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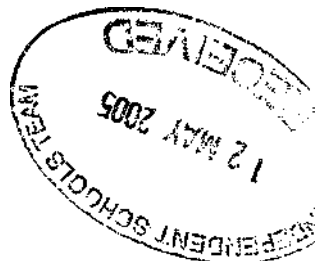
Essex County Council

Department for Education and Skills
Elective Home Education
Ground Floor, Area D
Mowden Hall
Road
DL3 9BG

Our ref: KLN/PSP
Date: 11 May 2005

Staindrop
Darlington

Dear



HOME

DRAFT LEA GUIDELINES ON ELECTIVE EDUCATION

Thank you for the opportunity to comment upon draft guidelines in respect of the above. My observations are as follows:-

General

The tenor of the draft document should be aligned with "Every Child Matters". The issues of child protection, tracking of children, monitoring of educational provision and attendance are in our view compromised by the drafts envisaged relationship of encouraging parents to engage with the LEA. Whilst working in partnership is commendable this should be underpinned by a legal requirement for parents to register their child with their LEA if they wish to educate him/her at home. This will enable LEA services to engage appropriately and ensure that pupils are not "invisible". It would also assist truancy sweeps particularly as an LEA register would determine whether a child is being home educated.

Although many parents have raised the issue nationally regarding lack of funding for home education it is clear from the draft that the responsibility for funding is theirs. It follows that if LEAs are not empowered or resourced to support Home Education the guidelines should not build an expectation through 'recommendations'. (Part 5 Support and Resources refers).

Proposed Amendments

The following changes to the document are proposed:

Para 3.2 - Amend to read The Department recommends that each LEA should have a named senior officer with responsibility for 'Education Otherwise than at School'

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Para 3.4 and 3.9 - Parents should be legally required to inform the LEA about their intention to home educate.

Para 3.10 - Add 'It is reasonable for LEA's to ask for information about the education parents are providing for their children'

Para 3.12 - Delete paragraph

Para 3.14 - Delete the following:

The way in which parents provide information is entirely up to them'

'Some home education consultants have been privileged to hear children read their own poetry listen to musical instruments being played and even be an audience for a play'

Para 3.17 - Insert - The majority of parents welcome the opportunity to discuss the provision that they are making for their children's education during a home visit'.

Delete - 'Parents are not legally required to give the lea access to their home '
substitute - 'Some parents may prefer to meet an LEA representative at a mutually convenient, neutral location, or may choose to provide a report instead.'

Delete - 'Have the educational provision endorsed by a recognised , third party'

Para 3.23 - Delete - 'Must remain in force'

Substitute - The Statement should be maintained and reviewed and the LEA must ensure that parents can make suitable provision, including provision for the Childs Special educational needs

Para 4.2 - Delete - "This will be true whether or not parents are required to demonstrate that a suitable home education provision is being made available"

Para 4.6 - Delete paragraph

Para 4.13 - Delete "A small number of LEAs choose to assist home educating parents in this task by undertaking Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks free of charge, for example, on independent home tutors".

Para 4.16 - Delete paragraph.

Para 5.2 - Delete "However, we recommend that all LEAs should adopt a reasonable and flexible approach in this respect, particularly where there are minimal resource implications.

Delete "LEAs may also be able to offer additional support to home educating parents such as the following:

- Provision of a reading or lending library with resources for use for the children, on home schooling and related topics.

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- Free, or discounted, admission into community programmes (including Local Authority owned community and sports facilities).
- Access to resource centres (including local school resources where feasible).
- National curriculum materials and curricula offered by other educational institutions.
- Information about educational visits and work experience. **Para 5.3** -

Delete "Normal" (first sentence).

Para 5.6 - Insert "Flexi schooling" is a legal option provided that the headteacher, governors at the

school concerned and the LEA agree to the arrangement. Delete "Some of the advantages and disadvantages of 'flexi schooling'....."

Para 5.8 Delete"but we wish to encourage LEAs to assist the parents of such children who wish to do so to pursue work experience through such arrangements".

Para 5.9 - Delete.

Para 5.12 - The text should be changed to ensure that parents inform LEAs when they are educating children at home.

Para 5.14-Delete. **Para 6.1** -

Delete.

I hope that you find the above helpful and if I can be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me on the telephone number below.

Yours sincerely

Manager
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