

Consultation on Home Education Guidelines

Consultation Response Form

The closing date for this consultation is: 31 July
2007

Your comments must reach us by that date.

department for







education and skills

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THIS FORM IS NOT INTERACTIVE. If you wish to respond electronically please use the online or offline response facility available on the Department for Education and Skills e-consultation website (<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations>).

The information you provide in your response will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations, which allow public access to information held by the Department. This does not necessarily mean that your response can be made available to the public as there are exemptions relating to information provided in confidence and information to which the Data Protection Act 1998 applies. You may request confidentiality by ticking the box provided, but you should note that neither this, nor an automatically-generated e-mail confidentiality statement, will necessarily exclude the public right of access.

Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential. ☐

Name 
Organisation (if applicable) 
Address: Bedfordshire County Council





If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact Elaine Haste on:

Telephone: 0870 000 2288

e-mail: elaine.haste@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

If you have a query relating to the consultation process you can contact the Consultation Unit on:

Telephone: 01928 794888

Fax: 01928 794 113

e-mail: consultation.unit@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

Which of the following best describes you:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual	<input type="checkbox"/>	Small business	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium business	<input type="checkbox"/>	Large business	<input type="checkbox"/>	Government	<input type="checkbox"/>	Academic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Healthcare	<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual	<input type="checkbox"/>	Small business	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium business	<input type="checkbox"/>	Large business	<input type="checkbox"/>	Government	<input type="checkbox"/>	Academic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Healthcare	<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

Please Specify:

[Redacted]

1 Do you agree that it is helpful for the DfES to issue guidelines to local authorities?

☐

Yes

☐

No

☒ Not Sure

Comments: NOT SURE

The principle of guidance to Local Authorities is good, provided that it gives greater emphasis on safeguarding; which this document does not. There is still the possibility of an EHE child not becoming known to a Local Authority and if applicable unable to be safeguarded.

The suggestion that children should have access to a full-time and suitable education will not be promoted through this guidance. A clearer definition of Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 would help.

2 Do you agree that the description of the law (paragraphs 2.1-2.3) relating to elective home education is accurate and clear?

☐

Yes

☐

No

☒ Not Sure

Comments: NOT SURE

The description of the law is accurate as it stands.

However, whilst the law states that "no person shall be denied the right to education", in practice there is no mechanism to seek the young person's views. Recent DfES research demonstrates the benefits of seeking the voice of the child. The document describes education law but compromises the welfare of the child, particularly by not addressing the Every Child Matters agenda.

3 Do you agree that the description of local authorities' responsibilities (paragraphs 2.5-2.11) is accurate and helpful?

☐

Yes

☒ No☐ Not Sure

Comments: NO

This description is not appropriate or helpful.

Whilst the legal provision is clarified, there is no common understanding of the components / minimum standards of appropriate educational provision. How is reasonable progress to be measured without effective and realistic liaison between the LA and families?

The wording in this paragraph does not mitigate towards developing these relationships. Whilst it is good that the LA must be satisfied, there are no criteria or benchmarking for this to be accomplished.

4 Do you agree that the section on contact with the local authority (paragraphs 3.4-3.7) is accurate and helpful?

☐

Yes

☒ No☐

Not Sure

Comments: NO

The suggestions contained in these paragraphs do not reflect the ECM agenda, nor provide guidance on how LAs should engage with children and families. Whilst there are many successful examples of home education, the activities of Fred West & family in the early 90s, and the case prosecuted in Bristol Crown Court (Eunice Spry – see <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/gloucestershire/6449313.stm>), appear to have been overlooked completely.

5 Do you agree that the section on providing a full-time education (paragraphs 3.11-3.14) – and in particular, the characteristics of provision (paragraph 3.13) – is accurate and helpful?

☐

Yes

☒ No☐

Not Sure

Comments: NO

The comments in 3.11 are not consistent with the testing arrangements currently in place for schools. Having established that much of the parental activities are non-prescriptive, paragraphs 11-14 suddenly become prescriptive. How will the LA will be able to develop an informed view?

