

**Elective Home Education Costs and Provision – Schools Forum  
17<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

**ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION COSTS AND PROVISION**

**INTENT**

This paper outlines the funding and provision for Electively Home Educated (EHE) children in Torbay. It identifies the duties placed on the LA and the cost pressures associated with these duties.

**DUTIES**

The first duty placed on the LA is;

*‘Identification of children who have never attended school and may be home educated forms a significant element of fulfilling an authority’s statutory duty under s.436A of the Education Act 1996 - to make arrangements to enable the authority to establish, so far as it is possible to do so, the identities of children in its area who are not receiving a suitable education.*

*The duty applies in relation to children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, and who are not receiving a suitable education otherwise than at school (for example, at home, or in alternative provision). Until a local authority is satisfied that a home-educated child is receiving a suitable full-time education, then a child being educated at home is potentially in scope of this duty.’*

Alongside this:

*‘as a minimum:*

- 1. have a written policy statement on elective home education which is clear, transparent and easily accessible by using different formats as necessary, is consistent with the current legal framework and preferably drawn up in consultation with local families who educate children at home so that it can reflect both the challenges and rewards of educating children in this way. It should take into account local circumstances and set out how the authority will seek to engage and communicate with parents.*
- 2. set aside the resources necessary to implement its policy effectively and consistently. This is not always easy at a time of constrained resources; but effective implementation in conjunction with work in related areas such as education welfare, children missing education and admissions, can reduce spend in the longer term on families where engagement is difficult.*
- 3. consider their organisational structures for dealing with home education and the related areas mentioned above. Although parents who educate their children at home sometimes say that home education should be dealt with in isolation, the reality is that it needs a holistic approach to issues of suitability, attendance, welfare and safeguarding. All of these factors need to be in place to ensure a good education outcome.*

4. *seek to offer guidance to all known home-educating families in their area about their rights and obligations, and also provide advice on good practice and available resources for parents who request it.*
5. *make it clear in all documentation that the local authority sees its role in relation to home education as part of its wider responsibilities, including safeguarding, for all children living in its area.'*

(Elective home education Departmental guidance for local authorities April 2019)

Torbay fulfils these duties by working with schools and partners to identify children who are being educated outside of the mainstream. Contact is then made with families and assessments made of the educational provision.

Early work involves understanding the reason EHE has been chosen and any barriers the child may face to receiving a suitable and effective education.

#### NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES CHOOSING EHE

The number of children moving into EHE had been falling significantly before lockdown one. There is now a marked increase in families choosing EHE as a response to Covid but the pattern is not consistent.

For example – most secondary schools are at 60% of the number choosing EHE compared to 2018/19 but one has seen a 100% increase from 8 to 16 children. The most marked decrease has been in Yr11 children.

	18-19		19-20		20-21	
	No	N of Sch	No	N of Sch	No	N of Sch
<b>Primary</b>	36	19	71	22	68	22
<b>Secondary</b>	69	7	56	7	59	5
<b>AP</b>	0	0	3	1	0	0
<b>Special</b>	3	1	3	2	3	2

#### CHILDREN NEEDING SUPPORT AND/OR ASSESSMENT ON BECOMING EHE

The number of children moving to EHE where parents claim needs are not being met in mainstream is growing.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020-21
<b>Number of EHE children referred for an EP Assessment:</b>	2	3	6
<b>Number of EHE children where an RSA has also been submitted:</b>	9 *	13 *	7
<b>Number of EHE children where an EHCP has been awarded:</b>	9	13	**
<b>Number of EHE children with an EHCP:</b>	15	20	23
<b>Number of EHE children referred to MTS:</b>	1	4	4
<b>Number of EHE children with additional AP provision:</b>	1	8	9

<b>Approximate cost of additional AP provision:</b>	NK	£6,000	£14,500
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(\* In these years parental RSAs supported other than by EHEO were not captured. \*\* The EHCP process is not complete for many so data is reported at the year's end)

## PROVISION

Provision at MTS is costed at the individualised funding for the child so (assuming an average of £6,000)

Provision of MTS places - £24,000

Provision of AP places - £14,500

The AP places cover a wide range of need and provides for Yr11 students, who are deemed to not be in receipt of suitable education, to receive this from an AP setting.

## STAFFING

There are 1.6 FTE Elective Home Education Officers within the Vulnerable Pupils team. Both are on Soulbury terms and conditions. They are supported by the Attendance Improvement Officer for legal processes around returning to school and by Business Support Colleagues for the equivalent of 2 days a week.

A legal pathway has been necessary for 15 families across the 3-year period. Recent Covid legislation changes have reduced this demand. All costs are subsumed into the central attendance budget.

EHE Officer Salary and Oncosts - £78,971

Business Support - £5,000

## EDUCATION PSYCHOLOGY SUPPORT

To provide support to children who are thought, after initial work with a family, to need EP support, the team have 8 days of EP time budgeted.

Education Psychology Support - £3,296

## COST PRESSURE REDUCTION ACTIVITY

To ensure that the pressure on the High Needs Block is minimised the following activities are undertaken:

1. Work with SDC to link the EHE provision there with appropriate families and to signpost to families that this provision is for children who have been EHE for some time. In this way it is not seen as a pathway by parents considering EHE.
2. Early intervention with families where schools have indicated they may be choosing EHE. This was about 3 families a week pre-lockdown.
3. Use of the Mediation Service to support schools and families in exploring options other than EHE.
4. Use of links to social care colleagues to identify children who may be moving to EHE and for whom this would not be appropriate under safeguarding processes.

5. A newly agreed charging process for recouping AP and other costs associated with meeting need.

## CHARGES AND EXPENDITURE

The chart below shows all invoiced charges for the last two academic years.

	Invoiced	Outstanding
<b>2019/20</b>	£ 73,404.00	£ 21,877.00
<b>2020/21</b>	£ 58,988.43	£ 25,450.65

The invoiced income still has some outstanding payments.

	Balance Outstanding	Invoiced Amount
<b>TSC</b>	£ 19,323.51	£ 19,323.51
<b>TA</b>	£ 9,455.10	£ 12,761.10

This leads to the following figures for this academic year assuming all outstanding amounts are paid.

<b>Income</b>	£ 58,988.43
<b>Staffing</b>	-£ 83,971.00
<b>EP</b>	-£ 3,296.00
<b>MTS</b>	-£ 24,000.00
<b>AP</b>	-£ 14,500.00
<b>Pressure</b>	-£ 66,778.57

## RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Forum:

1. Notes the contents of the report.
2. Advises officers on how to proceed with the outstanding amounts.