

# Elective Home Education

## Report of the Education & Children's Services Policy Overview Committee 2011/12

# Elective Home Education



### Members of the Committee

Cllr Catherine Dann (Chairman)  
Cllr Judith Cooper (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr John Hensley  
Cllr John Riley  
Cllr David Benson  
Cllr Susan O'Brien  
Cllr Peter Curling  
Cllr Lindsay Bliss  
Mr Anthony Little



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**Also included within this review:**

- **Appendix 1 – Views of EHE Parents and Young People**
- **Appendix 2 – Summary of responses from the wider consultation with all EHE parents**
- **Appendix 3 – Updated EHE Policy**

# Chairman's Foreword



*I am delighted to present this review on Elective Home Education. The aim of the review was to look at the Council's Elective Home Education Policy and in particular to examine the balancing of both safeguarding issues and the rights of parents who choose to home educate their children.*

*The review looked at the draft policy as well as engaging with parents of EHE children to get their views on the relationship between the local authority and parents that home educate their children.*

*The views of the parents who took time to get involved in our review were considered important as the review acknowledged the rights of parents to choose to educate their children at home. The local authority has to work in partnership with parents to ensure that the support mechanisms are in place to guarantee the best education possible for EHE Children.*

*On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank the external witnesses and officers for participating in the review. The Committee hopes that the recommendations can be supported by the Cabinet to improve the communication and information provided to Home Education parents.*

*Catherine Dann*

**Councillor Catherine Dann**  
**Chairman of the Education & Children's Services Policy Overview Committee**

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# RECOMMENDATIONS

Following its review the Education and Children's Services Policy Overview Committee has made the following recommendations to Cabinet:

**RECOMMENDATION 1: That an annual Borough network meeting take place between LBH EHE Parents and the local authority to enable networking to take place between different EHE groups.**

**RECOMMENDATION 2: That Officers review the EHE correspondence which is sent to EHE parents to ensure that their tone is empathetic and their contents are not open to misinterpretation.**

**RECOMMENDATION 3: That EHE parents be provided with information on London Borough Exam Centres that will accept EHE children.**

**RECOMMENDATION 4: That Cabinet be recommended to approve the updated policy on Elective Home Education and that the policy be reviewed on an annual basis.**

# BACKGROUND

Parents are required by law to ensure their children of a school age receive an appropriate full time education. In most instances this is achieved by registering their child with a school. However, some parents choose to educate their child other than at school: in the UK this is commonly known as Elective Home Education<sup>1</sup>. Hillingdon currently have 93 children that are being home educated.

The Council has always fully acknowledged a parent's right to choose to educate their children other than at school and has procedures in place to support parents who opt to home educate.

Guidelines on EHE were issued by the previous Government in 2007 entitled "Elective Home Education – Guidelines for Local Authorities" and these state that each local authority should have a policy on EHE and that it should be regularly reviewed to enable it to reflect changes in legislation and to comply with the guidelines.

The EHE policy was applied to parents that elect to home educate their children, Local Authority Officers, OFSTED Local Safeguarding Children Board (LCSB) partners including Health, Housing, Police, Social Care and voluntary sector professionals and Schools and Academies.

Hillingdon's current EHE policy was agreed in 2009 in partnership with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The policy would now benefit from being generally updated and in relation to a balanced approach to both safeguarding issues and the rights of parents that opt to Home Educate.

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<sup>1</sup> **Home schooling** or **home school** (also called **home education** or **home based learning**) is the education of children at home, typically by parents but sometimes by [tutors](#), rather than in other formal settings of [public](#) or [private school](#). Although prior to the introduction of [compulsory school attendance laws](#), most childhood education occurred within the family or community,<sup>[1]</sup> home schooling in the modern sense is an alternative in [developed countries](#) to attending public or private schools.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW

The Committee's review has given Cabinet and the Council the opportunity to re-look at this policy, the way we engage with EHE parents and maintain dialogue with them for the best educational interests of their children who are educated at home.

The Committee was aware that some parents of EHE children had expressed some concern regarding unannounced ad-hoc 'safeguarding' visits to the homes of EHE children by Council officers. They felt that these visits were unlawful and unwelcome.

In shaping the review, Members sought to look at providing a better balance to both the safeguarding responsibilities of the local authority and the rights of parents to home educate their children

The Terms of Reference of the review were as follows:-

- To look at the reasons why parents opt for EHE.
- To analyse at what stage parents decide to opt for EHE.
- To consider the needs of specific groups within the EHE Community for inclusion in the policy.
- To look at all sources of good practice and to recommend a revised policy to Cabinet.

