

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)

--	--

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

Please Specify:

Local Authority –

**Joint response from Gloucestershire Elective Home Education Service (GEHE)
and GEHE Steering Group**

GEHE Service/Steering Group Membership;

GPT Health

CYPD Children and Families Team

CYPD Educational Psychology

CYPD Education Welfare Service

CYPS Senior Education Officer

EHE Head of Service

EHE Information Officer

EHE Home Visitors

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

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

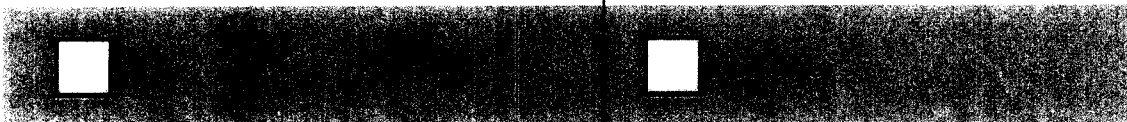
Comments: Yes it is useful to issue guidelines, but they are vague, and do not address underlying core issues. These may encourage Local Authorities to improve practice, but underscore what home educators need not do.

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"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

Comments: the description of the Law may be accurate but it is not clear. There are no benchmarks for "suitable" and "efficient" in terms of education. This is too vague and is open to a very wide interpretation. It is very difficult to challenge within the legal framework, should this become necessary. National minimum standards would have been helpful.

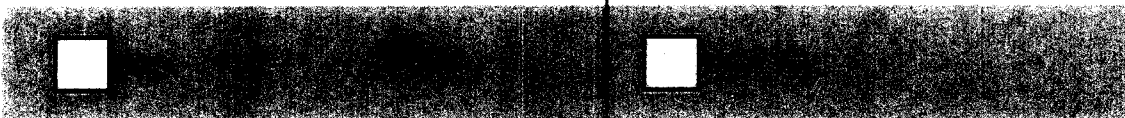
3 Do you agree that the description of local authorities' responsibilities (paragraphs 2.5-2.11) is accurate and helpful?



Comments: No.

- 2.6 states that the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to identify children who are missing or in danger of missing education, but this does not apply to home educated children. This would seem to contradict the Local Authority's duty of care under "ECM", and under local Children's Safeguarding Protocols. The DFES Guidance does not offer advice on what to do here. This is not helpful.
- Under Section 437 (1) of the Education Act 1996, Local Authorities can intervene **if they have good reason** to believe that parents are not providing a suitable education. How can local authority officers 'have good reason to believe' education is not '**suitable**' if they do not know about a child, or do not have the authority to meet the child if they do.
- 4.12 OFSTED will report on how the Local Authority caters for home-educated families – there would be an expectation that this issue of children missing education would be addressed.

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



Comments: No.

It is an accepted fact that the majority of home- educating parents register their children as home educated with the local authority, and accept help and advice when it is offered. But the issue lies with having the duty of care to **all** children. Some are not registered and under current law don't have to be. Some families may be difficult to track and may avoid contact with the local authority, because they know that they are not providing an education. It means that some of the most vulnerable children remain so.

The section on submission of a report by parents is unhelpful. There are no guidelines on quality or content or substantiation.

Assessment of a child's education should not have to be based just on goodwill.

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"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

Comments: This section is particularly negative. It focuses on the rights of the parents in terms of what they **do not have to do** when providing an education for their children, and there are no minimum standards. The autonomous approach may be respected by Local Authorities, but is difficult to assess if there is little evidence of planning and outcome. Access to literacy and numeracy should be a basic right for any child, even if these are not measured as in mainstream school. Further, there is a need to ensure that home educated children also have all 5 ECM outcomes promoted, with support/inspection visits by the responsible local authority going beyond purely academic issue. Terms used in these paragraphs are vague and unclear. It is difficult to quantify “consistent involvement” of parents, and “opportunities for the child to be stimulated”. This section serves to raise the level of subjective judgment by LA officers.

