

**ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS**

1.	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Children and Education Services</b>
2.	<b>Date:</b>	<b>16<sup>th</sup> September, 2014</b>
3.	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Elective Home Education</b>
4.	<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.

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