

RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT  
ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION  
GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITIES  
SOMERSET LEA

The draft guidelines are very welcome and provide some helpful information. We hope the following response will be equally welcome and helpful

**PART 1 & 2**

The introduction in Part 1 is positive and supportive and the reasons for choice are clear. Part 2 is also helpful in clarifying the law in this area and bringing together this information and the specific judgments relating to EHE.

The statement of the LEA's overall responsibility in paragraph 2.3 is an excellent summary of the LEA's responsibility towards EHE although there are some concerns that this paragraph is contradicted later on in the document. The reference to Section 175 (1) of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is also very helpful as LEAs move towards the implementation of Every Child Matters. However parts of Section 3 & 4 appear not to support this and may be in conflict with ECM.

**SECTION 3 & 4.**

There are, more difficulties with Sections 3 and 4. In principle Section 4 which is about relationships and welfare should follow Section 2 which introduces the concept of working together. Section 3 which is simply a summary on Policies and Procedures should then become Section 4

**SECTION 3.**

3.2 Is this a recommendation that the same officer should be responsible? EHE is very different to those on EO.

3.4. This is repeated much more clearly in 3.5. A further paragraph is needed about the non-registration of children who have never been to school and how this is linked to ECM

3.9 This paragraph covers two different points. The first one and a half sentences are simply a statement about parents informing the LEA which is helpful. However the next part about unsettling the child and the timescale is unclear. Presumably it refers to the timescale for the first visit but this is not evident. If it is about timescale it should be a separate paragraph. It is repeated in 4.4 more clearly and if Sections 3 & 4 are transposed then another paragraph may not be necessary

3.10 the last two sentences seem to contradict the statement in 2.3 and ECM. Does this imply that LEAs do not have to visit those families about whom there are no previous concerns?

3.11 This is similar in that it implies that 'someone' informs the LEA that the education is unsuitable. If there are no procedures for on going visits/contact this would be very difficult.

3.12 Repeats 2.4 except for the vital final sentence. Could this paragraph just be the first sentence, a reference to paragraph 2.4 and the last sentence?

3.13 The whole of the first section is irrelevant to an audience experienced in school education. The paragraph could be just the first sentence and the section from '...the type of educational activity can be varied...' 3.14 Remove the final sentence which may be true but is unnecessary

3.15 Add this whole paragraph to 3.12 linking it in with the issue of framework and philosophy (there are some grammatical inconsistencies in the bullet points and an additional point 'evidence of progress both academic and social' should be added)

3.17 The first sentence is quite a negative introduction after the positive statements in Section 1 & 2 and a replacement could be 'The majority of parents welcome the opportunity to discuss their child's education with a representative of the LEA but this is not a legal requirement'

3.18 & 3.19 contradict 3.10 absolutely. An LEA is recommended to make an annual contact

and assume if parents do not respond that the education is not efficient or suitable or as in 3.10 they should assume the education is satisfactory if there is no evidence of other concerns. This conflict needs to be resolved. Could 3.10 and 3.11 be re-written and incorporated into this section?

3.23 Could '..unless parents request the statement is finished' be added. This sometimes happens if for example the child's statement is for behaviour triggered by the school environment.

3.24 Remove the section beginning 'If., statement', run paragraph 3.25 into 3.24. Make 'If... statement' into the new paragraph 3.25

#### SECTION 4

The whole of this section is more positive and supportive. If it replaces Section 3 all references to Section 3 need to be removed or changed

4.2 remove the last sentence which is superfluous

4.6 The whole of this paragraph could be replaced with the statement. 'If parents are considering EHE the LEA should have a named person to discuss this with them'

4.7 The first section is very positive but again the comment on legal access introduces a negative note. It could be written in more positive terms.

4.9 Remove the term facilitator - LEA representatives have no responsibility to 'facilitate' in the way the term is used now.

4.10-4.12 Need to be re-written in light of ECM

4.13 Remove all references to individual LEAs

4.15 Replace the word 'should' with the word 'may' in line 4

#### SECTION 5

5.2 End the first sentence after... 'home educated families'. Remove from '..and - implications..'. Remove all the information about possible additional support, as this becomes a 'hostage to fortune' for those LEAs that cannot do this

5.3 -5.4 Is this information for LEAs or parents?

5.5 The last sentence needs to be clarified. This according to our information is not correct unless parents give permission

5.6 Flexi schooling is not authorised absence but education off site. Remove the reference to a private website

5.7 The whole paragraph is unnecessary since it is not relevant to EHE

5.8-5.9 Remove the section '... but - arrangements' in 5.8 and the first sentence in 5.9 and run the two paragraphs together.

5.10 Change the last sentence 'It is not available to learners if parents elect to educate them at home after 16+'

5.13-5.15 The whole of this section should be in separate Traveller Education documentation if it is felt necessary. The responsibilities for EHE are the same for all groups

Part 6 should be removed, especially since there are now strong links between authorities and they share good practice

#### SUMMARY

Section 1 & 2 are helpful

Transpose Sections 3 & 4

Ensure there is correlation between this document and ECM

Check for repetition

Remove all references to individual LEAs and private websites