In practice the LA has minimal powers to intervene or investigate, should concerns exist. There is no reference to children with SEN whose parents may wish to home educate. This means that the most vulnerable children of all may not be protected. The system proposed does not allow for the LA to be aware of all children home educated. Therefore it will be impossible for the LA to ensure that any special educational needs a home educated child may have can be considered.

6 Do you agree that the section on developing relationships (section 4) is useful?

☐

Yes

✓ No

☐

Not Sure

Comments: NO

This paragraph is written from the perspective that the LA will be punitive rather than supportive in their earliest interventions. The section does not address the complexities that exist for LAs who are attempting to safeguard children; to work consistently with the 2002/2003 Education Acts, which address the child's needs and to establish and promote good working relationships with home educating families.

7 a) Are the suggested resources in section 5 and appendix 2 useful?

☐

Yes

✓ No

☐

Not Sure

Comments: NO

Flexi-schooling, however flexible for the parents, will present organisational difficulties and may increase absence, for schools and LAs. There is insufficient clarity about monitoring. Concerns are expressed at the difference between the authoritative view that is apparent but which does not easily relate to the general lack of direction in the document generally. There is insufficient evidence to suggest that work experience for home educated pupils happens to any sufficient degree.

7 b) Should any other contacts be included?

☐

Yes

☐

No

☐

Not Sure

Comments: NO

8 Please use this space for any other comments you wish to make about the guidelines

Comments:

Paragraph 2.4 fails to protect children from the ill effects of parental rights and responsibilities. There must be an appropriate reference to the CME work, it is not acceptable to suggest that the duty described further in paragraph 2.6 does not apply.

Paragraph 3.1 – 3.3. If this work is to be taken seriously, it is essential that appropriate funding is available and that the nominated senior officer should be someone with safeguarding experience.

Paragraph 3.9 is inaccurate. The 1995 regulations were repealed by the 2006 regulations and the appropriate section is now section 8.

Guidance on a reasonable timescale should be included, and that this should be negotiated between the LA and the parents.

There is an assumption that all parents who are electing for home education are doing so from a sound basis. There are examples of known cases where this is not the case, consequently the opportunity to protect all children is compromised by the above assumption, however small few the number of worrying cases.

From this you will see that generally we are in agreement with the views submitted by The Association for Education Welfare Management and re-enforcing the well made points.

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply YES

Here at the Department for Education and Skills we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be alright if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

/ Yes

All UK national public consultations are required to conform to the following standards:

1. Consult widely throughout the process, allowing a minimum of 12 weeks for written consultation at least once during the development of the policy.
2. Be clear about what your proposals are, who may be affected, what questions are being asked and the timescale for responses.
3. Ensure that your consultation is clear, concise and widely accessible.
4. Give feedback regarding the responses received and how the consultation process influenced the policy.
5. Monitor your department's effectiveness at consultation, including through the use of a designated consultation co-ordinator.
6. Ensure your consultation follows better regulation best practice, including carrying out a Regulatory Impact Assessment if appropriate.

Further information on the Code of Practice can be accessed through the Cabinet Office Website: <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/regulation/consultation-guidance/content/introduction/index.asp>

Thank you for taking time to respond to this consultation.

Completed questionnaires and other responses should be sent to the address shown below by 31 July 2007

Send by post to:

Elaine Haste, Department for Education and Skills, Mowden Hall, Staindrop Road, Darlington DL3 9BG

Send by e-mail to: homeeducation.consultation@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

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Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential. ☐

Name

Organisation (if applicable) East Sussex County Council

Address:

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact Elaine Haste on:

Telephone: 0870 000 2288

e-mail: elaine.haste@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

If you have a query relating to the consultation process you can contact the Consultation Unit on:

Telephone: 01928 794888

Fax: 01928 794 113

e-mail: consultation.unit@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

Which of the following best describes you:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local authority
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Please specify)

Please Specify:
East Sussex Children's Services Authority

1 Do you agree that it is helpful for the DfES to issue guidelines to local authorities?

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not Sure

Comments:

We consider that most local authorities would welcome clear guidance in line with the Every Child Matters and Safeguarding agenda. Current legislation as set out in the guidance without clear definitions of 'suitable', 'full-time' and whether LAs should take steps to gather evidence of educational progress unless alerted to concerns that an appropriate education is not being provided, would be helpful.

