

Home schooling without permission illegal

The Education Ministry released a notice on its website on Wednesday, stressing that parents or guardians are not allowed to educate children at home without permission from education authorities.

According to the Compulsory Education Law, all school-age children must attend primary and junior middle school.

Schools and local education authorities shoulder the responsibility of finding those children who do not go to school and persuading them to attend, the notice said.

“For children who cannot attend school due to reasons such as poor physical health, their parents or guardians should report to the local education authorities and ask for a delay in enrollment,” the notice said.

“They cannot give children home schooling as a substitute for school education if they fail to gain permission from the authorities.”

The notice was released against a backdrop of an increasing number of students being educated at home or attending small, private teaching institutes.

Research conducted by the 21st Century Education Research Institute estimated that the number of children who receive home schooling rather than attending school in China has risen from 2,000 in 2013 to 6,000 today.

Wang Jiajia, who led the research, said the legality of home schooling had long been controversial in China, but that the increasing number of parents and children wanting to do so demonstrated that the unified, standardized education provided in the nation's schools cannot meet everyone's needs.