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

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

Comments: No. The Guidelines indicate that positive relationships should be built up, but by Law one does not have to. No right of access to see the child / speak to the child alone - continues to be an issue, and the Local Authority is again relying on goodwill to promote contact with parents.

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

Comments: yes, however

5.2 Suggests that the Local Authority may offer additional support. There is a funding issue here because it implies to parents that there could be an expectation/provision of additional support or resources, and this is unhelpful advice.

5.5 Connexions Service – this is a very useful service, but it may not be taking an overview of all young people, and so some Elective Home Education children are lost to the system.

5.6 Flexi-schooling - We are not certain why Flexi-schooling has been included in the guidelines because flexi-schooled children are still on a school roll, and the school receives funding. These children are not home educated.

5.7 Work experience – If parents are taking responsibility for their children's education, then this will include arrangements for work experience. Local Authorities are not able to provide resources; EHE parents should provide their own insurance arrangements /Health and Safety / CRB checks.

5.11 GRT families have a dedicated paragraph in the guidance, but Local Authorities are dealing sensitively with a number of other ethnic minority/religious groups. The document is implying that this particular group of children might have access to funding, where other groups may not.

7 b) Should any other contacts be included?

Comments:

Parent Partnership
School Health Service
Open University

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

- The DFES Guidelines have been written in accordance with the Law on home education as it stands, and still does not address the anomalies of the Local Authority having to work to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child, under the terms of the Children Act 2004 "Every Child Matters" but having no right to see the child.
- The needs, attitudes and aspirations of the child are to be recognised, but this is difficult if LA Officers do not meet the child or if there is insufficient information for an objective educational assessment.
- The DFES has produced Guidelines for LAs, but has not drawn up guidance for parents who are responsible for the EHE.
- The Guidelines do not address the issue of home educated children who are not registered with the Local Authority..
- LA Officers in Gloucestershire are already working closely to these new guidelines, have been doing so for years, and in many instances go further than minimum recommendations. National minimum expectations are needed to ensure that the child achieves ECM outcomes.
- The Guidelines rely too much on goodwill, and not on the basic rights or interests of the child.
- Only a change in the legal framework would ensure that Local Authorities are not impaired in their efforts to support the home- educated child under the terms of ECM.

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?

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

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 [REDACTED]
Organisation (if applicable) Kent County Council
Address: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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: Kent County Council

--	--

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

Comments:

It would be more appropriate for the DfES to issue separate (or at least restructured) Guidance to reflect the different roles of parents and Local Authorities.

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:

The guidance sets out the rights of parents to elect for home education. It is less clear how, at the level of national legislature framework and national policy, this guidance relates to the wider vision for all children; for example, the five key outcomes within the ECM framework and the rights of all children.

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

Comments:

It is clear that the LA should provide written information on home education but it has no statutory duty to monitor home education. The role of the LA needs to be defined more clearly. For example, in 2.5 – is the LA expected to define and apply criteria for judging reasonable progress? Is that the progress expected for all children?

2.7 – What should a local authority consider, as a good reason to intervene if they believe parents is not providing a suitable education?

It is unclear if the LA is expected to make a judgement about progress or suitable education within a particular cultural or community context e.g. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children. How would we ensure this was fair? The Guidance, if unchanged, could result in discriminatory practice. The research referred to seems to provide a very narrow evidence base for the assertions made.

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

Comments:

The guidance (3.4) makes an assumption that Traveller Education Services have a role to play with elective home education. This contradicts other DfES guidance where the focus is on ensuring that Traveller Education Services promote access to school-based education.

Secondly how should the Local Authority ensure that the child's views and voice are heard? The guidance needs to make clear if LAs are expected to seek the child's views in line with other statutory processes/guidance.

As currently drafted, the guidance suggests a passive role for the Local Authority.

Paragraphs 3.8 and 3.9 De-registration – in order to address failings or weaknesses in the education system, it would seem appropriate to seek the reasons for de-registration, particularly the views of the child or young person.

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:

The guidance states very clearly what home-educating parents are not required to do, but it does not provide guidance on what they are expected to do within the characteristics of provision set out in 3.13. The characteristics do not address or relate to the five key outcomes for all children. As currently drafted, they may not be applicable to all cultural or community contexts and they pre-suppose the family has a history of literacy.