The expectations of inspectors recently assessing our LA that Home Education should be monitored regularly and that data should be kept on the GCSE results of Home Educated children suggests that clarity is not currently in place and these guidelines appear not to provide greater clarity over these issues.

2 Do you agree that the description of the law (paragraphs 2.1-2.3) relating to elective home education is accurate and clear?

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not Sure

Comments:

As the response form from the Association for Welfare Management states 'The description of the law is accurate as it stands. However, while the law states that "no person shall be denied the right to education" in practice there is no mechanism to seek the young person's views. Recent DfES research demonstrates the benefits of seeking the voice of the child. The document describes education law but compromises the welfare of the child, particularly by not addressing the Every Child Matters agenda.'

We agree with the above and endorse that LAs are encouraged to seek the opinions, feelings and views of young people in most other matters.

3 Do you agree that the description of local authorities' responsibilities (paragraphs 2.5-2.11) is accurate and helpful?

☐

Yes

✓ No

☐

Not Sure

Comments:

The description does not clarify what the department's expectation of LAs is. That children and young people should make 'reasonable (educational) progress' is a premise with which we agree but how that is to be established when 'LAs have no statutory duty in relation to monitoring the quality of home education on a routine basis' is a taxing concept, especially when they 'can intervene if they have good reason to believe parents are not providing a suitable education'. It is not clear from the guidelines whether LAs should do anything in relation to Home Education unless they receive evidence that it is not appropriate.

The experience of this authority is that we are contacted about the unsatisfactory nature of educational provision only in the case of acrimonious situations between ex partners.

It is particularly perplexing to try to establish exactly what the expectation on LAs is, when the law stands as described and yet LA inspectors ask whether we keep data on the educational attainment in relation to GCSE passes for Home Educated CYP and what we do to ensure safeguarding in this area.

4 Do you agree that the section on contact with the local authority (paragraphs 3.4-3.7) is accurate and helpful?

☐

Yes

✓ No

☐

Not Sure

Comments:

Comments:

The response from Association for Education Welfare Management reflects our views here.

There have been concerning cases relating to the ECM agenda and safeguarding within our LA.

Please see attached case study which demonstrates some of our concerns.

5 Do you agree that the section on providing a full-time education (paragraphs 3.11-3.14) – and in particular, the characteristics of provision (paragraph 3.13) – is accurate and helpful?

☐

Yes

✓ No

☐

Not Sure

3.11 states the current position accurately but does not assist in clarifying how LAs should assess the education provided in the light of 3.12 which implies that LAs should be 'consider(ing) provision' of home educating families when previously it has been indicated that LAs need to have concerns before doing so.

6 Do you agree that the section on developing relationships (section 4) is useful?

☐

Yes

☐

No

✓ Not Sure

Comments:

The proposed guidance is not clear whether these contacts should be for all families or just those where concerns have been raised.

Within our authority considerable attempts have been made to develop good relationships including meeting with the leaders of local groups of home educators and making more regular visits to families who genuinely seem to want to home educate but need support and guidance to do so. If we were meeting with families only when alerted to concerns, these relationships would be at risk.

7 a) Are the suggested resources in section 5 and appendix 2 useful?

☐

Yes

☐

No

☐

Not Sure

Comments:

At present Flexi-schooling is not encouraged within our LA. In our guidelines it is stated that this is an arrangement between the family and the school at which the child is on roll. Schools are encouraged to consider any such requests on the grounds of how such arrangements will promote educational progress and school standards at the end of key stages. As a result of this, currently the monitoring of any such arrangements is not carried out by the authority. It would be extremely difficult to determine whether a child's progress under such an arrangement was as a result of work done at school or as part of a flexible arrangement.. The inclusion of flexi schooling in the guidance could encourage greater numbers of parents to consider it. In our LA, the only recent example of a request to do so was when a class was had a job-share teaching pair and the family did not like one of the job-share partners and therefore wanted to educate their child at times when that teacher had responsibility for the class.

