

Lancashire County Council

Education Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 10th July, 2012 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'C' - County Hall,
Preston

Agenda

Part 1 (Open to Press and Public)

No. Item

1. Appointment of Chair

The Committee is asked to note that at the full County Council on the 24th May 2012 County Councillor Mrs P Case was appointed as Chair for the following year.

2. Appointment of Deputy Chair

The Committee is asked to note that at the full County Council on the 24th May 2012 County Councillor Mrs S Derwent was appointed as Deputy Chair for the following year.

3. Membership, Terms of Reference and programme of meetings for 2012/13 (Pages 1 - 4)

4. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non Pecuniary Interests.

Members are asked to consider any Pecuniary or Non Pecuniary Interests they may have to disclose to the meeting in relation to matters under consideration on the Agenda.

5. Minutes of the meeting held on the 13th March 2012 (Pages 5 - 12)

6. Elective Home Education (Pages 13 - 50)

7. Update on the current Lancashire County Council position on Academies. (Pages 51 - 58)

8. School funding reform - next steps towards a fairer system (Pages 59 - 62)

No. Item

9. Urgent Business

An item of urgent business may only be considered under this heading where, by reason of special circumstances to be recorded in the Minutes, the Chair of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency. Wherever possible, the Chief Executive should be given advance warning of any Member's intention to raise a matter under this heading.

10. Date of the Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Committee is due to be held at 10.00am on the 6th November 2012 in Cabinet Room 'C' at County Hall, Preston.

I M Fisher
County Secretary and Solicitor

County Hall
Preston

Agenda Item 3

Education Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on 10th July 2012

Electoral Division affected: None

Membership, Terms of Reference and Programme of Meetings

Contact for further information: Mike Neville 01772 533431, Office of the Chief executive mike.neville@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

This report sets out those Members who have been nominated to serve on the Education Scrutiny Committee, together with the Terms of Reference of the Committee and the previously agreed programme of meetings for 2012/13.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note the membership, Terms of Reference and programme of meetings as set out in the report.

Background and Advice

At the annual meeting on the 24th May 2012 the full County Council agreed the membership of the Committee as sixteen County Councillors and five voting co-optees on the basis of three representing faith schools and two parent governor representatives.

The following County Councillors have subsequently been nominated to serve on the Committee for the following year:

County Councillors (16)

K Bailey	C Grunshaw
RN Blow	A Jones
K Brown	AD Kay
Mrs P Case	A Knox
Mrs S Derwent	Y Motala
C Evans	S Riches
P Evans	C Wells
S Fishwick	M Younis

The following co-opted members will continue to serve on the Committee.

Voting Co-opted Members (5)

Mr T Charnock – Representing RC Schools
Mr F Kershaw - Representing CE Schools
Mr K Wales - Representing Free Church Schools
Mrs J Hamid - Representing Parent Governors (Secondary)
Mr J Withington - Representing Parent Governors (Primary)

Terms of Reference of the Education Scrutiny Committee

1. To review decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any relevant functions undertaken by the Cabinet collectively, or the relevant Cabinet Members or Cabinet committee.
2. To make reports or recommendations to the Full Council, the Cabinet or the relevant Cabinet Members or Cabinet committee with respect to the discharge of any functions undertaken by the Cabinet collectively or the relevant Cabinet Members or Cabinet committee.
3. In reviewing decisions (other than decisions designated as urgent under Standing Order 34(3)) made in connection with the discharge of any relevant functions undertaken by the Cabinet collectively or the relevant Cabinet Members or Cabinet committee, but which have not been implemented, the Committee may recommend that the decision be reconsidered by the person who made it or to refer the decision to the Full Council for it to decide whether it wishes it to be reconsidered by the decision taker.
4. To consider at its discretion as appropriate Forward Plans prepared by the Leader with a view to determining which, if any, of the proposed decisions it wishes to scrutinise.
5. To hold general policy reviews and to assist in the development of future policies and strategies (whether requested by the Full Council, the Cabinet, the relevant Cabinet Members, Cabinet committee or decided by the Committee itself) and, after consulting with any appropriate interested parties, to make recommendations to either the Cabinet, the relevant Cabinet Members, Cabinet committee or to the Full Council as appropriate.
6. To fulfil all the statutory functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to education functions of a Children's Services Authority.
7. To undertake reviews (whether requested by the Full Council, the Cabinet, the relevant Cabinet Members, Cabinet committee or decided by the Committee itself) and make recommendations to the Full Council, the Cabinet, Cabinet committee or the relevant Cabinet Members, as appropriate, on relevant services or activities carried out by external organisations which affect Lancashire or its inhabitants.