To meet the objectives of the review Members of the Committee held 3 meetings on 7 September, 19 October and 23 November 2011 where it considered a comprehensive range of information, evidence and sought the views of a number of witnesses:

- Councillor Carol Melvin
- The Borough Solicitor
- Deborah Bell – Education Services
- Paul Hewitt – Education Services
- Jane Lowe – Home Education Advisory Services
- 4x parents who opt for EHE
- 2x young people who receive EHE

A subsequent comprehensive consultation exercise was then undertaken on revised draft of the Council's EHE policy.

## INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS

### **Reasons for Elective Home Education**

The Committee considered the reasons why parents opt for home education. It was noted that it was a key aspect of a parent's choice in terms of educating their children and that there were a variety of reasons why parents chose to educate their children at home:

Reasons given for home education children include:

- Cultural or religious beliefs
- Distance or access to a local school
- Ideological reasons
- Dissatisfaction with the education system
- The inability or unwillingness of a child to go to school
- A short term option for a particular reason

The Committee was aware that these reasons should not have any bearing on the local authority's treatment of EHE parents and their families. The local authority's main interest should be how well EHE children are being educated.

### **Council Policy**

At this meeting, the Committee also began to review the existing policy on Elective Home Education, which had been agreed in partnership with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board in 2009. The Committee considered how well balanced it was in relation to both safeguarding responsibilities and the legal rights of parents to educate their children at home.

### **Ofsted report**

Part of the intelligence for this review was the Ofsted report on Local authorities and home education. Between September and December 2009, Ofsted inspectors visited a range of 15 local authorities, and parents and EHE children. The aim of the survey was to evaluate how well local authorities discharged their statutory duties to ensure the suitability of education for children and young people who were educated at home.

It was acknowledged in this survey that there were a wide range of approaches to EHE, ranging from a highly flexible autonomous approach, to a school structure morning, often with a variety of social and enrichment activities in the afternoon. It was also acknowledged that some parents had chosen to educate their children at home not for positive reasons, but in response to some unresolved difficulties.

## **Badman Review**

Reference in the review's scoping report was made to the Badman Review which the previous Government had commissioned to look at altering the current legislation. The representative of the Home Education Advisory Service made the review aware of the many critics of the findings of the Badman Review, although Hillingdon's review only sourced the Badman review as background information for Members to further their knowledge and understanding of the issues around home education.

## **Considerations for Hillingdon**

The Committee considered the current procedures and policy in place in Hillingdon and some of the concerns that had been raised by parents that home educate locally. In addition, the review gratefully sought the views of Councillor Carol Melvin, who had been contacted by a group of EHE parents.

As a result of this first meeting the Committee identified a number of key issues which the Committee would develop and consider in reaching any findings. These were:

- The need to involve home education parents in the consultation process, which would enable information to be disseminated to other home educating parents in the borough.
- The possibility of setting up an annual event for parents that home educate. This may assist with the consultation process and a good way to involve the parents and therefore improve communication with the Local Authority. This will also help with the perception of the current draft EHE policy.
- The information provided to EHE parents should be reviewed to make it more user friendly and to avoid it being misinterpreted.
- To look at investigating the possibility of setting up of a buddy system so that home education parents could receive support from local schools through the annual event.
- That research be undertaken to look at providing a list of those schools that would be prepared to allow home educated children to take their exams.
- The apparent conflict between Education Law and Children's law in relation to EHE and the safeguarding responsibilities which local authorities have for children.
- To forge a partnership of trust, mutual respect and understanding between parents and the local authority.

The Committee was acutely aware of the strength of feeling which exists amongst many EHE parents across the country, including within the Borough.

## EVIDENCE & FINDINGS

In considering the evidence of witnesses, Members sought to ascertain views on how all parties could better balance the safeguarding responsibilities of the local authority and the rights of parents to home educate their children.

In considering the views from the Committee's witness sessions, it should be noted that the EHE parents and the former EHE pupils who provided evidence to the review were not wholly representative of the EHE community within Hillingdon. There were different types and methods of home education and the witnesses who helped Members in their review were one particular group of EHE parents and young people.

The review had heard evidence from Cllr Carol Melvin and other parents and from former EHE children who had chosen to be educated at home for positive reasons and thus the information received concentrated on the positive aspects of home education as these parents were making the choice to educate their children at home.