7 b) Should any other contacts be included?

☐

Yes

☐

No

☐

Not Sure

Comments:

8 Please use this space for any other comments you wish to make about the guidelines

Comments: The issuing of guidelines provides an opportunity for clarity in the area of elective home education. Unfortunately there still seems to be lack of day to day practical guidance about how the ECM and safe-guarding agendas can be put in place whilst working within the law as it currently stands. Many LAs, ourselves included, tend to rely on the good will of many parents in allowing monitoring to take place or their lack of knowledge about what LAs are legally able to do in this area.

Aspirations about how LAs should work with local parent groups and provide information to Home Educating families does not sit well with Section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996, which states that LAs can only intervene if they have good reason to believe that parents are not providing a suitable education. How this can be established without duties to monitor home education has always been the challenge here and often parents challenge any attempts of LAs to find out about the education they are providing because they know that there are no statutory duties in relation to monitoring the quality of home education on a routine basis.

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply ☐

Here at the Department for Education and Skills we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be alright if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

☐

Yes

☐

No

All UK national public consultations are required to conform to the following standards:

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Thank you for taking time to respond to this consultation.

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Send by post to:

**East Sussex
Elective Home Education - Case Study**

Pupil [redacted] Yr 9 had become increasingly unsettled at school. [redacted] behaviour was deteriorating and [redacted] had been truanting. Following warning re poor attendance, [redacted]'s mother notified the school to say she was education [redacted] at home, but [redacted] would be also spending time travelling with [redacted] father.

[redacted] is a Traveller child. Traveller Education Team was unhappy at the decision to home educate as they felt the family did not have "the knowledge, skills and resources to provide or deliver a full-time education that is efficient and suitable" (3.4). It was planned to intervene (monitor) immediately. Several home visits proved to be unproductive. On the last visit, two officers were kept at the boundary fence by aggressive dogs.

It subsequently transpired that [redacted] was being groomed with [redacted] mother's consent, by a Schedule 1 sex offender currently serving a prison sentence for an unlawful relationship with [redacted]. Prison monitoring picked this up and a Child Protection referral was made. [redacted] is on the Child Protection Register and although [redacted] has now moved to another County, her parents cannot home educate.

Conclusion:

It was through luck that we knew of the family and our Traveller Education Team raised concerns. If this child had been from a different ethnicity, she may have been unknown to the local authority and, away from regular contact with school and other professionals, would have been in danger of undetected abuse with the consent of her family.

Yet again there appears to be a conflict between our safeguarding responsibilities and the guidance as it exists in 2.7 "The local authorities have no statutory duties in relation to monitoring the quality of home education on a routine basis..... They can intervene if they have good reason to believe that parents are not providing a suitable education" We would ask the question – how do we know whether or not parents are providing suitable education or intervention is necessary unless we robustly monitor?

[redacted]

[redacted] Traveller Education Team

July 07

Case Study demonstrating how Home Education can potentially result in safeguarding issues being missed

A family with 4 children from a BME background who were purported to be educating at home. The 2 older children had been in schools but had been withdrawn to educate at home and 2 younger children who had never been in school.

Family avoided all contact with services for the children and GP was the only real contact but this was in terms of parents needs not those of the children.

When the LEA tried to use the legal process and also involve social care the parent accused the LEA of not taking his religious and cultural needs into account. Social care then closed the case.

No agency had access to the children for long periods of time and the EWS worked through the court procedures following the school attendance order procedure.

The case was eventually referred as a child protection issue by a number of professionals and the police visited and removed the children to a place of safety. The conditions in which they found the children were appalling and neither child was receiving education or adequate care. The older 2 were now adults but were removed to a secure hospital as there were concerns about their vulnerability.

Eventually the 2 younger children were placed on a full care order in foster care and began to thrive although the youngest has several developmental delay and special educational needs. The whole process took a number of years and it is not possible to assess whether the difficulties currently experienced were caused or aggravated by the length of time he remained in the parents care.

