

From: [mailto: @newham.gov.uk]  
Sent: 04 May 2005 15:44  
To:  
Cc:  
Subject: Consultation on Elective Education

#### Consultation on Elective Home Education

2.3 and 3.10 There seems to be something of a contradiction between these two paragraphs. In 2.3, the LEA is said to have a 'responsibility to make sure there is adequate provision for education'<sup>1</sup>, while it is stated in the last paragraph of 3.10: There is no express requirement in the 1996 Act for LEAs to investigate actively whether parents are complying with their duties under Section?.'

How can an LEA make sure there is adequate provision if there is no requirement for it to investigate actively?

I am emailing you Newham's response to the Consultation on Elective Education. We welcome your comments.

3.11 Last paragraph By what means would information be brought to the attention of an LEA which might cast doubt on whether "an efficient and suitable education" can be provided? Where parents have actively sought to home educate their child, it is the experience of professionals in Newham, that the education provided is generally adequate. However, there is a considerable cohort of parents who are home educating because they cannot find a suitable place for their child, or because they are concerned that their child may be bullied. These are what might be described as 'reluctant home educators' who frequently lack the skills necessary to provide an adequate education.

3.11 Last paragraph The statement that the child should also be given the opportunity, but not required, to attend any meeting<sup>1</sup>, seems a denial of the right of home educated children to be kept safe. Children who attend school, can be seen by professionals, such as the Education Welfare Service, to ensure that children are not subject to abuse or neglect.

3.13 bullet points 4,6,9 [What home educating parents are not required to do] It is difficult to conceive of an education being deemed adequate unless the premises are equipped to a particular standard, work is marked, and detailed plans are made in advance.

3.23 & 3.24 There seems to be a contradiction here, as according to 3.10, There is no express requirement in the 1996 Act for LEAs to investigate actively whether parents are complying with their duties under Section?.<sup>1</sup> How then, can an LEA obtain information about a family where a child has a statement?

4.16 What are the criteria which Ofsted uses to report on the way local authorities cater for home-educating families?

In general, the guidelines appear to prioritise the rights of parents over those of the child. The home education lobby is very powerful. The impression is that these guidelines tip the balance in favour of home educators vis-a-vis the local authority. This will not result in productive relationships.