8. To consider any relevant matter referred to the Committee by the Scrutiny Committee following a request by a County Councillor or a Co-optee of the Committee who wishes the issue to be considered.
9. To request that the Scrutiny Committee establish sub-committees, task groups and other working groups and panels as necessary.
10. To invite to any meeting of the Committee and permit to participate in discussion and debate, but not to vote, any person not a County Councillor whom the Committee considers would assist it in carrying out its functions.
11. To require any Councillor who is a member of the Cabinet, the appropriate Executive Director or a senior officer nominated by him/her, or the Director of the Lancashire County Commercial Group to attend any meeting of the Committee to answer questions and discuss issues.
12. To recommend the Full Council to co-opt on to the committee persons with appropriate expertise in the relevant education matters, without voting rights
13. To recommend to the Scrutiny Committee appropriate training for members of the Committee on education related issues.
14. To consider and respond to petitions in accordance with the Council's petitions scheme.

Programme of meetings

At the meeting on the 15th December 2011 the full County Council agreed the following programme of meetings for the Committee in 2012/13.

10th July 2012
6th November 2012
16th January 2013 (budget)
12th March 2013

Meetings will be held at 10am in Cabinet Room 'C' at County Hall, Preston.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

There are no significant risks associated with this item.

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
Agenda/Proceedings from Full County Council	15 th December 2011 and 24 th May 2012	Mike Neville, Office of the Chief Executive, 01772 533431

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate
N/A

Agenda Item 5

Lancashire County Council

Education Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 13th March, 2012 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'C' - County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Mrs Pat Case (Chair)

County Councillors

K Bailey	J Jackson
Mrs R Blow	A Kay
Mrs S Derwent	Y Motala
C Evans	S Riches
P Evans	C Wells
C Grunshaw	M Younis

Co-opted members

Mrs Janet Hamid, Representing Parent Governors (Secondary)
Fred Kershaw, Representing CE Schools

County Councillor J Jackson replaced County Councillor K Brown for this meeting.

County Councillor P Steen and County Councillor J Mein attended the meeting under Standing Order 19.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were presented on behalf of County Councillor Knox, County Councillor Jones, County Councillor Fishwick, Mr T Charnock (co opted member representing RC Schools) and Mr K Wales (co opted member representing Free Church Schools).

2. Disclosure of Personal/Prejudicial Interests.

There were no declarations of interest in relation to matters on the agenda.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on the 1st November 2011

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on the 1st November, 2011, be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. Programme of meetings 2012/13

Resolved: That future meetings of the Committee be held at 10.00am in Cabinet Room 'C' at County Hall, Preston on the following dates in accordance with the decision of the Full County Council on the 15th December, 2011.

Tuesday 10th July 2012
Tuesday 6th November 2012
Wednesday 16th January 2013 (budget)
Tuesday 12th March 2013

5. Student Support Appeals Committee

Mr Hart, the Director for Resources, Planning and Business Services from the Directorate for Children and Young People, presented a report in response to issues raised regarding the information presented to the Student Support Appeals Committee when considering requests for assistance with home to school transport.

County Councillor Steen, the Chair of the Student Support Appeals Committee, informed the meeting that since its creation the Committee had considered 433 appeals and the type of information presented as part of appeals had evolved in response to requests made by the Committee in the light of experience. However, it was felt that there were a small number of instances where the family circumstances were such that the Committee felt it would be beneficial if there were greater dialogue between the authority and the appellant before the matter came to the Committee, particularly with regard to highlighting the availability of other forms of support which may be available to the family concerned.

It was recognised that there was currently a validation process in relation to information presented or issues raised as part of an appeal and that this process could be improved/expanded, though there were concerns regarding the potential setting of precedents or in relation to data protection. Whilst acknowledging that there may be some obstacles both the Chair and other members of the Student Support Appeals Committee present at the meeting emphasised that in certain circumstances it was felt that issues raised as part of the transport appeal should be considered in a wider context in order that the Committee be provided with as much information/clarity as possible when considering the appeal.

Mr Hart reported that the County Council currently provided appellants with guidance on how to submit their appeal and that whilst Officers were available to assist the onus was on the appellant to provide information in support of their appeal. In response the Chair suggested that the current guidance could be examined as part of a review involving Officers and members of the Student Support Appeals Committee

It was noted that the Committee was able to exercise discretion regarding appeals and in some cases consideration of an appeal could be deferred or temporary assistance provided while whilst the Committee sought additional information.

