

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>).

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

Name

Organisation (if applicable) BMBC

Address:

BARNSLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH
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"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please Specify: Local Authority

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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: expectation that parents have to indicate whether they are entering their children into statutory education or not.

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: 2.3 last paragraph. Not clear, we would want additional contextual information re what they understand those phrases to mean. Case studies would be helpful

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

<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
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Comments: ~~Not~~ helpful. 2.11 mechanisms required for young people to voice their opinions
No "teeth" under safeguarding.
Responsibility on parents to inform us if educating at home.

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

<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
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Comments: 3.7 paragraph should be stronger [parents MUST provide evidence]

3.5 needs to be firmer. Child should be seen

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="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
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Comments: says what it is then says do not need to do it
Full Time – anomalous I n how you interpret it.

Examples would be useful in what good practise looks like
Contradictory and confused.

3.13 bullet point 4 – list in 3.11

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

☐☐

Comments: could suggest authorities put in a network.

4.9 no opportunity to comment

1. current arrangements don't give us access to parents where there may be concerns.

2. Sometimes parents will use this to avoid scrutiny

3. needs to be risk assessment for children on child protection plan

4.8 Although no access to home should have access to child.

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

☐☐

Comments: helpful but contradictory

7 b) Should any other contacts be included?

Comments: No local contacts/website when review guidance

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

Comments: Local authority need to review their child protection arrangements.

Not given opportunity to comment on section 3, children with SEN

5.7 no access to comment

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<input data-bbox="244 682 308 739" type="checkbox"/>	<input data-bbox="850 682 914 739" type="checkbox"/>
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Name

Organisation (if applicable) Staffordshire 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

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

Please Specify:

This response represents feedback from the Midland EHE LA forum held in June 2007.

*The evaluative ticks (✓) are my own and other personal observations are also included in **bold**.*

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

Comments:

Elective Home Education Guidance from the DfES / DCSF is a vital tool for all local authorities. It should set out the essential roles and responsibilities and link these to the Education act 1996. Furthermore it is imperative that the DCSF also stresses the emphasis on ECM and Safeguarding Children protocols.

Yes – provided it is clear, specific, agreeable to all parties (but this can be problematic – leads to unnecessary compromise) should be developed into a statutory framework

- LAs should be issued guidance on EHE but this needs to be clear, concise and reflect Local and National priorities and agendas (ECM, WTSGC).
- DfES should support schools on EHE issues – too many schools are suggesting to parents EHE is the best option without considering other options that may be available.

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:

Yes – it is long awaited – dependent on the guidelines actually guiding how the home education is done. The consultation should really consult and take notice of professionals nationwide who are aware of real cases. Please note that the guidelines are also for parents and should itemise real helpful examples of what is required:

- provided it is clear, specific, accurate and linked with ECM & Safeguarding children
- which aspect should be statutory

Need clear descriptors regarding what constitutes an 'efficient and suitable' education – more detail, helpful if it specified literacy and numeracy as compulsory activities.

How can LA fulfil this duty if unable to meet some EHE children?!

2.4 Please provide a clear definition of "full time" education and what would be the constituent parts.

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



Comments:

- The guidance is good in the fact it provides an overview but does not help LA deal ef
 - How long, if at all, do we have to wait before we see the child?
 - Guidance is parent centred NOT child centred!!
 - Guidance is needed on developing and promoting effective relationships.
- This document is about:

- Parents' Rights & LA Responsibilities

Should be about:

- Parents' Rights & Parents' Responsibilities
- LA rights and LA responsibilities
- **The Child's Rights are paramount**

- 2.5 – 2.11 Too 'Woolly' – contradictory.
- 2.5 Government 'passes the buck' to LAs regarding providing written information
- 2.6 & 2.11 Appears to be contradictory
- 2.6 Ambiguous. Need evidence that a child is being educated at home – if not, is the child missing education?
- 2.7 Education Act 1996 – please provide LA's with clear guidance definition of "good reason" to Believe that parents are not providing a suitable education. Case law**
- **2.11 Following Case Law (Eunice Spry and Gloucester) clearer Safeguarding advice issued from the DCSF – essential / musts!**

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

☐ ☐

Comments:

Policies and Procedures

DCSF should commission a national conference for LA's to lead on best practice, offer advocacy (and establish a common database / framework)

Traveller Gypsy/Roma parents and their families ought to become a national priority for the acquisition of "functioning skills" to enable this generation and subsequent generations of children to reach their potential on all of the ECM outcomes (to break the cycle of ignorance and enable Equal opportunities to be exercised) and broaden horizons and enable communities to fully diversify yet retain cultural values based upon knowledge , choice and not bigotry .