Attempts were made to engage with other EHE parents and young people, but unfortunately these attempts had been unsuccessful.

### **Matters raised by Cllr Melvin**

Councillor Carol Melvin, on behalf of some EHE parents, provided the review with their views on EHE within the Borough.

It was noted that there were concerns from some EHE parents who had approached Cllr Melvin in February 2011. These concerns related to correspondence they had received from the local authority about the local authority's requirement to be satisfied that EHE children were safe and receiving a suitable education.

It was further noted that prior to receipt of this correspondence there had generally been a good relationship between these parents and the local authority although the Local Authority had not changed its standard letters.

The Committee was made aware that to enable the local authority to determine the appropriateness of an EHE's education, there was a requirement for an ongoing dialogue between parents and in the case of Hillingdon, the Council's EHE adviser. However, that there was no legal obligation on the parents' part to do this.

Councillor Melvin reported that announced visits by the EHE adviser had taken place with the EHE parents whom she represented, where the provision of education to children was discussed and parents provided reports on the education being provided. These were generally well received.

However, the parents had expressed some concern regarding unannounced ad-hoc visits (when EHE families had not engaged with the Local Authority) which had been made by local authority officers and the language and the tone of correspondence sent. In response to this, Education Officers confirmed that a minority of EHE parents overall had expressed concern regarding un-announced visits.

Members were informed that in the main unannounced visits were carried out in exceptional circumstances and were not the norm. Most visits were by appointment and were generally well received.

One of the key findings of the Ofsted report on local authorities and home education identified that parents' attitudes to the local authority was affected and influenced by the tone of the local policy and guidance materials, and the approach of the relevant local authority officer who was responsible for this. This appeared to be the case in Hillingdon.

From the evidence given, it was clear that there was an element of distrust from some EHE parents regarding the motives of the local authority. It was acknowledged that there should be greater collaboration between the local authority and those parents of EHE children who were known to the authority, as this would engender trust and understanding and improve the relationship.

On a positive note, Members were pleased that there was now a better dialogue between the local authority and part of the EHE network. Whilst this was a good start, Members felt it should be maintained and improved on further. The EHE parents that had attended meetings during the review were a well organised network of parents who worked closely with the Home Education Advisory Service and it was apparent that the education which these children received was at a good standard. However, the Committee were conscious that the parents Cllr Melvin represented were a minority and not wholly representative of all EHE parents and children.

To continue this dialogue and partnership between the local authority and EHE parents, Members proposed that it would be good practice for an annual Borough EHE network meeting (event) to take place whereby interested parties could engage and discuss issues relating to EHE. This could look at ways of improving the processes which are currently used and which form part of the policy and would improve the trust between all parties.

Such an event would hopefully encourage other EHE parents to engage with the local authority and to share good practice with other parents.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 1**

**That an annual Borough network meeting take place between LBH EHE Parents and the local authority to enable networking to take place between different EHE groups.**

## **Home Education Advisory Service**

Particular mention should be made to the Home Education Advisory Service who provided information and evidence to the review and who represented the views of some of Hillingdon's EHE parents. The Home Education Advisory Service is a national registered charity that has endeavoured to improve relationships between home educators and local authorities. Their views both to the Committee and outside the Committee have been invaluable in helping the review look into this area.

## **General views of EHE Parents and EHE young people**

At further meetings of the Committee, Members heard evidence from four EHE parents and from two former EHE children.

Generally the views provided the review with a positive insight into how parents organised the education of children at home and the relationship they had with the local authority.

The parents and former EHE young people which the Committee met were very enthusiastic and passionate about home education and gave positive explanations about children being educated at home.

The Committee was impressed at the excellent organisation which this network of EHE community had and on the whole, the good working relationship they had with the local authority.

As with any relationships, it was noted that there were disagreements and different points of views on issues, but from the evidence Members received there appeared to be a general welcoming of the advice and support given by officers of the Council to EHE parents.

Communication should of course be two-way and views of EHE parents and their advisers should be taken into consideration when updating the policy on EHE and the processes allied to this.

## **Views on the role of the Local Authority**

Listening to the witnesses, the Committee did note an air of suspicion surrounding the role of the local authority with EHE and it was important that this role was clearly stated and explained to parents. The recommendation to hold an annual networking event would hopefully allay some of the EHE community's fears and build trust and confidence in the local authority.