3.13 Many parents employ tutors. Tutors often work with several families at the same time.

3.18 This paragraph needs more detail. It should say that the LA might only arrange education provision otherwise than at school if it would be inappropriate for it to be made in schools (s 319). That is quite different from what this paragraph says and will lead to serious confusion for parents who might expect it included LOVAAS and other home programmes. Clarification is needed

3.19 Statutory Assessment – do the criteria for agreeing to undertake an assessment outlined in the SEN Code of practice not pre-suppose education

within a school context?

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

Comments:

4.1 – Local Authorities need to clearly define the role of professionals in working with home-educating parents (Children's Workforce Strategy).

4.3/4.4 – In the context of the development of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights, 'diversity' is being used to promote an understanding of and respect for differences between communities; it is confusing to use the term in relation to models of home education.

4.5 – Local Authorities need to be aware of parents in communities with no history of literacy.

4.8 – In circumstances where relationships are positive, there should be no barriers in terms of access to the child. The guidance appears to negate the importance of the 'voice of the child' which is a key component of Every Child Matters

4.9/4.10 – Are the expectations set out in these paragraphs compatible with the arrangements for safeguarding all children?

4.12 – Local Authorities should equality impact assess their policies to ensure that they are not discriminating against individuals or groups.

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

Comments:

5.6 – Schools should consult widely, including asking for the views of the child, before putting in place arrangements for flexible school attendance. Arrangements should be subject to regular review.

Schools who do agree to such arrangements need to be made aware that the school's overall attendance rate will be affected

5.11 – Many Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families access education in the same way as the majority of families, through direct contact with the school.

7 b) Should any other contacts be included?

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

Comments:

--	--

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

Comments: We feel that all reference to Gypsy/Roma/Traveller families should be removed from the document.

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?

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

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.

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: 577	Jump	next >	last >>
----------	------------	----------	------	--------	---------

Entire Response	Suffolk County Council
-----------------	------------------------

[REDACTED]

This response has been submitted by a registered respondent.	Change Details
--	--------------------------------

Personal Details	Identifier: 577
Response Type	Online
Title:	
First Name:	[REDACTED]
Last Name:	[REDACTED]
Email:	[REDACTED]
Organisation:	Western Area, Suffolk County Council
Address:	
Response on behalf of an organisation:	Yes
Campaign:	Not Part of Campaign
Confidential Response:	Yes
Future Contact:	No
Acknowledge Response:	No
Inform when published:	Yes

Key Response:	[REDACTED]
Respondent Information Questions	Identifier: 577
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:	[REDACTED] Suffolk County Council
Please specify:	<div></div>
Consultation Questions	Identifier: 577
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):	<div></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 checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Not Sure	

	<input type="radio"/> No Response
Key Indicators:	[REDACTED]
New Key Indicator(s):	
Answer/Comments:	Paragraph 2.4: The law is very weak regarding the notification of Home Education. It is for this reason that LAs are apparently unaware of large numbers of parents who are Home Educating. It would help all parties if a simple registration system were made law, but particularly in the case of those children who have never been to school and also those who withdraw from the independent sector. Also the principles of "Every Child Matters" and the issues of Safeguarding Children would seem to necessitate a law which requires parents to register as Home Educators of their children.
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 type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> Not Sure <input type="radio"/> No Response
Key Indicators:	[REDACTED]
New Key Indicator(s):	
Answer/Comments:	Paragraph 2.7; What is "suitable" provision for a child on one date is not necessarily suitable one, two or more years later. it is for this reason that it is good practice for LAs to have contact with parents annually (or at the very least bi-annually). The statement that "Local authorities have no statutory duties in relation to monitoring the quality of home education on a routine basis", will only hinder the monitoring which LAs are at present doing in order to fulfil their statutory duty. At the very least "...on a routine basis" should be removed.
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]