Contact with the LA

Please define reasonable concerns

3.7 "with or without the child" – this remains a grave concerns for LA's : ECM and Safeguarding mantras MUST advocate that DCSF strengthen the Education Act to ensure that the child / youngster is seen.

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 The consultation document lists what is not required but not what is.

3.13 This is too vague and woolly as is 3.12.

The document is contradictory.

The concept of 3.14 is interesting and could be helpful but is far too vague and could not stand up in court. Definitions need to be stated – positive guidance should be given – it should be phrased for parents – perhaps a separate document. This outlines parents' rights and local authority responsibilities – it should show children's rights and parents' responsibilities as well. The document could outline "outstanding" home education looks like this: "good" could look like this "satisfactory" and "unsatisfactory" – parents want information as to what they should/could be doing. Not all of them want to join Education Otherwise. Parents can also feel isolated and want actual advice, guidance and examples – the DfES guidance could provide this.

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

Comments:

4.1 Mutual understanding? Trust? Respect?
Safeguard educational interests – need to define
→ Ambiguous

4.2 Support – finance for college places – every LA equal £200 per annum.

Investigate assertions from any source – causes distrustful attitude.

Authority's role not clearly defined.

4.3 LA must not specify curriculum?

But We do expect to see maths and English so tension created by lack of detail and support for consultants.

It would be useful if basic curriculum specified by document.

4.4 Surely if parents cannot read and write how can they provide an education – so may be some basic level of skills is needed.

4.5 LA need to provide written information – clear and accurate legal position.

Why can't this be included in the government document and therefore country wide?

4.6 Child should be present at meeting.

Pre EHE: should have a meeting to help parents realise what is involved.

'Agree future contact' annual or other visit should be in legislation. (last sentence)

4.7 Should have access to educational environment and see resources and child.

4.8 Write a parents report – how is it verified?

'Appropriate' note? → Defined. Subjective.

4.9 ✓

4.10 **CRB checks all should be free. I would ask the DCSF to require local authorities to provide the names of tutors within each Community Learning Partnership as a private / voluntary service, meeting the CRB standards.**

4.12 Have OFSTED been consulted and will their recommendation finding be published?

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



<p>Comments:</p> <p>Resources are always useful and should be encouraged as a basic minimum entitlement – to cover the key functioning skills which families and children can aspire to (to work towards achieving National standards of functioning skills and meeting the ECM outcomes)</p>	
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7 b) Should any other contacts be included?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<p>Comments:</p>	
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8 Please use this space for any other comments you wish to make about the guidelines

Comments:

The Rights of the child / young person and ECM

By definition all children/youngsters are deemed vulnerable until they have reached the age of 16 and their needs should be supported). Given the proposed raising of the school leaving age, the DCSF should plan for how and what rights school aged youngster can expect to have within a country, region, county, District, Parish and local community ;which should be determined at a local level by LA's in partnership with a range of stakeholders.

Case studies –

The DCSF should commission research on the scope of difficulties faced between LA's and the EHE community, which would inform future reviews of legislation and EHE Best Practice.

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 ✓

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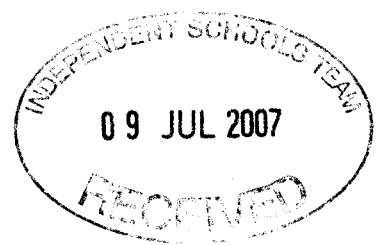
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Name

Organisation (if applicable) North Yorkshire 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

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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?

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

All parties need to be clear about their rights and responsibilities

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:

The description is clear but not necessarily helpful.

Lack of specificity means that there will always be interpretation of these words.

What about poorer families and their childrens' access to public examinations – cost implications?

As parents are not required to register with the LA and there is no financial support incentive, there will always be a significant number of families of whom we are unaware.

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



Comments:

Section 2.7 is problematic

"Reasonable progress" is not defined therefore this area is left to parents discretion.

We would welcome further clarification as to how we would establish that an education is being provided if parents choose not to engage with the LA.

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



Comments:

This paragraph is particularly muddled and unclear

If parents are not required to engage with the LA then (3.4) how do we know that any provision is being made?

What are the criteria used for taking a risk-based approach? It is not clear how to measure risk. Should this be via other community organisations providing information without parental consent?

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?



<p>Comments:</p> <p>Parents might find it helpful to have an indication of the sort of provision that could be expected.</p> <p>Why are you not asking for feedback on sections 3.15 – 3.19 – children with SEN???</p>	
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6 Do you agree that the section on developing relationships (section 4) is useful?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<p>Comments:</p> <p>What does the last sentence in 4.2 mean?</p> <p>4.7 – How can LAs form a view of children's learning at home if we are not provided with an opportunity to engage with families?</p>	
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7 a) Are the suggested resources in section 5 and appendix 2 useful?

