

Elective Home Education - Update

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REASON FOR ITEM

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on the continuing developments that have taken place and have been proposed since Elective Home Education (EHE) was last updated to the Policy Overview Committee meeting in January 2017.

SUGGESTED COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. Note the update.
2. Consider priorities for further development of the EHE service provided by the Council.

INFORMATION

Updates regarding EHE have been presented to the Policy Overview Committee in October 2016 and January 2017. This document outlines planned and ongoing developments to the way the local authority delivers its EHE service to residents.

The following areas set out proposals to improve communication and engagement with key partners and parents. Comments are welcome from the Committee on the ideas presented in this paper, which have been informed by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

School Nursing Service

There are three School Nursing teams in Hillingdon. The School Nursing service delivers the national Healthy Child Programme for 5-19 year olds. The service is available to all children and young people in full-time education and their families. The School Nursing service is contracted out to the Central and North-West London NHS Foundation Trust. Further work is underway to look into options to ensure the service includes provision for EHE children.

Yearly contact with parents

Officers already contact all parents annually with an EHE update. There is the option of sending an evidence request to every parent annually which will allow the Council to improve direct engagement with residents. Letters to parents can be personalised based on children's needs (SEN/ASD etc.)

There is the option to also call parents in advance of letters to discuss the survey, SEN, ASD, reasons etc. and request evidence.

EHE parents could be asked to attend an Annual forum. Guest speakers could be an option to encourage attendance.

A Feedback form can be added to the Hillingdon website so parents can easily contact the LA.

Information provided by schools

The Council could request schools complete an EHE notification form to provide relevant details about pupils to (eg. SEN/current Social Care involvement etc). This would allow the Council to provide information relevant to individual needs. (This proposed form would need to be approved).

Fair Access Arrangements

Officers have asked schools on placing a requirement in the Fair Access policy for EHE children to return to their previous school if EHE arrangements break down within 6 months of last day of attendance. Support from schools is generally positive. This will be implemented if the majority of schools are satisfied with this change. This change is in line with many other local authority policies and prevents parents and schools from using EHE legislation as a means of bypassing admissions procedures.

Identifying children not receiving education

It is possible to cross reference information held in other areas of the council to identify children that live in Hillingdon, but who do not appear on census or school records.

Identifying children with Social Care referrals

Further work is planned to find out if it is possible to check the social care records of all pupils receiving EHE on a 'live' or daily basis. If possible, it would mean that the social worker can be informed of the change in education for any child identified as being newly referred as a child in need or on a child protection plan.

Training / sharing information with other professionals

Bitesize training should be accessed by all professionals who work with children receiving EHE.