


<b>Scrutiny Review Recommendations</b>	<b>Response</b>
<p>The EHE resource pack be reviewed and edited to make it more accessible to parents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Elective Home Education (EHE) resource pack has been reviewed and edited to make it more accessible to parents;</li> <li>• Sandwell exam centres included</li> <li>• <a href="#">Welcome Pack provided for all new families</a> <a href="#">Home education Resources</a> <a href="#">FAQ</a></li> </ul>
<p>The EHE website be refreshed to provide information, guides and links to other information and links to EHE forums for advice and support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website reviewed, updated, and regularly refreshed to ensure all information, support and opportunities are included and relevant. See sample links below.</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200295/schools_and_learning/4812/elective_home_education_welcome_pack_for_parents">https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200295/schools_and_learning/4812/elective_home_education_welcome_pack_for_parents</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200295/schools_and_learning/4813/elective_home_education_resources">https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200295/schools_and_learning/4813/elective_home_education_resources</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200295/schools_and_learning/4814/elective_home_education_-_frequently_asked_questions">https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200295/schools_and_learning/4814/elective_home_education_-_frequently_asked_questions</a></p>
<p>To identify resource and support within the council to facilitate the refresh.</p>	<p>Team liaised with colleagues within corporate communications team.</p>

<p>That additional spaces and facilities be identified for EHE groups to meet and carry out activities, and that competitive rates for use of those facilities be negotiated for EHE group use.</p>	<p>During the academic year 2021/22, we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consulted with families via regular newsletter updates etc.</li> <li>• organised a series of (covid) funded community engagement activities utilising several venues including Hatley Heath.</li> <li>• launched a goodwill -box at the Bear Bookshop to share books etc. Others will be explored and rolled out in future if demand requires.</li> </ul>
<p>That the Council develop a mechanism for resources to be shared for EHE, such as a hub for books or other educational material to be kept.</p> <p><a href="https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200295/schools_and_learning/4846/elective_home_education_-_newsletters">https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200295/schools_and_learning/4846/elective_home_education_-_newsletters</a></p> <p>Access to newsletters is password protected and limited to the EHE community / Sand</p>	<p>Comprehensive range of resources from Early years to KS4 made available in community settings for families to borrow.</p> <p>Link to Black History Month website provided via EHE newsletter.</p> <p><b>Pages in "Elective Home Education Welcome Pack for Parents"</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">Part 1 - Starting the home education journey what you need to know</a></li> <li>2. <a href="#">Part 2 - Special Educational Needs</a></li> <li>3. <a href="#">Part 3 – Examinations, revision and marking</a></li> <li>4. <a href="#">Part 4 - Tuition Centres, Tutors and Home School Tutoring</a></li> <li>5. <a href="#">Part 5 – Generic Resources Links</a></li> <li>6. <a href="#">Part 6 - Functional skills</a></li> <li>7. <a href="#">Part 7 - Other Support Services</a></li> </ol>

<p>That youth social networks, such as ‘Just Youth’, be promoted on the EHE website for users to find out what’s on in Sandwell for young people and to encourage engagement;</p>	<p>The team organised various activity days/community events supported by youth services, leisure, and libraries</p> <p>EHE families were invited to the Just Youth SHAPE conference through a dedicated day on 29<sup>th</sup> June – see link <a href="https://www.justyouth.org.uk/">https://www.justyouth.org.uk/</a></p> <p>Just Youth is the go-to place for children and young people in Sandwell to find something to do, someone to talk to and somewhere to go. Designed with and for young people, the website provides: Advice, guidance and sign posting on a wide range of topics. Finding someone to talk to if they have an issue.</p> <p>We continue to ensure that families are sign-posted to appropriate support services plus other relevant learning resources and websites.</p> <p>E.g. <a href="mailto:youngpeople_services@sandwell.gov.uk">youngpeople_services@sandwell.gov.uk</a> and the Strengthening Families teams etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As above, we ensure that families are encourage and supported to take part in national /local events.</li> <li>• As stated, links provided to support “Marking Black History Month- Proud to Be”</li> </ul>

<p>To raise awareness of the SEN and EHCP support available and access for children.</p>	<p>Welcome pack revision includes specific section on “special educational needs” including links to:  SENDIAS - The Sandwell SEND Information, Advice and Support Service  Autism West Midlands  National Autistic Society / British Dyslexia Association etc.</p> <p><a href="https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200295/schools_and_learning/4812/elective_home_education_welcome_pack_for_parents/3">*https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200295/schools_and_learning/4812/elective_home_education_welcome_pack_for_parents/3</a></p> <p>We have employed a specialist (SEND) HLTA who will further develop this area of work and build relationships EHE families, Inclusion Support colleagues &amp; other relevant partners.</p>
<p>That the Cabinet Member for Best Start in Life and the DCS, on behalf of the Council, be requested to write to the former Secretary of State for Education, Nadhim Zahawi and to the Parliamentary Select Committee Inquiry of Home Education, to register this council’s findings from the Elective Home Education review which highlights the need for regulation and resources for Elective Home Education; and to endorse a letter from the Association of EHE Professionals which asks whether consideration is being given to strengthening the legislation to provide further safeguards for children who are EHE.</p>	<p>Letter sent, but no response received</p> <p>  SoS 5.1.22 NZ - EHE  Scrutiny.pdf</p>

**Additional activity**

A new EHE Team Structure now in place from September 2022, to increase capacity with the appointment 2 higher level teacher assistants (HLTA's) to support the EHE Advisory Teacher. The team will also get additional support from the School's Attendance Support Service with an allocated "children not in school" officer, who will support with initial consultations etc.

Please table below for comparative data for the last 2 academic years for the period half-terms 1-5

	2020/21- HT5	2021/22- HT5	% Difference
Closed	53	19	-64.15%
Opened	33	27	-18.18%
Current	549	553	0.73%

**Commentary**

- When closed cases are compared for the period 2020/21- HT5 to 2021/22- HT5 it shows a 64% decrease, 34 less cases than before.
- When opened cases are compared for the period 2020/21- HT5 to 2021/22- HT5 it shows a 18% decrease, 6 less cases than before.
- When current cases are compared for the period 2020/21- HT5 to 2021/22- HT5 it shows a 1% increase, 4 more cases than before.

Following on from last year's Kit Award for Excellence Suzanne Starr, the EHE Advisory Teacher has won another Gold Award in recognition of her passion and commitment to excellence in support of home education.

Working in partnership with STEPs, the team have been able to extend support to families who are “New to the UK”.

## **Safeguarding**

It should not be assumed that a child who is “educated otherwise than at school” presents a greater safeguarding risk than any other child. They may, however, be less visible to a range of universal services and professionals because they do not attend school.

As noted during the ILACS review (May 2022), safeguarding and the concept of “professional curiosity” is regularly promoted by the safeguarding team situated within the Schools Attendance Support Service.

An EHE fact sheet is available for partner agencies (i.e. social workers, housing officers and & other professionals) who may have contact with, and/or be less familiar with the requirements / expectations relating to “children not in school” including those who are electively home educated.



Professional  
Curiosity and EHE fact

Where required, EHE team members continue to work in partnership with other professionals to deliver support that is needed on a case by case basis including children experiencing neglect and/or domestic abuse etc. The team also works with health colleagues to ensure that EHE children have access to school nursing services including vaccinations and eye tests.

A recent example of professional curiosity and successful inter-agency safeguarding practice was confirmed during the school summer holidays: We received a report from housing colleagues of two children (not EHE) in a home in disrepair where the tenants refused entry for essential repairs to be completed. This matter was appropriately referred.