

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND EDUCATION SERVICES**

**Venue: Rotherham Town Hall**

**Date: Tuesday, 16th September, 2014**

**Time: 10.00 a.m.**

### **A G E N D A**

1. To determine whether the following items should be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended March, 2006) of the Local government Act, 1972.
2. To determine any item(s) the Chairperson is of the opinion should be considered later in the agenda as a matter of urgency.
3. Apologies for absence.
4. Declarations of Interest.
5. Appointment of Local Authority Governors (papers supplied separately).
6. Elective Home Education. (Pages 1 - 24)
7. Exclusion of the press and the public.

The following item is likely to be considered in the absence of the press and the public as being exempt under Paragraph 3 of Section 12A of Section One to the Local Government Act, 1972 (Business affairs of any particular individual, including the Council).

8. Approval of Tender for the Central Primary School, Eastwood. (Pages 25 - 28)
9. Date and time of the next meeting: -
  - Monday 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2014, to start at 10.00 a.m. in the Rotherham Town Hall.

<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS</b>
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<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Children and Education Services</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>16<sup>th</sup> September, 2014</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Elective Home Education</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Children and Young People’s Services</b>

**5. Summary:** Rotherham’s policy and parental guidance for Elective Home Education required reviewing and updating in order to meet Government guidance. Whilst educating children of statutory school age is compulsory, attendance at school is not. Parents can legally elect to home educate their children. This is referred to as **Elective Home Education (EHE)**

**6. Recommendations:** That the Rotherham Policy for Elective Home Education and Parental Guidance are accepted and approved for publication via the RMBC website, as required by the Department of Education EHE Guidance for LAs.

## **7. Proposals and Details**

Whilst educating children of statutory school age is compulsory, attendance at school is not. Parents can legally elect to home educate their children. This is referred to as **Elective Home Education (EHE)**

Local Authority duty is to be aware of cases when education provided is not suitable for age, ability and aptitude. In such cases, usual processes leading ultimately to a School Attendance Order would be followed.

Two education officers, experienced in mainstream education, with part-time administrative support took over the EHE work area from October 2013 on the Government Education Select Committee recommendation to separate EHE from the Education Welfare Service. An operational partnership between the two teams will continue. There was therefore a need to find out our position, update our knowledge and review the policies and guidance.

Taking advice from colleagues and other services within Rotherham, from other LAs locally and nationally, and working in partnership with representatives from the home education community, the attached updated policy document and parental guidance have been produced. The policy is underpinned by much improved tracking and data sharing processes and improved working relationships with other services with constant regard to safeguarding.

## **8. Finance**

Accepting the new policy and parental guidance carries no financial implication.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

Government guidance on EHE recommends

*“that each local authority provides written information about elective home education that is clear, accurate and sets out the legal position, roles and responsibilities of both the local authority and parents. This information should be made available on local authority websites”*

Inaccurate and outdated information has been taken off the RMBC website. Replacement with new and approved policy and parental guidance would fulfil this recommendation. Without it, the Council would not be meeting this government recommendation.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The full review of EHE policy and practice has led to a significant staffing change and much improved tracking of young people who are known to be EHE. Coordination between teams in education, health, social care and outside partners such as the colleges have improved. Against a national picture of rapidly increasing numbers of EHE, Rotherham has slightly reduced numbers since October 2013. Schools and other partners are becoming more aware of the existence and

implications of EHE and are willing to work together to promote the safeguarding of this cohort of children and young people.

#### **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Attached is the proposed EHE policy for Rotherham and accompanying the parental guidance.

**Contact Name** : Marie Boswell, School Improvement Consultant (EHE Officer),  
01709 255224, [marie.boswell@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:marie.boswell@rotherham.gov.uk)



*elective* Home *education*

# **Elective Home Education Policy and Procedures**

**Draft 4 June 2014**

This document outlines policy and procedures governing the management of cases where parents or those with parental responsibility for a child or young person, have opted to educate their child at home or otherwise than in Local Authority (LA), mainstream or special education provision.

### **Parties to the Procedures**

- School Effectiveness Service (SES)
- Education Welfare Service (EWS)
- Pupils
- Parents/Carers

### **Objectives**

The objective of this policy document is to set out the agreed framework for information sharing and joint working.

