2017 event. The 2017 event was held very recently and the initial feedback is excellent.

It is hoped that these events become annualised, with other events added to the calendar over time.

Community Groups

The Education Office also aims to deliver programmes to community organisations and the general public. Each month a small number of community groups are invited to visit Parliament House for a private guided tour, thereby widening Parliamentary Education to adults. Usually these targeted groups have not had significant previous contact with the Parliament of Tasmania.

Looking forward

There are many projects currently underway for the Education Office. However, the key objectives for 2018 are: establishing the Schools Outreach Programme, establishing a specialised Legal Studies Programme for Year 11 and 12 students, and investigating the use of digital technologies within the House of Assembly Education Programmes.