400

ESSEX CC

Logged in as: [REDACTED]

e-consultation

Home / Consultation on Home Education Guidelines... / Analysis / Response Edit

Consultation on Home Education Guidelines

department for

education and skills**Consultations**

Consultation Home

Manual Response Entry

Analysis

Campaigns

Acknowledgements

System Tools**response edit**

This screen displays the contents of an individual response, including the respondent's personal details and their answers to the questionnaire. You can JUMP to another response by supplying an appropriate response number, or move to the NEXT or PREVIOUS response. The response number is the number automatically assigned to the response when it was submitted by the respondent. It is equivalent to the Consultation Unit's traditional Reference Number. It is assigned to each response and remains unique. Where a response has been deleted from the system, the reason is displayed in place of the response.

[Click here for more information about using this screen](#)

<< first	< previous	Ref: 400	Jump	next >	last >>
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Entire Response	[REDACTED] - Essex County Council
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[REDACTED]

Personal Details		Identifier: 400
Response Type	Online	
Title:	[REDACTED]	
First Name:	[REDACTED]	
Last Name:	[REDACTED]	
Email:	[REDACTED]@essexcc.gov.uk	
Organisation:	Essex County Council	
Address:	Children's Support Service Schools Children and Families 2nd Floor E Block County Hall Chelmsford CM1 1LD	
Response on behalf of an organisation:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Campaign:		

	Not Part of Campaign
Confidential Response:	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Future Contact:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Acknowledge Response:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Acknowledgements:	Acknowledgement email
Inform when published:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Key Response:	[REDACTED]
Respondent Information Questions	Identifier: 400
Which of the following best describes you:	
<input type="radio"/> Home educator <input type="radio"/> Organisation representing home educators <input checked="" type="radio"/> Local authority <input type="radio"/> Young person who is/was home educated <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify)	
Answer/Comments:	Essex County Council
Please specify:	
Consultation Questions	Identifier: 400
1 Do you agree that it is helpful for the DfES to issue guidelines to local authorities?	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Not Sure <input type="radio"/> No Response	
Key Indicators:	[REDACTED]

	[REDACTED]
New Key Indicator(s):	<input type="text"/>
Answer/Comments:	It is useful to have a set of national guidelines to provide some consistency of approach within the UK. Perhaps greater reference to parental responsibilities as well as rights would have been helpful.
Text for Report:	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px; width: 100%;"></div>
2 Do you agree that the description of the law (paragraphs 2.1-2.3) relating to elective home education is accurate and clear?	
	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Not Sure <input type="radio"/> No Response
Key Indicators:	[REDACTED]
New Key Indicator(s):	<input type="text"/>
Answer/Comments:	Clear descriptions should be given as to what constitutes 'suitable, efficient and full-time' education.
Text for Report:	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px; width: 100%;"></div>
3 Do you agree that the description of local authorities' responsibilities (paragraphs 2.5-2.11) is accurate and helpful?	
	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Not Sure <input type="radio"/> No Response

Key Indicators:	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
New Key Indicator(s):	<input type="text"/>
Answer/Comments:	It is difficult to see how the LA would be made aware of concerns about a child's suitable education without some form of routine monitoring.
Text for Report:	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
4 Do you agree that the section on contact with the local authority (paragraphs 3.4-3.7) is accurate and helpful?	
	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> Not Sure <input type="radio"/> No Response
Key Indicators:	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
New Key Indicator(s):	<input type="text"/>
Answer/Comments:	In our view there would be a need to ensure a dialogue with the family in order to make an informed decision about the education being provided.
Text for Report:	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
5 Do you agree that the section on providing a full-time education (paragraphs 3.11-3.14) – and in particular, the characteristics of provision (paragraph 3.13) – is accurate and helpful?	

