

Home Education - registration and monitoring proposals

Consultation Response Form

The closing date for this consultation is: 19
October 2009

Your comments must reach us by that date.

department for
children, schools and families

THIS FORM IS NOT INTERACTIVE. If you wish to respond electronically please use the online or offline response facility available on the Department for Children, Schools and Families e-consultation website (<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations>).

The information you provide in your response will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations, which allow public access to information held by the Department. This does not necessarily mean that your response can be made available to the public as there are exemptions relating to information provided in confidence and information to which the Data Protection Act 1998 applies. You may request confidentiality by ticking the box provided, but you should note that neither this, nor an automatically-generated e-mail confidentiality statement, will necessarily exclude the public right of access.

Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential.x

Name

Organisation (if applicable) LB Wandsworth

Address: Town Hall, Wandsworth High Street
London SW18 2PU

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact the Public Communications Unit on:

Telephone: 0870 000 2288

e-mail: xxxx@xxxx.xxx.xxx.xx

If you have a query relating to the consultation process you can contact the Consultation Unit on:

Telephone: 01928 794888

Fax: 01928 794 311

e-mail: xxxxxxxxxxxxx.xxxx@xxxx.xxx.xxx.xx

Please tick the box that best describes you as a respondent.

☐ Home
educated
child/young
person

☐ Home educating
parent

☐ Organisation
representing
home educating
families

☒ Local
Authorities

☐ Other organisation
with responsibility for
children (please
specify in box below)

☐ Other (please
specify in box
below)

Please Specify:

1 Do you agree that these proposals strike the right balance between the rights of parents to home educate and the rights of children to receive a suitable education?

☒ Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Not sure

Comments:

Yes – we believe that the right of parents to Home Educate should remain in law, but that safeguards need to be put in place and that these proposals do this

2 Do you agree that a register should be kept?

☒ Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Not sure

Comments:

Absolutely – this is long overdue. A national scheme needs to be established that is consistently used across all LAs and agreed criteria for ‘banning’ certain groups of parents/carers who may pose a risk to children or revoking registration should be established and consistently applied.

3 Do you agree with the information to be provided for registration?

☒ Agree

☐

Disagree

☒ Not sure

Comments:

Registration should include basic details of child and family (eg who lives in the household) as well as statement re educational approach etc as referred to in the recommendations

4 Do you agree that home educating parents should be required to keep the register up to date?

☒ Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Not sure

Comments:

Parents should be required to notify the LA of any changes in circumstances (eg change of arrangements, house move etc)

LA should have responsibility for notifying EHE parents of any key changes locally (eg change of key officers etc)

5 Do you agree that it should be a criminal offence to fail to register or to provide inadequate or false information?

☒ Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Not sure

Comments:

Yes, because the scheme will not be workable unless there are sanctions for those who misuse it

6 a) Do you agree that home educated children should stay on the roll of their former school for 20 days after parents notify that they intend to home educate?

☒ Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Not sure

Comments:

Agree in principle with a period of time to allow for any disagreement resolution, time for reflection etc. However thought will need to be given to coding for schools during this period. Also may need discussion re timescale and how long the period should be.

6 b) Do you agree that the school should provide the local authority with achievement and future attainment data?

☒ Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Not sure

Comments:

School reports will be very helpful in supporting assessment of education needs etc. However future attainment data (whilst potentially helpful) may be more complex as it may not fit with the teaching philosophy of some home educating parents.

7 Do you agree that DCSF should take powers to issue statutory guidance in relation to the registration and monitoring of home education?

☒ Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Not sure

Comments:

If a compulsory scheme is being introduced, with sanctions if it is not followed, then statutory guidance will be needed

8 Do you agree that children about whom there are substantial safeguarding concerns should not be home educated?

☒ Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Not sure

Comments:

9 Do you agree that the local authority should visit the premises where home education is taking place provided 2 weeks notice is given?

☒ Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Not sure

Comments:

10 Do you agree that the local authority should have the power to interview the child, alone if this is judged appropriate, or if not in the presence of a trusted person who is not the parent/carer?

☒ Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Not sure

Comments:

The voice of the child is crucial and within current legislation there is no way to ensure the child's independent views can be heard and considered.

11 Do you agree that the local authority should visit the premises and interview the child within four weeks of home education starting, after 6 months has elapsed, at the anniversary of home education starting, and thereafter at least on an annual basis? This would not preclude more frequent monitoring if the local authority thought that was necessary.

☒ Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Not sure

Comments:

In principle we feel this would be a good model.

This level of monitoring would be a substantial increase in workload for LA

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply ☐

Here at the Department for Children, Schools and Families we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be alright if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

☐

Yes

☐

No

All DCSF public consultations are required to conform to the following criteria within the Government Code of Practice on Consultation:

Criterion 1: Formal consultation should take place at a stage when there is scope to influence the policy outcome.

Criterion 2: Consultations should normally last for at least 12 weeks with consideration given to longer timescales where feasible and sensible.

Criterion 3: Consultation documents should be clear about the consultation process, what is being proposed, the scope to influence and the expected costs and benefits of the proposals.

Criterion 4: Consultation exercises should be designed to be accessible to, and clearly targeted at, those people the exercise is intended to reach.

Criterion 5: Keeping the burden of consultation to a minimum is essential if consultations are to be effective and if consultees' buy-in to the process is to be obtained.

Criterion 6: Consultation responses should be analysed carefully and clear feedback should be provided to participants following the consultation.

Criterion 7: Officials running consultations should seek guidance in how to run an effective consultation exercise and share what they have learned from the experience.

If you have any comments on how DCSF consultations are conducted, please contact Donna Harrison, DCSF Consultation Co-ordinator, tel: 01928 794304 / email: xxxxx.xxxxxxxxxx@xxxx.xxx.xx

Thank you for taking time to respond to this consultation.

Completed questionnaires and other responses should be sent to the address shown below by 19 October 2009

Send by post to:
Consultation Unit
Area GB
East Lane
CastleView House
Runcorn
Cheshire
WA7 2GJ

Send by e-mail to: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.xxxxxxxxxxxxxx@xxxx.xxx.xx