All parties will have due regard for the legal framework that governs a parent's/carer's decision to educate at home or otherwise.

All parties will have due regard to issues of cultural diversity and how religious or ethnic factors may impact on a parent's/carer's decision to educate their child outside of LA, mainstream or special education provision.

The parties accept that the procedures laid down in this document will provide a secure framework for sharing information on education at home or otherwise cases.

The parties accept that each will have a responsibility to take appropriate action for the management of education at home or otherwise cases, in a manner that is compliant with their statutory responsibilities as laid down in this document.

All parties will ensure that the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 are met in relation to information exchange.

## **Legal Framework and Parents' or Carers' Responsibility (Education Act, Appendix A)**

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children receive an education.

The parent/carer of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-

- a) to his/her age, ability and aptitude; and
- b) to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. (Education Act 1996, Section 7)

## **Structure of Elective Home Education (EHE) Service**

The Strategic Leader for Elective Home Education will delegate responsibility for the management of Elective Home Education (EHE) cases to the senior officer responsible for EHE within the School Effectiveness Service.

The Officers for EHE will be responsible for giving advice in the first instance to parents/carers and for the initial visit for children educated at home.

EHE Officers will ensure that relevant training is accessed and updated as necessary, including Lone Worker training and Safeguarding Children. EHE Officers will ensure that they are up to date with relevant regulations and guidance. This may include attendance at regional or national meetings and networks.

Cases of concern will be reviewed at joint meetings by Senior Officer (Education Welfare), EHE officers (Primary and Secondary) and EHE Administrative Support staff, as appropriate.

Where parental visits are refused, children are not seen by EHE staff or other RMBC staff, cases will be brought to the attention of the Director of Children's Services, Heads of Children's Social Care, Schools and Learning and SES at half-termly meetings or sooner.

## **Safeguarding Children**

The welfare and protection of all children and young people (both those who attend school and those who are educated by other means) are of paramount concern and the responsibility of the whole community. As with school educated children and young people, safeguarding issues may arise in relation to home educated children and young people. If any safeguarding concerns come to light in the course of engagement with children and families, or otherwise, these concerns should immediately be referred to the appropriate authorities using established protocols as described at <http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/safeguarding/>

Parents/carers may choose to employ other people to educate their child, though they themselves will continue to be responsible for the education provided. They will also be responsible for ensuring that those whom they engage are suitable persons to have access to children. Parents/carers will therefore wish to satisfy

themselves by taking up appropriate references and/or by requesting a potential tutor to consent to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

NB - Parents should make sure that they protect their child's safety on the internet.

Advice and guidance is available for parents/carers on this issue.

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## PROCEDURES FOR ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

### General

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child(ren) receive an education. This can be done by either regular attendance at school or otherwise.

The word 'otherwise' meaning that parents take responsibility of providing the education themselves. This is known, in Rotherham, as **ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION (EHE)**

Parents/carers can either teach their child(ren) themselves or employ private tutors or access distance learning packages that may be available.

Information and Guidance notes for parents/carers are available.

### Process for Elective Home Education (Appendix E)

- Parents may contact the EHE team directly or via the child's school or another service to discuss implications before making a final decision to home educate.
- When a decision has been made to remove a child from a school to home educate, the parent should notify the school in writing of the decision and to request that the child's name is removed from the school roll.
- Where a child has never attended a school, the parents may choose to notify the LA of the EHE pupil. Normal EHE support will be offered.

Full details will be required from parents/carers or the school/service i.e. Child's full name, date of birth, address, school, telephone number, and parents/carers name, email address if available. Details to be placed on EHE secure files.

**Where a decision has not yet been made**, the EHE service will liaise with the parents, the school, EWS or other services or agencies and:

- Outline the implications for and the requirements of parents/carers when notification is received that a parent/carer is considering withdrawing their child from mainstream or special education provision.
- If parents wish to continue to provide EHE they can be asked to complete Form EHE1 (Appendix B) in preparation for an initial visit by EHE Officer.
- A home visit will be offered to outline procedures and expectations placed on parents/carers around EHE and collect information to inform an Initial Visit report.
- Throughout the information gathering process, the child can remain on school roll.