Unfortunately most communication is written and as with any public authority writing to the general public, great care is needed to be taken to ensure that the right tone is taken with correspondence and officer contact to ensure that

the rights of the EHE parents and children is protected, whilst ensuring that the legal duties of the local authority are maintained.

Officers supporting the review had kindly supplied the Committee with examples of the annual letters which were sent to out to EHE parents and the Committee recommend that these letters be reviewed to ensure that the tone was empathetic and could not be misinterpreted.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 2**

**That officers review the EHE correspondence which is sent to EHE parents to ensure that their tone is empathetic and their contents are not open to misinterpretation.**

#### **Examination Centres**

An issue which came out of the review was the difficulties which home educated children had in relation to finding examination centres to take their exams. The costs were often prohibitive and journeys long and LEA schools were not always receptive to non-school children taking exams on their facilities.

Reference was made to the Pupil Referral Unit Providence Road, Yiewsley, which offers this facility for EHE children, both in the Borough and outside the Borough.

The review felt that more information should be provided to EHE parents and children on possible examination centres. Indeed the witnesses had asked that EHE groups be provided with a list of educational establishments which would allow EHE children and young people to take their exams. The Committee recommend this action be taken forward.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 3**

**That EHE parents be provided with information on London Borough Exam Centres that will accept EHE children.**

#### **Review of the Elective Home Education Policy**

One of the main objectives of the Committee's review was to look in more detail at the existing EHE policy and to recommend an updated version to the Council's Cabinet for approval.

The Committee noted that the attitudes of EHE parents would be influenced by the tone of the policy and guidance material and for this reason great care and attention should be given to updating it. The review in itself has provided

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an opportunity for EHE parents and their advisors to give their views on the local authority's existing policy.

The Committee felt that the local authority needed to make it clear as to what home educating parents should expect and not make the parents feel that if they did not comply with what was required, they would be legally forced to do so. Having ascertained that EHE parents would welcome a degree of relationship with the local authority, the updating of the policy offered the prospects of developing that relationship further, as well as the potential for any family to let the local authority know what support they would like to receive.

The witness sessions had highlighted some concerns that needed to be addressed in the policy, but the Committee felt on balance that the overriding principles and processes contained within it were generally acceptable.

Members were made aware of some concerns regarding the adequacy of the policy and the legality of some of its content and referred the matter to the Borough Solicitor for clarification. Members also agreed that the policy should be reviewed further and put out to a much wider consultation with all EHE parents within the Borough before being recommended for approval to the Cabinet.

### **The law relating to Elective Home Education and the law on the Safeguarding of Children**

As mentioned earlier in this report, the previous Government issued a document called 'Elective Home Education - Guidelines for Local Authorities' back in 2007. These Guidelines aim to clarify the balance between the right of the parent to educate their child at home and the responsibilities of the local authority.

Although the Guidelines have helped to inform the formulation of the latest policy on Elective Home Education, there are nevertheless a number of grey areas of law which exist. In particular, the balance between the rights of parents to home educate their children and the local authorities' duties to safeguard the welfare of children living in their area is a difficult one to reconcile.

The Elective Home Education Policy forms part of the Hillingdon Children's & Family's Trust Plan in relation to P1 - Keeping Children & Young People safe and P2 - To ensure that all children have a good start to life. This area of EHE had caused the greatest debate within the home educating community and it is an area which the review required legal advice on.

The Guidelines primarily focus on the law and practice of home education but there is a separate section which deals with the issue of safeguarding. The

Guidelines recognise that as with school educated children, child protection issues may arise in relation to home educated children.

The statutory powers conferred on local authorities allow them to insist on seeing children in order to enquire about their welfare where there are grounds for concern. However, such powers do not bestow on such authorities the ability to see and question children subject to elective home education in order to establish whether they are receiving a suitable education.

Subsequent to the October witness session, the representative of the Home Education Advisory Service wrote further in relation to the evidence she had provided Members with during the meeting and on aspects of the Council's draft policy on EHE. Particular concern was expressed regarding the recognised difficulties which local authorities have in relation to carrying out their safeguarding duties and the rights of parents who choose to home educate their children.

There were other concerns expressed regarding the adequacy of the policy and the legality of some of its content.

The review referred the correspondence to the Borough Solicitor, asking for his views and he was also requested to attend the Committee's meeting on 20 March 2012 to provide legal advice in relation to the draft policy.

Shortly before this meeting, the representative of the Home Education Advisory Service sent a further detailed letter to the Chairman of the Committee regarding the draft policy. The Borough Solicitor attended the meeting on 20 March and responded to the various points made in this letter.