New Key Indicator(s):	
Answer/Comments:	Most parents with whom we have regular contact value and appreciate our input, counsel and advice. These 'wordy' sections do not necessarily reflect this.
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 type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/> Not Sure <input type="radio"/> No Response
Key Indicators:	<div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em;"></div>
New Key Indicator(s):	
Answer/Comments:	Paragraph 3.13 is good and is welcome!
Identifier: 577	
6 Do you agree that the section on developing relationships (section 4) is 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; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 2px;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em;"></div>
New Key Indicator(s):	
Answer/Comments:	Paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 are good. Paragraph 4.7, Sentence 2 is not a reflection of our experience: "Many" or "most" would be better than "some". paragraph 4.10: presumably LAs need to tell parents of their responsibility here; how do they know in the cases where there is no contact with the LA.
7 a) Are the suggested resources in section 5 and appendix 2 useful?	
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Not Sure

	<input type="radio"/> No Response
Key Indicators:	[REDACTED]
New Key Indicator(s):	
Answer/Comments:	However, as we have found, the list could be endless and is ever-changing.
7 b) Should any other contacts be included?	
	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Not Sure <input type="radio"/> No Response
Key Indicators:	
New Key Indicator(s):	
8 Please use this space for any other comments you wish to make about the guidelines	
Key Indicators:	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
New Key Indicator(s):	
Answer/Comments:	These guidelines will be used by some parents to obstruct the reasonable operation of what the DFES expects LAs to do.
<div>Save Reset Delete Back Print</div>	
<div><< first < previous</div>	Ref: 577 <div>Jump</div> <div>next > last >></div>
Entire Response	[REDACTED] Suffolk County Council
[REDACTED]	

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. X

Name

Organisation (if applicable) Tameside MBC

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"/> Home educator	<input type="checkbox"/> Organisation representing home educators	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local authority
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)		

Please Specify:

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure
---	-----------------------------	-----------------------------------

Comments:

This document is welcomed as a means of encouraging all Councils, multi-agency partnerships and Home Educators 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?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure
---	-----------------------------	-----------------------------------

Comments:

The description of the law is helpful but is jargonistic. This may not be helpful to all parents. The emphasis in these sections on parents' rights may conflict with the right of a child to live free from harm (as defined in the Children Act 2004, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006 and Human Rights Act 1998) and to receive a suitable education.

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:

Paras 2.5 – 2.11 provide a limited definition of the LA responsibilities in relation to the provision of, and monitoring of, EHE. Para 2.11 refers to the LA duty to safeguard & promote the welfare of children. This guidance **must** include further advice on how a LA meets this duty for a child or young person to whom they have no access, or where parents choose not to engage.

The ability of a LA or LSCB to safeguard & promote welfare is compromised when parents refuse to allow access to a child or young person that is home educated. Further, LAs have a duty to safeguard **all** children, not just those on a school roll or notified to us as EHE – the DCSF should issue guidance on how this function is to be discharged

The guidance is right to state (1.4) that there are a number of valid reasons why parents elect to educate at home or outside the traditional school environment. However, we are aware that there is a further motivation for some parents, particularly where a school or local authority have concerns that the child is at risk of significant harm. In these circumstances a risk assessment would seem sensible before agreeing to a notification for EHE – where there are child protection concerns, the LA should undertake a risk assessment to determine whether the notification for EHE would put a child at increased risk of significant harm.

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:

This section needs to be much clearer to be effective. If it is not an LAs duty to monitor arrangements, how will an LA "have good reason", they can only act on "assumption". If education provision is unsatisfactory, too much time will elapse before any action can be taken. This is a particular concern where parents of pupils in Years 10 and 11 decide to home educate to avoid prosecution for non attendance. The Authority has several examples of parents who were being pursued for failing to ensure their child attends school regularly who have then decided to home educate. As there is no specific legal definition of what is suitable education for the child's needs and ability, how do we know that these children will receive the level of education that they need to prepare them for their adult lives?

LAs need clear guidance from DCSF in cases where known s47 concerns exist, on action to take, who to inform and what the likely response should be. Where notification involves a child in need, a risk assessment should be considered to determine whether the withdrawal from an educational establishment & normal social interaction increases the concern and / or risk to the child.

