

# Professionals Briefing Sheet

## A Simple Guide to Elective Home Education

Families may choose to EHE for a variety of reasons:

- Lifestyle / culture / philosophical / religious beliefs
- Medical needs
- Bullying
- Anxiety / School phobia / refusal
- Particular talent / activity (e.g. arts or sports)
- Not offered preferred school(s)
- Special Educational Needs
- Disaffection with school environment

### Statutory Responsibilities

Education is compulsory but school is not.

The Education Act 1996 Section 7 states that a parent must ensure that their child receives education that is full-time, efficient and suitable. There are no statutory definitions for these requirements.

A parent must ensure that education is suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and takes account of any Special Educational Needs. The education should primarily equip the child for life within the community to which s/he is a member but should not foreclose the child's options in later year to adopt a different form of life.

Parents do not have to follow the National Curriculum or follow a strict timetable of learning and may use different means to educate their child. Some parents employ tutors or purchase on-line educational resources. Parents often join with similar minded families and share resources. Many local resources (e.g. libraries, sports centres etc.) have sessions dedicated to home educated children. Learning can take place outdoors, informally with family and friends or more formally through Forest Schools. A variety of teaching methods are practiced, some families have a very informal approach and use totally child-led learning.

Children who are withdrawn from school will need to be registered with the Local Authority, a parent must write to the Head Teacher requesting that their child is de-registered and confirming that it is their intention to home educate their child.

If a child has never been registered for a school place then they do not have to be registered with the Local Authority.

There is no requirement for a parent to engage with the Local Authority, the Elective Home Education Officer will contact parents once a child is made known to them and offer to visit; on-going advice and guidance can also be offered.

A parent can refuse to have any contact with the Local Authority regarding the provision of home education. There is no statutory duty to monitor home education and the EHE Officer cannot insist on seeing either a child or examples of a child's work or ask for evidence of a timetable of learning activities....

“...unless it is made known to the Local Authority that it “...appears that the parents are not providing a suitable education...”

There is no difference if a child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan. The SSEN/EHCP must be maintained by the Local Authority and reviewed annually using the usual SEN procedures.

If a child has SSEN/EHCP then the SENAT team will need to complete an assessment in conjunction with the EHE Officer to ensure the child's needs can be met before the Local Authority consents to the child being taken off a school roll.

Currently (Jan 2017) there are 149 children on the LBC Elective Home Education register. There will be many more home educated children in Luton of whom the Local Authority is unaware.

#### Process in Luton

Following the recent changes in Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2016) Statutory Guidance for Schools & Colleges. The Local Authority requires schools should consider notifying the Local Authority at the earliest opportunity where parents **orally** indicate that they intend to withdraw their child to be home educated.

However, the Education(Pupil Registration)(England)Regulations 2006 are clear that the child's name **must** be deleted once a formal letter has been received (excepting Special schools)

The Headteacher must forward a copy of the written notification to the EHE Officer and a completed EHE referral form. The EHE Officer will add the child to the EHE register.

If a written request is not received by the school then the child's name must remain on the school roll and a referral must be made to the Education Welfare Service.

The EHE Officer will write to all parents when a child is referred to them, welcoming them to the EHE community and offering to visit or provide assistance.

The EHE Officer will remove a child from the EHE register and refer them to Children Missing from Education and the Education Welfare Service if it becomes apparent that a child is not being appropriately home educated.

#### Contact

If you have any questions please contact

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