**When a decision has been made to Home Educate:**

- Parents/carers to send a letter of intention to educate their child(ren) at home. This should be sent directly to the Head Teacher of the school.
- School to deregister the child.
- School will contact EHE Team and forward a copy of the parental letter to the EHE Team.
- EHE team to work with the school to ensure that Capita ONE records are accurate.
- Send a de-registration form to other agencies: Educational Psychology Service (EPS), Child Health, Contact and Referral Team (CART), Learning Support Service (LSS) and Admissions, as appropriate. (Appendix C)
- Issue a form for parents/carers to initiate Rotherham Elective Home Education card for if the child is stopped by Truancy Patrols.
- EHE Officer will offer visits to the parents/carers at least annually.
- Where there are concerns around the education provided, the EHE Officer will liaise with other services including EWS and agree an appropriate plan of action.
- Take appropriate action on information received when EHE is not suitable.
- In partnership with EHE team, EWS to follow enforcement procedures as appropriate (Education Action 1996) and update EHE Officer of progress.
- Record all relevant data on EHE Tracker and Capita One as appropriate.
- If concerns are raised regarding the welfare of any child, contact must be made with the Safeguarding Unit and agree a plan of action for resolving these issues.
- Send or take parent guidance booklet and any relevant information on procedures and processes to parents/carers.

**Pupils returning to school**

There are reasons why a pupil might return to school

- a) The parents/carers or the child wishes a return to school.
  - b) The EHE and/or EWS Officers recommend that the child returns to school as adequate education is not being provided.
- Parental Preference forms will be sent to the parents/carers.
  - Parents/carers will state a preference of a school for their child to attend.
  - EWS/EHE to check with the Admissions Department if this process is continuing.

- If the child is returned to school records will be amended accordingly.
- If the child is not returned to school EWS to continue with the legal process potentially resulting in a School Attendance Order being served.

### **Annual Review of Records**

After the official school leaving date in June, all Year 11 pupils to be archived from the EHE Tracker as these pupils become over statutory school age.

### **Reviewing policies and procedures**

This Authority will review the policies and procedures of EHE on a regular basis or at least every 3 years to help secure effective partnership.

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**List of designated officers responsible for the management of Elective Home Education**

Director of Schools and Lifelong Learning, Children and Young People's Services  
Tel: 01709822572

Head of School Effectiveness Service Tel: 01709 740226

Education Welfare Service Manager, Riverside House Tel: 01709 822567

Elective Home Education Officers: Rockingham Professional Development Centre,  
Tel: 01709 740226

Elective Home Education Administrative Support: Rockingham Professional  
Development Centre.

Tel: 01709 740226

email: [ElectiveHomeEducation@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:ElectiveHomeEducation@rotherham.gov.uk)

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**EDUCATION ACT 2002 (Section 175 (1) to (3))**

Section 175 Education Act 2002 provides that:

- A local education authority shall make arrangements for ensuring that the functions conferred on them in their capacity as a local education authority are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (s.175(1));
- The governing body of a maintained school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school (s.175(2));
- The governing body of an institution within the further education sector shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the institution are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children receiving education or training at the institution (s.173(3)); and
- An authority or body mentioned in any of subsections (1) to (3) shall, in considering what arrangements are required to be made under the subsection, have regard to any guidance given from time to time (in relation to England) by the Secretary of State or (in relation to Wales) by the National Assembly for Wales (s.175(14)).

The above, therefore requires LAs and governing bodies of maintained schools and further education institutions to have regard to Circular 10/95. Essentially, Circular 10/95 has been given statutory effect thereby strengthening child protection measures.

Local Authorities and schools must ensure that school staff are aware of their new duties and receive appropriate Child Protection training.

**Form EHE1 (For parent/carers)****Appendix B**

Rotherham Borough council is committed to supporting parents who choose to educate their child(ren) outside the school system. To help us do this, please complete this form and return to:

The Administrator  
 Elective Home Education  
 Rockingham Professional Development Centre  
 Roughwood Road  
 Rockingham  
 Rotherham  
 S61 4HY

Telephone: 01709 740226

Email: [ElectiveHomeEducation@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:ElectiveHomeEducation@rotherham.gov.uk)

If you have any questions about completing the form please contact the EHE team for advice.