How can a LA discharge its responsibilities to safeguard & promote the welfare of **all** children in the area, in circumstances where parents undertaking EHE choose not to engage with the LA ? Tameside Council is aware that the majority of parents provide a safe and suitable environment for their children however, it is dangerous for this guidance to presume that **all** parents do. The fact that parents can choose whether or not to engage with the LA, and the LA may not make judgements based on the lack of interaction, makes some EHE children more vulnerable.

For example, a Year [redacted] moved into the borough from [redacted]. The school where [redacted] had been on roll was very concerned about the [redacted]'s sexualised behaviour and language and were monitoring the situation with a view to a referral to Social Care and Health. The child moved to our borough and her parent elected to educate at home but will not permit anyone to visit the home nor let the child meet any officer from the Authority. The Authority has no means to determine that exhibited work is the work of the child or that the child has any social interaction outside of the home.

With reference to para 3.4 , it is not clear how a LA calculate risk and 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 and the general public

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:

Yes, except LAs are left to define 'consistent involvement of parents or significant others'. How much consistency can we expect of a parent with mental health problems, whose EHE child is also a young carer? How would a LA evidence a lack of 'consistent involvement' in an application for a School Attendance Order? For example, a Year [REDACTED] whose mother has a long history of mental health problems and separation problems with her [REDACTED]. Whilst we had concerns that the child would now be spending all his days with [REDACTED] mother with no opportunity to socialize with anyone other than a couple of neighboring children, we did not have enough fact or evidence to support a child protection investigation. When we have no access to children educated at home, how can we make any assessment as to their unmet need or any abuse that they may be subject to?

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

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not Sure

Comments:

Generally yes. However,

4.9 talks about the welfare of all children & provides guidance on what to do if new child protection concerns come to light once a child is EHE and the family have engaged with the LA. Our primary concern is those children where a child protection concern would not come to light as there is no engagement from the family.

s4.10 reminds parents of their responsibility to recruit tutors in line with safer recruitment guidance. However, it presumes that parents in EHE will have sound knowledge of safer recruitment techniques. A current example would be a Year [REDACTED], whose mother was illiterate, appointed a neighbour to educate

her [REDACTED] There was no CRB check on this neighbour. How capable is a parent to safely recruit a teacher for her child?

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

☒ Not Sure

Comments:

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

Comments:

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
- Safeguarding of children. LAs have no right to see the child.
- There is no reference to Contact Point and the role of the LA when that LA is made aware of a child living in its area where the LA was not previously aware of that child.

Para 3.4 is particularly muddled and unclear. If parents are not required to engage with the LA then 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? How would this be done without breaching individual rights to privacy and confidentiality?

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!

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

X 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.

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) London Borough of Havering

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"/> Home educator	<input type="checkbox"/> Organisation representing home educators	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local authority
<input type="checkbox"/> Young person who is/was home educated	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)	

Please Specify:

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

X Yes

☐ No

☐ Not Sure

Comments:

Clarity would be helpful. It would enable both parents and LAs to understand their responsibilities within the current legal framework. If clear guidance sets unrealistic responsibilities and expectations these could then be challenged. This could well highlight the urgent need for legislative changes in order to safeguard the welfare of this potentially vulnerable group of children and young people. In the best interests of the children & young people it must be possible to achieve an improved balance between parents' rights and LA responsibilities.

Under the present guidance there appear to be expectations and responsibilities placed on LAs to monitor and report on the suitability of the education being provided, together with safeguarding responsibilities under the Every Child Matters Agenda. These expectations can be difficult to fulfil for three principle reasons:

- 1) The LA may not be aware of all children and young people being home educated as there is no compulsory registration system in place. Children who have never been in school; left private education or who have transferred into the LA from another Borough without leaving any forwarding information. (latter group are often vulnerable children) may not be known or choose to make the LA aware of their election to home educate – therefore LA unable to monitor. A contact point would assist but has its limitations.
- 2) Currently there is no obligation for parents to meet with the LA representative or to ensure their child(ren) and young people meet with any professional. Under these circumstances how can any LA ensure these children matter? Only 'Every School Matters' and the children who attend them.
- 3) Under current guidelines when the parent does agree to meet with the LA representative they are only entitled to comment on education related matters. If the children's educational programme appears adequate then there are no grounds for Social Care to instruct the parent to return their child to school where their welfare needs can be monitored, even if they are considered children in need of protection.