	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Not Sure <input type="radio"/> No Response
Key Indicators:	<div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em;"></div>
New Key Indicator(s):	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Answer/Comments:	The list in Section 3.11 only provides information on what is not required - this could be open to poor interpretation. The list in Section 3.13 is too vague.
Text for Report:	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div>
Identifier: 400	
6 Do you agree that the section on developing relationships (section 4) is useful?	
	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Not Sure <input type="radio"/> No Response
Key Indicators:	<div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em;"></div>
New Key Indicator(s):	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Answer/Comments:	Agreed that positive relationships are important. The guidelines do not give LA's the opportunity to meet with each family regularly or even to meet the child. It could therefore, be difficult to develop relationships. It appears that the LA is expected to provide a range of resources for families, who they may have no contact with and no knowledge of their requirements.
Text for Report:	

<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px; width: 100%; background-color: black;"></div>	
7 a) Are the suggested resources in section 5 and appendix 2 useful?	
	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> Not Sure <input type="radio"/> No Response
Key Indicators:	<div style="background-color: black; height: 15px; width: 100%;"></div>
New Key Indicator(s):	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>
Answer/Comments:	It should be recognised that these lists are subject to continuous change. Can only, therefore, be a sample.
Text for Report:	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px; width: 100%;"></div>
7 b) Should any other contacts be included?	
	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> Not Sure <input type="radio"/> No Response
Key Indicators:	
New Key Indicator(s):	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>
Answer/Comments:	See above.
Text for Report:	

8 Please use this space for any other comments you wish to make about the guidelines	
Key Indicators:	[REDACTED]
New Key Indicator(s):	
Answer/Comments:	<p>When we met [REDACTED] at the Essex Elective Home Education Conference in 2006, we were led to believe that following the research into Traveller Families in Home Education, there would be changes in the law to allow for compulsory registration of all families in Home Education and that LA's rights and responsibilities would be clarified in light of Every Child Matters and Children Missing in Education. Instead, we have been given guidelines that protect the parents' rights to provide Home Education, but allow the LA very little scope to monitor all parental provision of home education.</p> <p>It would only take a serious child protection case to make Home Education more visible in the public eye and that would call into question whether parents should have so much freedom in relation to Home Education in the UK.</p>
Text for Report:	
<div>Save Reset Delete Back Print</div>	
<div><< first < previous Ref: 400 Jump next > last >></div>	
Entire Response [REDACTED] - Essex County Council	
[REDACTED]	

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Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential. ☐

Name

Organisation (if applicable) Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Address:

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e-mail: elaine.haste@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

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Telephone: 01928 794888

Fax: 01928 794 113

e-mail: consultation.unit@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

Which of the following best describes you:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Please Specify:

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1 Do you agree that it is helpful for the DfES to issue guidelines to local authorities?

Comments:	We already have guidance but it is helpful to have a summary of the expected contents of LA guidance as an aid to consistency across LAs.
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2 Do you agree that the description of the law (paragraphs 2.1-2.3) relating to elective home education is accurate and clear?

Page 10 of 10

Comments:

3 Do you agree that the description of local authorities' responsibilities (paragraphs 2.5-2.11) is accurate and helpful?

Comments: It would seem sensible for parents to be required to register their intention to take responsibility for the education of their child by home education. Failure to incorporate this in the guidance would make it very difficult for LAs to accurately comply with paras 2.6 and 2.7 as there could be children being educated by parents who are not receiving suitable education unbeknown to the Local Authority.

It makes no sense to impose the new duty on LAs to identify children likely to missing a suitable education and then to state in 2.7 that the LA has no duty to monitor the quality of the education. How is the LA to know that the education is suitable or not if they have no statutory duty to monitor? Paras 2.6 and 2.7 seem to contradict one another and need further clarification.

There are also Child Protection issues. Some parents/carers may not wish the existence of a child to be known to any Authorities. Whilst it is accepted that parents/carers wishing to hide a child will find a way to do so if they are determined to do it, the discovery of a child previously unregistered as being home educated will serve to alert others to an unusual situation.

4 Do you agree that the section on contact with the local authority (paragraphs 3.4-3.7) is accurate and helpful?

Comments:

5 Do you agree that the section on providing a full-time education (paragraphs 3.11-3.14) – and in particular, the characteristics of provision (paragraph 3.13) – is accurate and helpful?

Comments: This is very helpful guidance.