Resolved:

1. That arrangements be made for members of the Student Support Appeals Committee to meet with the relevant Officers from the Directorate for Children and Young People to further discuss potential improvements to the procedure regarding transport appeals.
2. That a further report be presented to a future meeting of the Education Scrutiny Committee on the outcome of those discussions.

6. Children in Care - Educational Progress

Sue Parr, Senior Manager and Associate Headteacher of the Virtual School for Children Looked After, from the Alternative and Complimentary Education and Residential Service (ACERS) presented a report in response to questions raised at the previous Committee regarding the attainment of children in care and the following points were discussed.

- With regard to the reduction in the percentage of Children Looked After (CLA) at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 achieving national attainment targets when compared to the figure for the previous academic year Ms Parr reported that this was due to a higher proportion of pupils in those years with statements of special educational needs. It was further reported that progress was improving with 12.2% of the cohort achieving 5+ GCSEs including English and Maths as opposed to the predicted 9%. Ms Parr reported that the figure was expected to increase further to 15% in the future though she cautioned that the results would be dependent on the stability of the cohort in terms of whether pupils remained in the same placement/school and this was something which would be monitored.

It was also noted that in both Key Stage 2 and 4 the majority of SEN pupils were making good progress when measured against goals set using the PIVATS or P-Scales systems (which informed target setting for pupils of all ages whose performance is outside national expectations) so that attainment against set targets could be monitored and progress evaluated.

- As the previous report had focussed on the progress of CLA at Key Stage 2 and 4 which was only a small cohort of all CLA Ms Parr informed the meeting that the progress of all other CLA was monitored using Electronic Personal Education Plans (E-PEP). However, Ms Parr acknowledged that the monitoring was not as robust as she would wish and so the current arrangements would be subject to a review which was intended to produce more educationally challenging targets which would then be monitored and evaluated.

It was also reported that IT equipment had been put into residential care homes for use by CLA and that Educational Consultants were working with care homes staff and foster carers in order to provide support with regard to the children's educational development.

- In response to the concern that the cumulative way in which data was collected would skew results Ms Parr informed the meeting that the County Council was required to collect data in a particular way so that it would then be comparable with data from other authorities. However, it was noted that in future more detailed data would also be produced for internal monitoring purposes.
- It was reported that in order to ensure that CLA pupils made good progress in further/higher education they would have a Pathway Plan which would set targets and be monitored in the same way as an E-PEP. In addition the Virtual School Educational Consultants would also work with colleagues within Children's Social Care to ensure CLA receive effective support.
- In response to a previous query about how easy it was for CLA to be admitted to schools Ms Parr reported that she was unaware of any CLA who had not been provided with a place at their school of choice.
- Ms Parr informed the meeting that there were currently 149 CLA in Lancashire from other authorities though she recognised that this figure only related to those CLA in schools.
- It was further reported that 273 of Lancashire's CLA were currently educated outside of the County and that their progress was monitored via the Personal Educational Plans, 6 monthly LAC Review and the Virtual School Educational Consultants.
- In response to concern regarding the possible impact on CLA if a school transferred to an Academy Ms Parr reported that such situations would be closely monitored by the Virtual School Educational Consultants in order to ensure that the needs of CLA were addressed and that they made progress.

In considering the report the Committee recognised the importance of setting challenging/achievable targets and monitoring progress to ensure that CLA were able to achieve their potential. The need to ensure that examples of best practice were shared amongst schools was noted and Ms Parr informed the meeting that designated teachers would also receive training with regard to PEPs and their increased role/responsibilities in relation to CLA. It was also noted that as discussed earlier carers and fosters carers would also be given training and support in relation to Personal Educational Plans.

Resolved: That a further report be presented to a future meeting of the Committee once the new procedures are in operation so that their effectiveness can be evaluated.

7. A summary of the results for key groups of pupils at risk of underachievement in Lancashire at the end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4.

Mr Dyson-Knight, Senior Adviser/Team Leader Secondary (Secondary Post 16 Team) from the Directorate for Children and Young People, presented a further report in relation to the attainment and progress of key groups of pupils who are at risk of underachievement in Lancashire schools at the end of Key Stages 2 and 4 in 2011.