It is true that many children benefit from and would wish to continue with home education by parents. However, it would be naïve to assume that all children are indeed happy with home education but they may never have the opportunity to converse with professionals in any field who could assist in extricating them

from their situation. The ECM Agenda clearly gives 'the voice of the child' some priority. It does not appear to do so with Elective Home Education. It would be equally naïve to assume that a non confrontational approach to Elective Home Education on the part of the LA will disperse past years of anger and confrontation with authority on the part of the parents.

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:

Accurate with regard to the right of parents to elect to home educate their child(ren).

This omits any rights of the child to have an independent view on their education and has no regard for the safety and welfare of the child(ren). It omits the spirit and safeguarding afforded by the Every Child Matters Agenda. The '*voice of the child*' relates to this section also. Issues outlined in the previous section were raised at the consultation stage for Every Child Matters and by Havering's Chief Education Officer when visited by the ECM Inspectors.

Article 2 Protocol 1 - In instances known to this LA the children are being denied the right to education by their parent. In discussion with colleagues in other LAs this is replicated in their areas. The Protocol supports parents' right that '*such education and teaching is in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions*' but does not imply that they have a right to anonymity. Registration would not affect their entitlement to educate in the manner of their convictions.

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:

Para 2.5

Mostly accurate

Would challenge '*all children should make reasonable progress.*' Unlikely we are aware of all home educating families. Request for evidence of work, if and when produced, could well not have been undertaken by child if not seen and no previous knowledge of the child. If the level of work meets with parental expectations then it is not within the remit of the LA to make a judgement on what is reasonable for that child – against what standards and targets is progress to be legitimately measured? This sentence should be omitted under current legislation. If it is to be retained then legislation should be amended in order to indicate some measure of assessment and permit access to the child.

Para 2.6

By making the guidance clear that '*the duty does not apply to children who are being educated at home.*' It is in direct opposition to the LAs responsibility for good practice in safeguarding children. The two are not compatible.

Para 2.7

As 2.5 above – a request to the parents may produce some evidence but to form a judgement from the quantity and quality of evidence from persons unknown as supplied by the parents is highly questionable. It would only be relevant to satisfy LAs concerns if you were aware of the capabilities of the child concerned. Eg parental submission – child had set up a website on [REDACTED] [REDACTED]-web address supplied - sole educational evidence provided. Several issues raised. Was this [REDACTED] endeavour? what were [REDACTED] previous IT skills – did this indicate progression? and did the limited quality of the site reflect [REDACTED] educational ability or not? It provided no reassurance as to any safeguarding concerns.

Para 2.8 Emphasises parental rights. It should alert parents that refusal to provide evidence could raise safeguarding issues with the LA which may or indeed may not, be justified but may have to be investigated.

Para 2.11 States the LA's duty without the law giving them any mechanism 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?

☐ Yes

X No

☐ Not Sure

Comments: Helpful only to parents.

Para 3.4 It is correct advice to seek support from local TESS for the Traveller community but many in the settled community do not have the knowledge, skills and resources to undertake home education but there is no equivalent community group to consult. Too much emphasis on Traveller group who often employ tutors, follow distance learning programmes or are part of the e.lamp project. Deflects emphasis on groups who are causing concern including parents with mental health issues.

It is difficult to rely on a risk based approach as past experience in this field has indicated that seemingly competent parents in good economic circumstances can prove the most able in disguising total lack of any educational programme. Their children may indeed not be at risk from a safeguarding point of view but paedophilia and sexual abuse are not easy to identify without closer involvement with a family and are clearly not limited to areas of social deprivation. The assumption that parents always respond in a totally truthful manner is clearly not always the case.