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

7 b) Should any other contacts be included?



Comments:

Why specify Christian home educating websites?

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

Comments:

- The 1996 Education Act is vague, no definition of full time, efficient and suitability. Guidance does not give any further clarification.
- The need to engage and consent to sharing information are central to LAs involvement with Home Educating families – there has been no change in this.
- There has been no mention of the implications of Contact Point
- What about the right of young people (16+) currently home educated to access the EMA and other health provision/ benefits?

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 x

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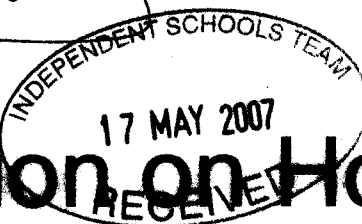
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Name

Organisation (if applicable)

THURROCK

Address:

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

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

Please Specify:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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

☒ ☐ ☐

Comments:



Comments:

not all authorities have Traveller support services and so seeking advice is difficult to find. Further guidance written for authorities on appropriate support for travellers would be helpful.

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:

P 3-15 - 3-19. particularly helpful.

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



Comments:

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



Comments:

National Extension College. (NEC)
provide GLE courses + tutors.

7 b) Should any other contacts be included?

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

[REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable) Wigan Children and Young People's Services

Address:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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Which of the following best describes you:

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

Please Specify:

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

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not Sure

Comments:

Guidance on home education is very welcome within the authority however; initial consultation on input into draft guidance may have been beneficial. We have waited for Guidance for over 12 months since the original draft was circulated (although not to all Authorities), it is through chance and not direct contact with appropriate officers that we have been made aware again that there is an EHE consultation.

From discussions in regional groups, there is a frustration that Home education bodies appear to be more involved in the consultation and drafting of Guidance rather than the local authorities that have a major role in ensuring it is implemented effectively.

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:

Although the description is clear, it remains an area of professional and parental 'conflict' when the LA are unable to adequately quantify "efficient, suitable education" The guidance broadly describes this as an education that "***achieves which is sets out to achieve***" and one which "***primarily equips a child for life within the community of which he is a member, rather than the way of life in the country as a whole, as long as it does not foreclose the child's options in later years to adopt some other form of life if he wishes to do so***".

These statements in themselves can support the fears of local authorities. Parental preference here can take over the rights of the child. The parents are able to decide that the child will not be educated within a school setting and will be brought up within the family culture. If the culture for example is travellers and no secondary education is pursued then although it does equip the child with the skills to be a member within that community, does it not also restrain

them within that community? Some children and young people are unable to move on because they are not given the opportunity or rights to move outside their community therefore does this not in itself "foreclose the child's options in later years to adopt some other form of life if he wishes to do so?"

The Guidance just seems to be as 'wooly' as before telling parents that they (if they are known to the authority to be home educating) must let the authority know if they are providing a suitable education and yet if they don't there is little the authority can do about it. Home educators (not intending to generalise) and home education bodies are fully aware of and will make specific reference to their rights and indeed the lack of rights of the authority when challenged over insufficient submissions to the authority on the education provided. None make reference to children's rights.

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

☐

Yes

☐

No

X Not Sure

Comments:

On the 19th July The new Secretary of State for DCSF addressed a conference of experts in children's services, saying **"....Every child deserves to be safe and loved and have a healthy and happy childhood, free from harm. And every child should have the chance to make the most of their talents and fulfil their potential."** **"To do this we must provide excellent universal services for all children and their families; be able to identify potential problems early, before things go wrong; and when children are at risk, do something quickly to help children and their families get back on track".** (Ed Balls 19/7/07 NCB event)

Although we do not work from the premise that all home educated children are at risk, on the contrary there are many families providing an excellent education for their children at home with lots of enriching experiences, many of these families engage very well with the local authority and take pride in showing our officers how they have supported their children. These families also take advantage of any support on offer particularly when wanting to access additional services i.e. connexions/ work experience. However, there are a few that do not and use EHE as a way to avoid services or to fulfil their own anxieties as parents (separation issues/poor school experiences/avoiding prosecution). In these circumstances, we are unable to follow the ambitious mission of the Secretary of State for all of our children and young people.

Further Guidance is needed in order to properly define how a local authority can

safeguard and promote the welfare of ALL children. If we have no access then we cannot fully achieve this.