Name(s) of Child(ren)	
Date(s) of Birth	
Ethnicity	
First Language	
Names of parents/carers who have legal responsibility	
Address	
Post code	
Tel No	
Mobile number	
Email	
Last school last attended by child	
Local Authority	
Date last attended school	
Date of commencement of Elective Home Education	

<p>It would be helpful if you could give some background to your decision to provide education at home, please tick as appropriate:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety/School Phobia</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Attendance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Dispute with school</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Issues around behaviour</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Lifestyle/Cultural/Philosophical preference for home education</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Medical/ Health</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Preferred school place not available</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Religious beliefs</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Special educational needs</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p>
<p>Please give an indication of your aims and the outcomes you hope to achieve through education at home and details of how you intend to approach the education provision.</p>
<p>Please give a brief outline of the proposed initial plan of study, mentioning (where appropriate) details of subject areas to be covered e.g. particular project areas.</p>
<p>Name(s) of person(s) who will be educating the child(ren). This may involve tutors or other family members.</p>
<p>If your child is of Secondary School age do you intend to work towards public examinations?                      Yes/ No</p>
<p>Does the child(ren) have a statement of Special Educational Needs?    Yes/No</p>

I understand that the Local Authority has a responsibility to ensure that my child(ren) is/are educated as required by law and that an Officer of the Authority, with my permission, may arrange to visit to view the educational provision being made for my child(ren).

Signed ..... (Parent/Carer)

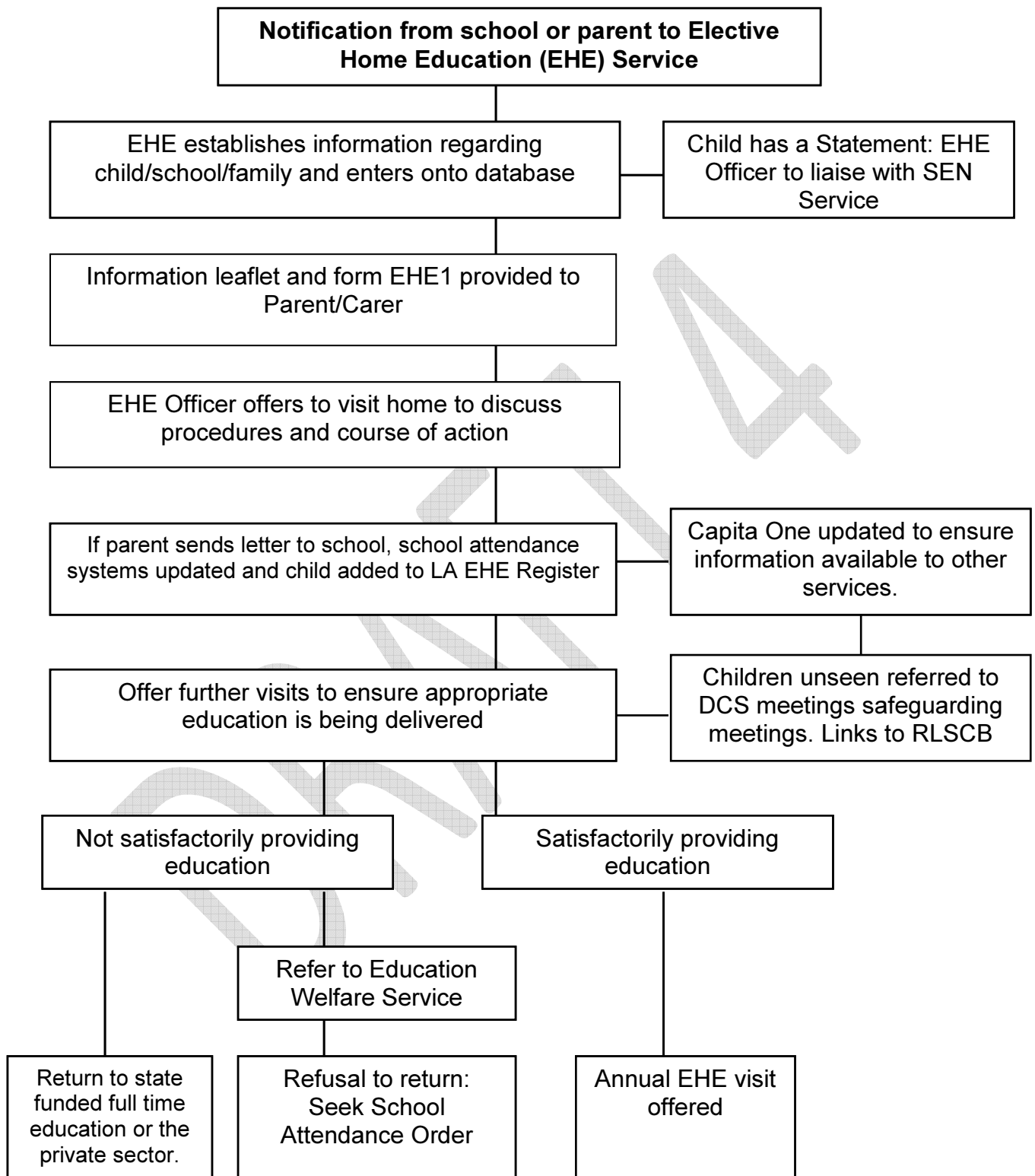
Thank you for taking time to complete the form.