### **Consulting on a revised policy**

Following this meeting, a five week consultation exercise was undertaken with those parents which home educate their children and who are registered with Hillingdon, seeking their views on the draft policy. A total number of 11 written responses were received and they are summarised in Appendix 2 to this report.

It is a legal requirement of any consultation exercise which is undertaken by a Local authority that the product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account before a decision is made.

Although the responses received only represent a minority of the registered home educating community in the borough, nevertheless they were properly considered by officers.

In particular, the Borough Solicitor has reviewed the responses and the law governing home education and safeguarding in detail. He has adjusted the

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policy by updating the law set out within it and has removed any references to outdated or irrelevant legislation.

There was a continuing theme of safeguarding throughout the policy which has also been removed and there is now a separate section on safeguarding which is consistent with the manner in which the 2007 Guidelines have been set out.

Finally, it is the view of the Borough Solicitor that the policy which Cabinet is being recommended to approve is now a lawful document.

The updated policy is attached to this report as Appendix 3.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 4**

**Cabinet be recommended to approve the updated policy on Elective Home Education Policy and that the policy be reviewed on an annual basis.**

## **CLOSING WORD / ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The Committee's review has given an opportunity to review the Elective Home Education Policy and to ensure that it contained a balance of both safeguarding issues and the rights of parents.

The Committee heard directly from some of the parents that home educate, young people that had been home educated and from other professionals other than the Local Authority.

Finally, the recommendations that have been put forward will enable the Local Authority to work in partnership with parents to support mechanisms are in place to ensure the best outcomes for EHE Children,

# Appendix 1

## Summary of comments from EHE Parents

- Educating children at home had led to a positive experience for the children and positive development of the children. It had also enabled parents to impress their ethos and morals on their children.
- There was a preference to educate their children at home as parents could see how the children thrived and developed a thirst for learning.
- There was support given through a Home Education Network Group, where different activities such as swimming and craft were carried out together.
- A parent mentioned that they had had a positive relationship with the EHE Adviser and had never refused a request for an inspection, due to the approach and helpfulness of the adviser that had visited them. This positive experience had led the parent to encourage another EHE parent who was not known to the Authority to register, so that she too could be visited.
- Suggested that there was no official line of informing the LA on issues.
- From the witnesses' experience, officers within Education and Children's Services appeared to have a limited knowledge of Home Education.
- Unannounced visits from the LA generated negativity and such visits appeared to cast a feeling of suspicion over families who chose to educate their children at home.
- It was strongly felt that if a parent decided to home educate, this should not automatically present safeguarding issues in terms of the need for the involvement of Social Services. The allowing of home visits would not necessarily safeguard children.
- There was a strong belief that EHE families were not legally obliged to engage with the LA.
- Considered that the Local Authority's policy on EHE was being updated to suit the Council's position, as opposed to that stated in law.
- Concern was expressed regarding the tone of the letters which EHE parents had received which had said the failure of parents to respond to the letters, could result in children being placed into schools.
- Suggested that there was a need for roles to be clearly set out to enable open relationship between EHE parents and the LA.
- Suggested that the LA had the tools to intervene when there were problems in the care of children, as families were in receipt of services from different areas.
- Felt that all EHE families should not be viewed with suspicion.
- Indicated that there were a number of families home educating their children who did not want to be told what they should or should not teach.
- A parent suggested that they had had four visits in the four years of home educating their children and found the officers to be very polite

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but felt that the officers were not interested in what they taught but were more interested as to whether the children were healthy.

- Advised that parents were not being given practical support or advice and felt that instead, officers were checking up on them. This approach did not give parents any incentive to come forward.
- Suggested that support like providing a list of schools where children were able to take exams would be helpful and would lead to better rapport with the LA.
- Felt that more parents would be interested in working with the LA if they were provided with useful information.
- Advised that since the previous EHE officer had retired, the helpful advice and report on the progress of the children had ended. The parent then received a "threatening" letter after a number of years, and suggested that had the family's files been examined, it would have been seen that she had complied with the visits in past years.
- Advised that EHE parents were not obliged to register with the LA and the law did not imply that the LA must ensure education was taking place, nor did it mean that the LA could intervene in the lives of every individual child.
- Suggested that Section 9 of Education Act 1996 was irrelevant as, there was no situation anywhere in the law which justified intervention with every family. Felt that the paraphrase obscured and added to the confusion.
- Advised that some local authorities where parents' views were respected, had an informal get together which did build relationships.
- That parents who elected to home educate, retained the duty to educate their children and did not receive public money.