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

☐

Yes

☐

No

X Not Sure

Comments:

As above – how balanced are the rights of the child with the rights of the parent. How many children are choosing to be home educated and how many are refusing to see the LA? The Children Act 1989 and 2004 clearly state that the welfare of the child is paramount but how do we assure this in ALL cases where we are unable to get access or disprove concerns with no real powers to do so.

The guidance appears to give you a responsibility in one sentence but then take away your ability to undertake that responsibility in the next. Para 3.5 says that if there is doubt over whether an “efficient education is being provide, the LA **should** seek further information. It goes on to say “This should include seeking any from the parents any further information that they **wish** to provide.” Is it not an imbalance saying that the Authority is under a duty but the parent can do it if they want to?

How will the risk-based approach be taken as stated in para 3.4? Will there be given criteria that will be consistently used through all authorities. I am sure that should this be produced it would be greatly welcomed nationally and would go some way to appeasing the anxiety of officers having to make these judgements without specific guidance.

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

X Not Sure

Comments:

This seems very parent orientated and a little anti LA. Why can't you list both of the what is not required and what is required together as a parental responsibility rather than putting the what may be reasonably expected in a paragraph targeted at the LA? This is again weakened by the fact that it says may as again if they don't it wasn't a requirement.

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

☒ Yes

☐

No

☐

Not Sure

Comments:

However, it does seem fairly weighted to the parents again, what the local authority must so to prevent upsetting the parent?

Para 4.6 says that when a meeting takes place to discuss home education between the parent and LA, "the child concerned should also be given the opportunity to attend that meeting, or otherwise, to express his or her views" How will it be determined that the child has given their views? If they don't attend the meeting and the parents advocate or bring a written representation – is this sufficient?

4.9 "If any child protection concerns come to light" – how will they come to light? Again without working from the premise that EHE children are at risk, how do we know if we are unable to gain any access? If children are not registered with us or are refusing access, how do we know if they are safe or at risk?

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

☒ Yes

☐

No

☐

Not Sure

Comments:

7 b) should any other contacts be included?

☐

Yes

☐

No

X Not Sure

Comments:

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

Comments:

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 X

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:

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:

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

creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence

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) Wakefield MDC
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"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(local) community
<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?

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not Sure

Comments:

This document is welcomed as a means of further encouraging all LAs to have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in this area.

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:

An Annex with examples of case law outcomes would be a helpful addition to the guidelines.

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

☐

Yes

☐

No

X Not Sure

Comments:

The document is accurate but it would be more helpful if wording was added to this section to encourage parents to engage with LAs. Although there are many parents who are successfully home educating the LA is often in a position of having to be proactive to ensure that efficient and suitable education is being provided.

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

☐

Yes

☐

No

X Not Sure

Comments:

The section is generally helpful although there are issues regarding the reference, in Para 3.4, to a "risk based approach" and to "taking into consideration the individual and community's circumstances". How should a LA calculate risk? What criteria should be used? How can risk be calculated if there is no means of identifying it other than by information the LA receives from other services and agencies? Is there an implication by referring to a "community's circumstances" that some communities are at risk or more likely to be at risk? If so, what types of risk are being considered? What criteria should be utilised? Is it being implied that LAs have greater "authority" to seek contact with parents/carers who live in areas with certain socio-economic characteristics?

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:

Helpful in part. In Para 3.13 further bullet points might be added such as:

- Parents can describe a coherent educational philosophy which illustrates serious intent to educate the child sufficient to convince a reasonable person that the child is receiving efficient, suitable full time education according to his/her age, ability, aptitude and nay special educational needs.
- Parents/carers keep written records of educational provision being made for the child
- Parents evaluate the progress the child is making, monitor gaps in children's learning and address these
- Children have access to community facilities (including sport and other recreational facilities) that support their physical, social and emotional development

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

☒ Yes

☐

No

☐

Not Sure

Comments:

Generally yes.

Once again the issue is raised for LAs of "You don't know what you don't know". How do LAs safeguard children's learning at home if LAs are not allowed by parents to engage with them?

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

☒ Yes

☐

No

☐

Not Sure

Comments:

You mean Annex B? Yes.

7 b) Should any other contacts be included?

☒ Yes

☐

No

☐

Not Sure

Comments:

Should the DfES consider maintaining a detailed list of contacts/education resource providers that support EHE on its and other appropriately linked websites?

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

Comments:

Of course the key issues for LAs are:

- The lack of specific legal definitions of suitable, efficient and full time
- Parents being able to choose not to engage with LA officers regarding their enquiries re home education provision.

Is the "bottom line" that LAs should be taking no active interest in children being educated at home unless they have reliable evidence (good reason to believe) that parents are not providing a "suitable" education?

If so, DfES guidance to LAs could potentially be quite brief!

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X Yes

☐

No

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