

Name of meeting: Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Date: 27 November 2017

Title of report: Proposal for a Scrutiny Elective Home Education Ad-hoc Panel

Purpose of report: For the Scrutiny Committee to formally consider a request to establish an Ad-hoc Scrutiny Panel on Elective Home Education (EHE).

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	No .
Key Decision	Not applicable
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Not applicable
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services? Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Governance and Commissioning Support?	John Chapman 16/11/2017
Cabinet member portfolio	n/a

Electoral wards affected: none specific

Ward councillors consulted: Not applicable

Public or private: Public

1. **Summary**

- 1.1 At the first meeting of the Children's Scrutiny Panel, the members of the Panel agreed that Elective Home Education should be considered as part of the work programme for the 2017/18 municipal year. Following an initial report providing an overview of the legislative framework, the Panel members agreed that an in depth consideration by means of an Ad-hoc Panel, of Elective Home Education would be valuable.

2. **Information required to take a decision**

- 2.1 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. This is different to home tuition provided by a Local Authority, or education provided by a Local Authority other than at a school.
- 2.2 Numbers of electively home educated children and young people are increasing in Kirklees, and are in line with neighbouring Local Authorities and national trends. The responsibility for a child's education rests with their parents. In England, education is compulsory, but school is not.
- 2.3 The oversight of EHE is the responsibility of the Education Safeguarding Team, and the team works in partnership with any other relevant team or agency to provide support to families when needed. However, Local Authorities have no statutory duties in relation to monitoring the quality of home education on a routine basis.
- 2.4 Schools have a duty to inform the Local Authority of any child that has been removed from their school roll once a parent has de-registered to become EHE. There is no duty on parents to inform the Local Authority if they choose to EHE from the start of school (Reception), and as such the number of these children is unknown.
- 2.5 The proposed EHE Ad-hoc Scrutiny would like to consider the reasons why parents choose to EHE, and how to best support children and parents throughout their education, particularly giving consideration to children who would like to take their GCSE exams. Work would include identifying national best practice and identifying how the approach in Kirklees reflects good practice.

3. **Implications for the Council**

The EHE Ad-hoc Panel will consider work within each of the areas below.

3.1 **Early Intervention and Prevention (EIP)**

Kirklees has an EHE protocol in place that is understood by all schools in Kirklees. When the Education Safeguarding Team is made aware of a child that has become EHE, it offers to visit the parent to provide an offer of support if required.

3.2 **Economic Resilience (ER)**

No specific implications

3.3 **Improving Outcomes for Children**

The Children's Scrutiny Panel understands that there is no one 'correct' educational system and that all children learn in different ways and at varying rates. The Panel also understands that parents and children choose a type of

education that is right for them; however there is a need to ensure that the approach chosen is feasible and legally valid to enable the children to reach their potential.

3.4 Reducing demand of services

No specific implications

3.5 Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)

No specific implications

4. Consultees and their opinions

The Strategic Director outlined EHE as a priority for consideration by the Children's Scrutiny Panel and along with the lead Cabinet Members for Children, is supportive of an in-depth consideration of the issues surrounding EHE.

5. Next steps

5.1 That members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee consider the attached Terms of Reference for the proposed Ad-hoc Panel.

5.3 That an invitation be sent to all Members to become a Panel Member of the proposed Ad-hoc Panel.

5.2 If the recommendation is agreed then the Lead Member will provide regular updates on the progress of the Ad-hoc Panel to the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee

6. Officer recommendations and reasons

That the Management Committee consider and approve the proposed Elective Home Education Ad-hoc Scrutiny Panel and the arrangements for monitoring the work of the Panel.

7. Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations

Not applicable.

8. Contact officer

Yolande Myers, Governance and Democratic Engagement Officer
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9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

n/a

10. Service Director responsible

Julie Muscroft; Assistant Director: Legal, Governance & Commissioning

ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION – TERMS OF REFERENCE

To scrutinise Elective Home Education in Kirklees, with a particular focus on;

- Developing an understanding of why some parents and carers choose to home educate, and for how long children are typically home educated for.
- Scrutinising the Local Authority's responsibilities for home educated children.
- Scrutinising how the Local Authority identifies, supports and ensures the safety and wellbeing of electively home educated children.
- Scrutinise the outcomes for electively home educated children.