If you change your address or your child returns to school please let us know in writing.

For Office use only. Date received:

Date added to database:

**ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION FLOW CHARTS**







# *elective* Home *education*

## Guidance for Parents/Carers

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Children & Young People's Services

## Introduction

This booklet has been written to help you understand what may be involved if you are thinking about, or have decided, to educate your child away from the school system.

We recognise that there is a wide variety of ways in which education can be provided.

A decision to educate at home should not be made solely to resolve a particular problem in school. It is advisable to discuss the problem with the Head Teacher in the first instance, or write to the School Governors.

For ease of reference the majority of this booklet has been set out in sections in a format of 'Frequently Asked Questions' which we hope that you will find useful.

We can be contacted at:

Elective Home Education Team  
School Effectiveness Service  
Rockingham Professional Development Centre  
Roughwood Road  
Rockingham  
Rotherham  
S61 4HY

Tel: 01709 740226

Fax: 01709 557515

Email: [ElectiveHomeEducation@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:ElectiveHomeEducation@rotherham.gov.uk)

All contact details are correct at February 2014

# Frequently Asked Questions about Elective Home Education (EHE)

## The Law

### What is a parent's duty?

The responsibility for a child's education rests with their parents. In England, education is compulsory, but school is not. Parents have a duty to secure an appropriate full-time education for their children. Some parents choose to do this by educating their child at home. They do it because they judge it to be the best way to carry out their duty.

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 provides that:

"The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

- to his age ability and aptitude, and
- to any special educational needs he may have, either by attendance at school or otherwise."

*Parents are not required to*

- *teach the National Curriculum*
- *provide a broad and balanced curriculum*
- *have a timetable*
- *have premises equipped to any particular standard*
- *set hours during which education will take place*
- *have any specific qualifications*
- *make detailed plans in advance*
- *observe school hours, days or terms*
- *give formal lessons*
- *mark work done by their child*
- *formally assess progress or set development objectives*
- *reproduce school type peer group socialisation*
- *match school-based, age-specific standards.*

*However, we aim to offer advice and support to parents on these matters if requested.*

You should note that the EHE Officer will not be able to direct the learning which takes place nor can she/he accept any responsibility for it. If you decide to educate your child outside of school it is your responsibility to plan her/his education and to carry it out.

If you decide to re-integrate your child into a school in the future you will probably find the process more straightforward if your home education takes the National Curriculum into account.

There are dedicated support networks run by home educators to help parents whose children are taking exams. Home Education support organisations and local groups also offer opportunities for social and educational activities.

### **What if my child has never been to school?**

If your child is below compulsory school age you do not need to tell anybody but it will help us to keep our records accurate if you write to let us know you intend to educate your child at home when she/he is of compulsory school age. We will then ask you for some basic information as we do with all home educating families.

If the Local Authority discovers that you have a child who is not a registered pupil in a school and we don't know that you are home educating, or have any information about your educational provision, it could be misinterpreted that your child is "missing from education". The Local Authority has a legal duty to identify children who are missing from education so, for this reason, we will ask you to provide some information about your home education.

If your child is already being educated at home and the family moves to Rotherham please write to the Local Authority and let us know.

Please note that a parent who fails to register their child at a school and makes no other arrangement for their education will have a School Attendance Order served upon them. A parent who fails to comply with such an order is guilty of an offence. (Education Act 1996 Sec 443)

### **What if my child is having difficulties at school?**

This does not mean that you *have* to take your child out of school. Discuss the issues with the school, the Head Teacher or governors at the school. A school **cannot** request that you educate your child at home because s/he is having difficulties or has poor attendance at school.

