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Background

Elective Home Education (EHE) is the term used by the Department for Education (DfE) to describe parents' decisions to provide education for their children at home, instead of sending them to school, and taking responsibility for provision themselves. EHE is an option that any family may consider for their child/ren. The Local Authority's primary interest should lie in the suitability of the parents' educational provision and not their motivation for doing so. The reasons for deciding on this approach are many, as are the teaching methods undertaken. For some families, it is a decision on their philosophical, spiritual or religious outlook; for others it is to meet the specific needs of a child or children. It may be because of dissatisfaction with 'the system' or used as a short-term intervention for a particular reason. Whatever the circumstances, the Local Authority aims to work closely with parents in their choice.

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Why it matters

The Law

The responsibility for a child's education rests with their parents. In England, education is compulsory, but school is not. The law gives parents the choice of educating their child at home so long as they ensure that their child receives an efficient and suitable, full-time education. The request for a given State to respect a parent's wishes is a key component of this statement and the implications of this are made more explicit in the Education Act 1996. The relevant section of the Act, Section 7, provides that:

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

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

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Information

Home education can be a positive choice which is expected to lead to a better outcome for the child than other alternatives; in other cases, it may be attempted as a last resort, which may well have implications for the quality of home education which can be provided.

Under section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a duty to intervene if it appears that parents are not providing a suitable education. A referral to Children Missing Education (CME) will be made and it may be necessary to apply for a School Attendance Order (Sections 437-443, 1996 Education Act). It will be arranged for the child to be admitted to, and to attend, the school named on the Order; failure to do so would be an offence.

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Information: continued

There is no proven correlation between home education and safeguarding risk. However, a child being educated at home is not necessarily being seen on a regular basis by professionals. Therefore, should safeguarding concerns arise, the EHE Coordinator will follow Salford's safeguarding procedure, completing a referral to the Bridge and linking with health and multi-agency for further information, if necessary.

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What to do?

If you visit a home and you are aware that children are present in the home during usual school hours, ask yourself, "Why are these children not in school?"

Are you confident in asking the parents, in a polite manner, why the children aren't in school?

If you aren't, or if you are not in a position to ask, you can always notify the LA who can check the 'status' of the children's education.

If you have reason to question whether a child is receiving 'suitable' home education, you can notify the Local Authority via email:

cme@salford.gov.uk.

A referral form is available on the internet:

- [Children missing education](#)

To check character count, select the REVIEW tab, highlight the text and click on "word count" from the "proofing" section. Details for the selected text will be shown in a pop-up box.



Elective Home Education 7 Minute Briefing

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Key Guidance

- [EHE Good Practice Guidance](#)
- [Guidance for local authorities and schools about children educated at home](#)

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Information: continued

If a child has an Education Health & Care Plan (EHC Plan) the Local Authority can help parents to make suitable provision. An EHC Plan of a home educated child must be reviewed annually by the local authority. If a parent decides to educate a child on roll at a special school an interim review of the child's EHC Plan will be conducted.

Parents may also home educate children who have SEN but no EHC Plan. They have the right to request an EHC assessment in the same way as if a child is on a school roll.