6 Do you agree that the section on developing relationships (section 4) is useful?

Comments: **Para 4.9:** If there is no requirement to register the child as being home educated it is difficult to know how the Local Authority might discover any Child Protection issues. In two different LAs I have worked in, children were discovered by chance as being home educated. In the one case, the child was alive and well and had received a suitable education but was rather belatedly needing advice for further education which could have easily been provided had we known about the child. In the other case, the child's father was imprisoned for child abuse. That particular child was 8 years old and unknown to us.

Para 4.10: Help with regard to CRB checks would be a good idea but a small Local Authority would find the cost rather onerous.

The general guidance on diversity and contact with parents and children was very helpful.

7 a) Are the suggested resources in section 5 and appendix 2 useful?

Comments: We agree that children educated at home would benefit greatly from being able to participate in work experience and work related learning. However, where there is a cost involved for a risk assessment done by an outside agency it is felt that the parents should bear that cost themselves.

7 b) Should any other contacts be included?

<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
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Comments: The list of organisations was very useful and will be added to our local guidance.

8 Please use this space for any other comments you wish to make about the guidelines

Comments:

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Please acknowledge this reply ☐

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☐☐

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Thank you for taking time to respond to this consultation.

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Send by post to:

Consultation on Home Education Guidelines

Consultation Response Form

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2007

Your comments must reach us by that date.

department for

education and skills

creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence

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The information you provide in your response will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations, which allow public access to information held by the Department. This does not necessarily mean that your response can be made available to the public as there are exemptions relating to information provided in confidence and information to which the Data Protection Act 1998 applies. You may request confidentiality by ticking the box provided, but you should note that neither this, nor an automatically-generated e-mail confidentiality statement, will necessarily exclude the public right of access.

Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential. ☐

Name

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable)

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Address:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Somerset

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact Elaine Haste on:

Telephone: 0870 000 2288

e-mail: elaine.haste@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

If you have a query relating to the consultation process you can contact the Consultation Unit on:

Telephone: 01928 794888

Fax: 01928 794 113

e-mail: consultation.unit@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

Which of the following best describes you:

<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	

Please Specify:

[Redacted]

1 Do you agree that it is helpful for the DfES to issue guidelines to local authorities?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Comments:

It is helpful but consideration needs to be given to LAs duties and responsibilities [education, welfare and ECM agenda] balanced alongside home educating parents rights.

2 Do you agree that the description of the law (paragraphs 2.1-2.3) relating to elective home education is accurate and clear?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Comments:

2.1 to 2.3 is accurate and clear.

However 2.4 re parental rights and responsibilities is clear but, "parents are not required to register..." is not helpful [see 2.6 re Children Missing Education].

Why does this guidance not apply to children being educated at home? This places those children at risk.

3 Do you agree that the description of local authorities' responsibilities (paragraphs 2.5-2.11) is accurate and helpful?

Comments:

How can a LA fulfil its statutory duty to, "intervene if they have good reason.." if the child's education is not being monitored at least annually or the child is not seen? Equally the LA cannot "safeguard and promote the welfare of children" [Education Act 2002, S175[1]] if they are not able to see the child.

4 Do you agree that the section on contact with the local authority (paragraphs 3.4-3.7) is accurate and helpful?

Comments:

3.4 Agree the LA should not "automatically assume there is a problem" if the family do not want any involvement with the LA ...however a refusal to allow any contact would certainly alert the LA to the possibility of a problem, which, without any evidence the child was ok, would pose too great a risk not to investigate further.

3.7 Evidence really needs to demonstrate progress... so a report and examples of work would be useful. Somerset LA has developed guidelines on providing evidence...available in our information pack now and on the website very soon.
3.10 "reasonable timescale" ...needs to be more specific. I would suggest 3 months.

5 Do you agree that the section on providing a full-time education (paragraphs 3.11-3.14) – and in particular, the characteristics of provision (paragraph 3.13) – is accurate and helpful?

Comments:

3.11 lists what home educating parents are not required to do. Some people may use this list to point out what they don't have to do. A list of what they may do would be more positive and helpful all round.