Para 3.5

No provision is made to hear the voice of the child. Their participation is determined by the parents and where the child can participate there are occasions noted of 'frozen watchfulness' where the child is looking to the parent for affirmation that they have conveyed what they were told to do. Fear of retribution in answering incorrectly could be a cause for concern. This may even nullify the value of introducing an independent advocate.

Para 3.6

Indicates again a naivety that parents are eventually willing to meet with the LA. The reality is somewhat different - as an LA we have offered neutral venues at a place and time of their choice, with independent interviewers from another LA if they so wish. Where possible the LA has adopted a non confrontational approach since 2001. Most parents are now aware of the limited powers of the LA with regard to Home Educated children and appear to rely on delaying tactics to ensure that their young person has reached a stage where practicably it is too late to issue or be obliged to comply with a SA Order. This is especially applicable to a rapidly increasing group who are withdrawing their children in KS4 to avoid prosecution for non attendance.

Para 3.7

Always an option but some choose not to avail themselves of any of these options.

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

X No

☐

Not Sure

Comments:

Para 3.11/ 3.12/3.13

Agree with these paragraphs:

Reflects the guidance in Havering LA leaflet and visiting Tutor Advisers seek to support the parent and child in their Home Education experience whether autonomous or structured approach. Para 3.13 no problem – accurate and helpful.

3.14 Crux of problem – if you are unable to meet with child or parent or have any discussion which could confirm written evidence it makes nonsense of what LAs can reasonably expect the provision to include. If the parents' co-operate with the LA we can, through a variety of mechanisms, assist with working towards putting some or all of these characteristics in place. Whilst parents are trying to work towards improving the home education experience they would be given support, however if it became clear to all participants that this was no longer in the best interests of their child we would attempt to come to an amicable agreement in seeking an appropriate school place for their child without resorting to the need for a SAO.

Para 3.15

Some clarity in this area would be appreciated. It is not clear how this is meant to be interpreted in practice, especially if the parents are not willing to co-operate with the LA.

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

☐

Yes

☐

No

X Not Sure

Comments:

Agree with overall content but clearly weighted towards interests of parents. As an LA we enjoy good working relationships with the majority of our families and for them section 4 is indeed quite valid. Some of the educational content may be marginal but if it is the parent and child's wish to continue to home educate then we respect their wishes and try to assist in making it as fruitful as possible linking with Connexions, Further Education and the working world. However there is a residual core in each academic year who, despite non confrontational approaches and every endeavour to develop good relationships, decline to respond or are actively aggressive. It is unrealistic to envisage an effective partnership being established. Case files available. 4.7 No legal right of access, even at an independent venue, contradicts the responsibilities of the LA.

Analysis of the past academic year gives the following breakdown. In 2006/2007 there were 107 Home educated students who, from my perspective, 75% were marginally to well home educated with no apparent welfare concerns. However 25% I viewed as having welfare concerns – some of these had been on the Child Protection Register but had not co-operated and were now closed. Evidence of case files can substantiate this. Reality is that 27 children may be at some form of risk in one authority alone. If this is replicated throughout the country this is a small but significant number who are entitled to protection through the Every Child Matters Agenda – it may be that the Home Educating parents may have to surrender some autonomy in order to take shared responsibility for protecting this potentially vulnerable minority.

It is my view and that of a wide range of professional colleagues that:

1. All home educated children should be registered with the relevant LA
2. All children should be seen by two professionals at least twice per year.

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

X Yes

☐

No

☐

Not Sure

Comments:

Mostly of assistance.

5.6 Unlikely many Head teachers will accept pupils on flexi schooling so long as there are attendance targets in which authorised absence also contributes to their overall attendance score.

7 b) Should any other contacts be included?

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not Sure

Comments:

Contact list appears to be quite comprehensive.

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

Comments:

Guidelines assume all Home Educating parents are doing so in the best interests of the children. The reality would appear to be that a small minority have a hidden agenda which should be monitored in the interests of those children's safety. Failure to safeguard these children by enforcing compulsory registration and regular meeting with professionals appears to create an accident waiting to happen. Any requisite amendment to legislation to safeguard these children should be an urgent corollary of the Every Child Matters Agenda.