It was reported that whilst the attainment of pupils in Lancashire was consistently above the national average at the end of Key Stage 2 and 4 there were a number of groups of pupils whose attainment remained low and whose rates of progress had been below that of other pupils. The particular groups which had been identified as being at risk of underachievement included pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), those from Bangladeshi/Pakistani backgrounds and pupils with Special Educational Needs.

An analysis of the results for these groups at Key Stages 2 and 4 was presented and the following issues were raised by the Committee.

- The provision of early years support was considered important in improving attainment for the groups which had been specified and also other minorities.

In response Mr Dyson-Knight reported that through the Childrens Centres the County Council was providing the Best Start Lancashire programme which provided early support for families and children aged between 4 and 7 (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2). It was reported that the programme was funded through efficiency savings and the County Council was committed to making further savings to allow the programme to continue up to 2013/14 by which time it was anticipated that the Department for Education funded Pupil Premium (targeted at pupils eligible for FSM) would be at a level to enable schools to maintain the family support.

It was noted that in the future Ofsted would monitor how the Pupil Premiums were used and schools would be required to show that pupils had made progress as a result of the funding. In addition the DfE would publish information about schools and if outcomes were not seen to be improving then schools would be asked to provide evidence of how the Pupil Premium funding was being used.

- It was recognised that there was a percentage of children from minority ethnic communities who did not access the services provided through Childrens Centres and did not have English as their first language on entering primary education and the county Council would continue to work towards addressing this.

Mr Dyson-Knight informed the meeting that other minority groups were monitored though the numbers of children from those groups was small and it was noted that monitoring could be difficult given the transient nature of those families. With regard to the Gypsy, Romany and Traveller community it was reported that Ofsted was satisfied with the level of services provided.

- The provision of more detailed information was discussed and it was suggested that attainment figures for individual schools in each District would

be useful.

In response Mr Dyson-Knight reported that similar information had previously been provided to Lancashire locals for consideration and was currently provided for Childrens Trusts together with a commentary on the data and suggested priorities. It was noted that following the disbanding of Lancashire Locals some of the newly formed Three Tier Forums had requested the information.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

8. Elective Home Education

Mr Stott, the Director of Universal and Early Support Services from the Directorate for Children and Young People presented a report regarding the recent review of the County Councils Elective Home Education (EHE) procedures

It was reported that the review was undertaken following the transfer of functions between teams within the authority and in order to address concerns identified by officers and the home educating community in respect of the procedures and processes which were previously in place.

Mr Stott informed the meeting that following consultations towards the end of last year initial proposals had been revised before they were presented to and subsequently approved by the Cabinet Member for Children and Schools (see <http://council.lancashire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=1560>).

In considering the report the following issues were raised by members of the Committee.

- Elective home education had been the subject of an Overview and Scrutiny Task Group in 2009 which had made a number of recommendations, though it was felt that these had not been fully taken into account during the more recent review (see item 6 at <http://www3.lancashire.gov.uk/council/meetings/displayAgendas.asp?meetid=5884>).
- It was recognised that whilst the County Council had a duty to provide the offer of a formal educational system parents had a right to choose to educate their children at home. However, there were concerns that whilst schools were subject to external monitoring to ensure standards there was no such monitoring for children who were educated at home.
- Whilst it was noted that the recent consultation had involved some responses from known home educators and also the Lancashire Home Educators Forum there was concern that families from the Gypsy, Romany and Traveller (GRT) community may not have had sufficient opportunity to take part in the consultation. In response Mr Stott informed the meeting that the County Councils GRT Service had been used to highlight the consultation and a number of families from that community had been involved.

- In response to a query regarding the attainment of children who were home educated Mr Stott reported that it may be difficult to establish the level of attainment because there was no requirement for such children to undertake formal examinations.

The Committee noted that the intention was to review the recently approved procedures after they had been in operation for 12 months. However, it was felt that in view of the issues raised a further report should be presented to the next meeting of the Committee in July 2012.

Resolved:

1. That a further report be presented to the next meeting of the Committee in relation to the following.
 - a) A more detailed breakdown of the consultation process in relation to the review of the County Councils Elective Home Education procedures and the findings.
 - b) A response to the concerns raised by the Committee as set out above.
 - c) Clarification of the current legal position in relation to the County Councils duties and responsibilities toward children who are home educated.
2. That all members of the Committee be provided with a copy of the Elective Home Education Procedure document as approved by the cabinet member for Children and Schools on the 6th March 2012.