Ideally LAs would appreciate a list of what home educating parents do have to do in order the LA has enough evidence to be satisfied the standards of the Education Act [1996, S7] are being met.

3.13 too vague

3.14 "reasonable" needs to be specific...some home educating parents may consider a year is a reasonable time for them to improve their provision.

6 Do you agree that the section on developing relationships (section 4) is useful?

☐☐

Comments:

Overall well intended but leaves LAs in position of protracted negotiations with some parents who fundamentally are failing to provide their children with an appropriate education.

7 a) Are the suggested resources in section 5 and appendix 2 useful?

☐☐

Comments:

Info on support ...clear and useful. Thank you.

This section could be extended to include advice about taking GCSEs [early and Y11] and info on exam centres that accept external candidates.

7 b) Should any other contacts be included?

<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
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Comments:

This list looks quite comprehensive

8 Please use this space for any other comments you wish to make about the guidelines

Comments:

5.2 Examples of Additional Support

Somerset LA has been offering workshops to EHE families on post 16 options, routes into HE and anti-racist / inclusion issues.

We plan to offer storytelling workshops, opportunities for home educating parents to get together and an outdoor residential experience in the autumn.

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Name

Organisation (if applicable)

Address:

Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

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e-mail: elaine.haste@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

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<input type="checkbox"/>	

Please Specify:

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1 Do you agree that it is helpful for the DfES to issue guidelines to local authorities?

Comments: We think it depends on how they are framed. Some guidelines can be woolly and may not be followed.

2 Do you agree that the description of the law (paragraphs 2.1-2.3) relating to elective home education is accurate and clear?

Comments: In theory it may be accurate and clear but is there any evidence that this is played out in practice? It really depends on who your clients are. Nine months ago [redacted] YO Traveller pupils opted for EHE and despite regular contact with the EWO only [redacted] family out of [redacted] have filled out the initial form and as yet there have been no visits from SIAs or any monitoring whatsoever, partly because it is something new for the LA to address and partly because there have been tensions within the community which have resulted in services not visiting the site for a period of time.

3 Do you agree that the description of local authorities' responsibilities (paragraphs 2.5-2.11) is accurate and helpful?

Comments: But what legal obligations/backing do they have in order to carry out their responsibilities ?

4 Do you agree that the section on contact with the local authority (paragraphs 3.4-3.7) is accurate and helpful?

Comments: The process of inspecting/monitoring EHE for Travellers is fraught with difficulty (access to children on site, in a trailer, the interest and willingness of LAs to engage with Travellers who aren't interested and for Travellers to engage with the LA). The reality is that Traveller pupils electing for EHE are not being monitored in the same way as non Traveller pupils for the reasons above. So much time, negotiation and effort is needed to follow through the recommended processes of home visits and monitoring the provision, when it is widely known that the reason behind their decision is to opt out altogether and not just opt out of school education.

Historically Travellers have only ever wanted their children to receive the basic education at Primary School, and not to continue their education past Year 7/8/9, so monitoring becomes irrelevant when they have in effect opted out of education under the pretence of providing their own. When Travellers opt for EHE, it must be remembered that they are at the opposite end of the scale to the parents who traditionally do this (university educated networkers, who pool their own resources). Travellers are the least educated, most marginalised and vulnerable ethnic group in the UK – they are not generally opting out because they want to provide their own education, they are following their traditional and entrenched culture of not going to school at secondary level. This should be understood from the start, and given this and the authority's responsibility to safe guard children, what protection can there be for children if Traveller

parents are able to elect for EHE ?

5 Do you agree that the section on providing a full-time education (paragraphs 3.11-3.14) – and in particular, the characteristics of provision (paragraph 3.13) – is accurate and helpful?

Comments: It is, but we believe that Travellers do not fit into the 'norm' so extra guidelines are needed to address the fact that they don't want education before LAs invest a lot of time and energy in following up.

6 Do you agree that the section on developing relationships (section 4) is useful?

Comments: It's good in theory.

7 a) Are the suggested resources in section 5 and appendix 2 useful?



<p>Comments:</p>	
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7 b) Should any other contacts be included?



<p>Comments:</p>	
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Comments:

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