Should you wish for any further information or case examples to support the views expressed in this consultation I would be pleased to share these with you. More detailed examination of any LA Elective Home Education client group over recent years would almost certainly demonstrate similar characteristics.

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?

XYes

☐

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)

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

--	--

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

Comments:

Clarification of regulations relating to elective home education is helpful but the clarification should be written within the context of Every Child Matters. The Staying Safe and Being Healthy outcomes are of particular importance where children remain outside the maintained education and health systems.

It is acknowledged that many parents who decide to home educate their children have considered their options carefully and made this choice for sound reasons. These parents provide effective education for their children and consider their children's holistic needs. However others may have taken the decision for different reasons and without due understanding and a small minority may be adversely affecting their children's life chances, either wittingly or unwittingly. The current legal framework often makes it difficult to identify accurately all children who are being electively home educated (EHE), and to monitor effectively those we are aware of when parents do not wish to co-operate.

The guidelines should highlight areas where the law as it currently stands is in need of review in relation to balancing parents' rights to home educate their children and local authorities' duty to safeguard children. The government should set out a timetable for changes to the current arrangements which will address the inadequacies of the current arrangements.

As an absolute minimum, a requirement for Elective Home Education parents to notify the Local Authority should be introduced by new legislation. This should also apply if the family move into a different area.

If the welfare of children in EHE situations is to be effectively safeguarded and promoted, additional safeguards also need to be built in to any update of the legislation. Current legislation in this area gives children no voice and no easy access to adults outside the family where they can express their concerns when things are not going well or where abuse or neglect may be taking place.

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

Comments:

The description of the law is clear and accurate as it stands at present

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"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

Comments: Wandsworth Council already have a written policy and guidelines for EHE parents and have worked to try and establish relationships with EHE

parents (in many cases successfully). However we remain concerned that some parents can 'hide behind' current legislation by using their right not to allow officers to meet the child or see any evidence of work and thereby prevent effective monitoring taking place.

Para 2.8 underlines parents' right not to comply with a request for information. The guidelines should instead emphasise that parents' refusal to provide information about the education they are providing might constitute an alert for local authorities from a safeguarding or educational point of view.

A change in legislation is required to ensure that the welfare of children who are EHE can be effectively promoted and safeguarded.

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

Comments:

It is helpful within current legislation. However it makes the assumption that parents will automatically engage with local authorities – an assumption which is not substantiated in practice. Some parents refuse to engage with their local authority.

We are concerned that Para 3.4 singles out Gypsy/Roma and Traveller parents when there are other parents who may equally not have the knowledge, skills and resources to provide or deliver a full-time education that is efficient and suitable

It would be helpful if regulations relating to de-registration are re-visited to allow a period of checking to take place before removal from roll.

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"/>

<p>Comments:</p> <p>The list at 3.11 detailing what is <u>not</u> required of EHE parents is not particularly helpful. It would surely be better to provide a list of the minimum requirements necessary to be providing a good educational experience</p>	
--	--

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

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

<p>Comments:</p>	
------------------	--

It is useful and in line with Wandsworth Council's current practice. However, it should be clearly stated that parents too have a responsibility to engage with the local authority and health services. This should be strengthened by changes to the current statutory arrangements

Para 4.10 Parents should be required to request the local authority to carry out a CRB check on anyone they are engaging in the education of their children.

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

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

Comments:

Provision should be made for children who are educated at home to be provided with an independent advocate (independent of the school, local authority and parent) to help secure the child's views.

Para 5.6 "flexi-schooling" is a complex area – and needs more detailed guidance

7 b) Should any other contacts be included?

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

Comments:

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

Comments: On reading the rationale behind this piece of work and the proposals to issue guidance it seemed that a positive step forward was being taken. However the overall outcome feels like an opportunity missed to actually make a difference and ensure these children can be safeguarded and effectively educated.

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?

☐☐

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