### **What is the process if I want to take my child out of school to home educate?**

If your child is of compulsory school age, (the term after the child's fifth birthday) and is already registered as a pupil in a Rotherham school you will need to write to the Head Teacher

It is then the Head Teacher's legal duty to remove your child's name from the admission register and the Head Teacher will notify the Local Authority.

It is important that you know that once your child's name is taken from the school roll it may not be possible for your child to return to the same school if you change your mind, because the place may have been allocated to another child.

### **What if I just keep my child at home?**

Registered pupils must attend school regularly. If your child is still a registered pupil you will be visited by an **Attendance Officer** or **Education Welfare Officer** to find out why your child is not attending school.

A parent who fails to ensure their child regularly attends the school at which she/he is registered is guilty of an offence. (Education Act 1996 Sec 443) and may be liable on summary conviction to a fine. The Local Authority would then take steps to get your child back in school.

### **Can a school simply take my child off the school roll?**

No. A school cannot force or request you as a parent to remove your child from the school roll under any circumstances. The Head Teacher cannot remove your child from the school without the parent/carer's written, signed permission.

### **What happens when the school tells the council?**

Once we are informed of your decision to educate at home, we will contact you to ask you to give us some information about your provision. Many people find a face to face meeting is helpful at this stage.

### **What if my child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs?**

A statement of SEN is no barrier to home education. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to carry out an annual review, wherever the child is educated. If your child is at a mainstream school and you write to the Head Teacher to say you will be home educating, the school will let the EHE Officer and the council's Special Needs department know.

### **What if my child is at special school?**

You will need to contact the school to let them know you wish to home educate. Where a child with a statement of Special Educational Need attends a Special School, the law is different, so please contact the EHE team, or the LA SEN team to discuss individually.

### **What kind of information will be helpful?**

We would like to hear about your ideas for your child's education and would appreciate it if you could share examples of what your child has been doing. The EHE Officer will give you feedback on this and send you a report.

### **What happens if the Local Authority has concerns?**

You will be kept fully in the picture if we think that the educational provision for your child does not meet the requirements of the 1996 Education Act. A School Attendance Order is very much a last resort and is rarely used in cases where education is being provided otherwise than at school. It gives the Local Authority the powers to name a school your child **must** attend and to ignore the Order is an offence, unless you can prove your child is receiving a suitable education.

Safeguarding concerns will be brought to the attention the Director of Children's Services and members of the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children's Board, as appropriate. <http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/safeguarding/>

### **How often will the Local Authority make contact?**

We would like to establish a good working relationship with you. Following the initial contact and discussions, future visits or contacts will be discussed and agreed with parents as appropriate. If everything is satisfactory then the visits/contact will be offered on a flexible basis, minimum annually.

## Local support for home educating families living in Rotherham

### School Nurses

Although your child may not be in school, the School Nurse Service is available to support all children of school age in Rotherham. We will pass on your contact details to the school nurses.

### Paid employment

The law about paid employment for young people of statutory school age remains the same for those who are home educated as those in full time school. Employment means helping with a trade or occupation which is carried on for profit, even if the child receives no pay.

Children may not be legally employed if they are under 13 and they must have a work permit. There are various legal restrictions on the employment of children – please see the RMBC website for further details on employing school age children.

### Careers advice and guidance

Rotherham has an integrated Youth Support Service (IYSS) who can be contacted via [iyss-enquiries@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:iyss-enquiries@rotherham.gov.uk)

### Ceasing to home educate

If you decide at any time that you would like your child to return to school, or to go to school for the first time you will need to contact the School Admissions Team to apply for a school place. If you would like to discuss your thoughts about home education and applying for a school place with the EHE Officer please contact us. We will write to you to confirm what we have done so that you have a clear record of the discussion we have had and any action we have taken to support you. Please note however, that the school of your choice may be full for your child's year group and that you may need to appeal for a place or consider applying to a different school.

### Assessing for Special Needs before going to school

If you feel that your child should be assessed for a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) before going/returning to school, please let the EHE know so that we can advise you of appropriate contacts.

