

Press Release by the

Minister of Education

The Honourable Dame Jennifer Smith DBE, JP, DHumL, MP

On Thursday 07 April 2011

Minister of Education, the Honourable Dame Jennifer Smith today issued the following policy concerning the acceptance of children who are not toilet-trained into the public school system.

Clause 53 subsection (1) of the Education Act 1996 provides:

- (a) "children shall be admitted according to admission procedures published by the Ministry.
- (2) Subsection (1) relates only to the principles governing admission and confers no right to free education otherwise than as provided by this Act."

In making this announcement today – 7 April 2011, I am giving adequate notice, (five months), to parents, home care providers and guardians to ensure that children are ready and able to participate and function in a school environment.

We are aware that some children who have been registered for public preschools are not toilet trained. Parents must ensure that this situation is addressed before September 2011.

Toilet training is not a function of Education. Teacher training does not cover this aspect as children aged 4 years and up are expected to start school ready to learn. We are aware that the community expects a lot from our teachers and our schools – and we accept that responsibility. At the same time, parents must ensure that students enter school ready to learn.

Please note that the Dame Marjorie Bean Hope Academy is exempted from this policy as are any students where there is a documented medical reason for the lack of toilet training.

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