### **Comments from former EHE young people**

- One of the former EHE young people referred to his eldest sister who had got into trouble at school as being one of the reasons his parents had given him the option of being home educated
- One of the former EHE young people had been taught at home from the age of 10 through to 16, and then went on to Uxbridge College and then onto University. The transition had been smooth and trouble-free
- He had been an average performer at school and home education gave him and his parents the freedom to teach him what he was good at, whilst ensuring he was taught the basic educational standards (English and Maths)
- One of the former EHE young people was now a parent and he home educated 4 children. The Council was aware of this and a visit took place annually.
- As a home educator he had taken the decision to work with the Council on elective home education whereas he understood some parents did not

- The major benefit of home education for children was giving them the freedom to explore what they were really interested in and giving them an opportunity to learn more about these subjects
- This freedom had resulted in him acquiring the skills and knowledge to develop his interests into his chosen career
- The freedom and lack of restriction which elective home education brought, made him “think outside the box” and be innovative, which may not have happened if he had been in a classroom, within a school
- In response to a comment regarding elective home education and the lack of interaction / socialising with other children, the former EHE young person reported that this had not been an issue with him. When he was home educated there were 4 - 5 families who were jointly home educated. This meant that they shared knowledge, conversed together, socialised and exchanged views and opinions
- The groups of children would have sessions with specialised teachers once a week
- From the personal experience of being home educated, the former EHE young person believed he had matured quicker and had not been subjected to the peer pressure which sometimes happened with children at school
- Whilst being home educated, children did still come into contact with local children outside of school hours, so relationships and contact was still made with other children. The everyday issues which confronted children (i.e. bullying) did not just happen in schools.
- Experiences of home education had increased the motivation to study
- Specialist teachers were brought in to teach a small group of home educated children
- Physical education and sports lessons / activities were undertaken by home educated children with parents hiring sports halls and swimming pools in leisure centres. These were structured and took place sometimes 2 to 3 times a week
- Reference was made to the possible involvement of the local authority with home educated children and their parents and the possibility of establishing a network group. The witnesses said this could be where parents could tell the local authority what they wanted and parents could work with the local authority. This would be seen as a positive move and remove the suspicion which some parents had of the local authority
- Reference was made to the difficulties which home educated children had in terms of finding examination centres to take their exams. There were cost implications and LEA schools were not always receptive to non-school children taking exams on their facilities
- Financial and personal sacrifices were made by parents who home educated their children and this commitment and dedication was appreciated by the children and was a driving force behind them doing well with their education

- Reference was also made to parents who chose to educate their children at home for negative reasons and the need for the local authority to be mindful of their responsibilities to those children under the Education Act. These parents may not want to be part of a network with other families and the local authority
- One of the witnesses was asked for his views if there was a legal requirement for home visits. He said that he personally chose to allow arranged visits for his children but he fully supported the rights of other home educating families who chose not to have home visits
- Members made reference to the health and safety and well-being of children who were home educated and the need for the authorities to safeguard these children. This could include inspections to assess the standard of education, visits from school nurses. Both witnesses did not agree with the general linking of health and safety and the safeguarding of children to just home educated children, as this also applied to children who were educated in schools.

### SUMMARY TO CONSULTATION RESPONSES

A five week consultation exercise was undertaken with those parents which home educate their children and who are registered with Hillingdon, seeking their views on the draft policy. A total number of 11 written responses were received and they are summarised below:

- Consultation should have sought views from the wider community not just those that home educate.
- Not sufficient time to respond to the consultation asked for further consultation before final document agreed.
- There was no framework of questions to respond to consultation.
- Would like to see clear distinction in the policy between welfare and education concerns.
- Policy seems to focus on child protection and gives a sense of suspicion towards those who home educate.
- The policy is confusing and is unclear and difficult to follow.
- The policy should state suitable definitions of the terms together with clear statements of applicable law.
- Parts of the policy are repetitious and needs to be shortened and combined for clarity.
- Query how point 3/10 of the policy would be actioned.
- Many statements contained in the policy had no place in the document.
- Reference made to parts of the policy that were felt to contain incorrect statements.
- Information section of the policy was out of date.
- The section on Children with Special Educational Needs requires re-writing as parents of children with SEN are fully entitled in law to home educate their child.