### School Admissions Team contact details:

School Admissions Team  
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council  
Riverside House  
Main Street  
Rotherham  
S60 1AE  
Tel. No. : 01709 822505  
Email: [admissions.enquiries@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:admissions.enquiries@rotherham.gov.uk)

**Please note:** If you are known to the Local Authority you are likely to receive a letter asking you to apply for a place for your child in the year before she/he is 5 and also in

the school year in which she/he is 11. This will happen even if you are home educating your child. If you do not want to apply for a place please inform the School Admissions Team so that your intentions are clear and they will know that they do not need to contact you again.

If you would like help, or if you wish to discuss your education plans for your child in the secondary phase, please contact the Elective Home Education Officer.

**National and local home education support organisations:**

Local and National support networks are known to the LA and may be appropriate to support you.

These include Yahoo Groups such as:

Sheffield & South Yorkshire Home Education Group

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SYHEC/>

Rotherham Home Education Group

<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/RothHE/info>

or national groups, including:

Home Education Advisory Service, PO Box 98, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 6AN

Tel: 01707 371854

[www.heas.org.uk](http://www.heas.org.uk)

The home education consultancy website has a vast array of up to date information and support at

<http://edyourself.org/>

Education Otherwise

Tel: 0845 478 6345

[www.education-otherwise.net](http://www.education-otherwise.net)

Please note that RMBC cannot be held responsible for the content on any of these sites and is not affiliated to any of the organisations. The above list does not constitute a definitive or recommended list of support organisations and others may be available to parents.



**Request that Draft 4 of Rotherham Policy for Elective Home Education and Parental Guidance are accepted and approved** for publication via the RMBC website, as required by the Department of Education EHE Guidance for LA's.

## **Background**

Two education officers, experienced in mainstream education, with part-time administrative support took over the EHE work area from October 2013 on Government Education Select Committee recommendation to separate EHE from the Education Welfare Service. An operational partnership between the two teams will continue. There was therefore a need to find out our position, update our knowledge and review the policies and guidance.

## **Elective Home Education**

Whilst educating children of statutory school age is compulsory, attendance at school is not. Parents can legally elect to home educate their children.

Local Authority duty is to be aware of cases when education provided is not suitable for age, ability and aptitude. In such cases, usual processes leading ultimately to a School Attendance Order would be followed.

### Work completed:

- As the officers were new to this area of work a handover of cases took place which included completing visits where they shadowed the previous officer.
- Processes, policy and parental guidance were reviewed and updated.
- RMBC website reviewed and amended. Further improvements to be made once new policy and parental guidance are approved.
- Generic [ElectiveHomeEducation@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:ElectiveHomeEducation@rotherham.gov.uk) email address arranged.
- Comparisons to sub-regional and national best practice have been investigated. Other LAs are undergoing similar changes, so the Yorkshire & Humber EHE Network is being revived. This will feed into national EHE networks suggested by Education Select Committee.
- All the above were completed against both the sub-regional and national picture of rapidly increasing numbers whilst the Rotherham numbers of learners who are fully recorded as EHE are fluctuating but only rising slowly overall.
- Policy and Parental Guidance reviewed to be in-line with current thinking and Education Department guidance to LAs.
- Electronic tracker (password protected) developed with individual electronic files for each child allowing easy access to a current view of the position and central working document for case management.
- ONE system updated and other services assured of the validity of EHE status and comments now available.
- Important links developed with other teams and agencies: CART, EWS, School Admissions, Educational Psychology, Learning Support, Autism Communication Team, CAMHS, Child Protection & Child in Need Panels, Health, Social Care etc.



- New process in place of half termly meetings with Joyce Thacker and Karen Borthwick to discuss vulnerable/ unseen children as parents are legally allowed to refuse EHE Officer visits or meetings.
- Back-log of annual visits caught up and now back on track for the school year 2013/14
- EHE Data summary sheet attached, to end March 2014.

**Draft 4 incorporates comments from DLT meeting (02.06.14) and has the support of that meeting.**

**Contact names and details:**

Marie Boswell, Elective Home Education Officer [marie.boswell@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:marie.boswell@rotherham.gov.uk)  
01709 255224/ 01709 740226

Maggie Duroe Elective Home Education Officer [margaret.duroe@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:margaret.duroe@rotherham.gov.uk)

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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