9. Urgent Business

County Councillor Riches informed the Committee that she had raised a number of issues as potential items of future business for the Committee and was satisfied that they would be discussed with the Chair at the next agenda setting meeting.

10. Date of the Next Meeting

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee would be held at 10.00am on the 10th July 2012 in Cabinet Room 'C' at County Hall, Preston.

I M Fisher
County Secretary and Solicitor

County Hall
Preston

Agenda Item 6

Education Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on 10th July 2012

Electoral Division affected: All

Elective Home Education

(Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

Contact for further information: Frances Molloy, (01772) 532722, Directorate for Children and Young People, Frances.Molloy@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

The County Council's revised Elective Home Education (EHE) procedures were approved in March 2012.

At the Education Scrutiny Committee on 13th March 2012 a further update on how the new procedures are working was requested along with information on how the procedures address some of the concerns raised at that meeting.

Recommendation

Members of the Education Scrutiny Committee are asked to :

- consider the progress being made in implementing the new procedures;
- note the areas where amendments to the procedures have already been identified as part of the planned review;
- consider the additional areas for development in respect of support for families on EHE; and
- consider the extent to which the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group have been achieved.

Background and Advice

In March 2012 the Education Scrutiny Committee received a report relating to the revised County Council procedures relating to Elective Home Education (EHE). A copy of the new Elective Home Education Procedure is attached as Appendix 'A'.

The procedures are currently being followed for all new notifications to the EHE team, for cases where families are requesting contact or support from the EHE team and for those cases where concerns have been identified indicating that additional enquiries should be undertaken. For other cases currently known to the local authority the procedures will be implemented from the start of the new academic year in September.

The revised procedures are already impacting on the work of the EHE Team and are assisting the team in achieving the balance between being available to provide support to home educating families as required, and also to ensure capacity to provide additional input to families experiencing difficulties or where concerns have been identified requiring the authority to undertake more detailed enquiries regarding the nature of provision being made.

In March 2009 the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered and approved the final report from the Elective Home Education Task Group, a copy of which is set out at Appendix 'B' to this report.

The Task Group made 15 recommendations, of which one (recommendation 13) related to changes to legislation and is therefore outside the control of the authority's officers. Of the remaining 14 recommendations, several have been completed for example the EHE team have new job titles (Rec. 2), the structure of the EHE team has been reviewed to increase capacity to respond to EHE cases (Rec. 4), the EHE1A form has been withdrawn (Rec. 9) and the Overview and Scrutiny report was passed to the then DCSF (Rec. 15).

Good progress has also been made in respect of most of the other recommendations but as these generally relate to improving the quality and types of support available to home educating families they are areas which we would see as constantly under review and ongoing improvement – but feedback from the Lancashire HE Forum group indicates they acknowledge the progress that has been made in these areas (Recs 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12).

For example, currently work is being undertaken to redevelop the website to ensure better signposting to resources and the team is compiling details of examination centres available to home educators within Lancashire. In addition the Pupil Attendance Support Team will accept requests for assistance from any family who indicates they are considering EHE due to difficulties arising from their child's current school place. This service has already been accepted by a number of families, with some families able to resolve their concerns and keep their child in school whilst others have continued with the choice to withdraw their child but have indicated they felt more reassured regarding their decision to home educate and their capacity to follow this route.

Discussions involving the Inclusion and Disability Support Service and representatives from the EHE community have already identified the need for an additional section within the procedures to clarify the instances where support differs for children for whom the local authority maintain a statement of special educational needs, and further meetings are planned to explore how the annual review process can be adapted to become more appropriate in instances where children with statements receive their education otherwise than at school. The change of approach within the authority in terms of initial and annual contact will ensure there is sufficient capacity within the EHE team to assist families through attendance at Annual Reviews where this is requested by the family.

The final recommendation of the Task Group (Rec. 14) related to working to establish the best way to ensure the County Council's responsibility for the

safeguarding of every child in Lancashire can be achieved in respect of home educated children. This issue was a clear priority for us in developing the new EHE procedures but discussions with the Safeguarding Unit proved very helpful in allowing the procedures to be finalised. There is a very clear understanding within the Safeguarding Unit and the EHE Team that all safeguarding concerns are addressed within the relevant procedures for children in need and the Local Safeguarding Children Board's procedures, as with all children within Lancashire; where actions are required to safeguard children who are being home educated they will form part of the child in need/child protection plan whilst any concerns related to the quality of educational provision will continue to be the remit of the EHE team. The relevant workers will liaise closely in all such cases and the action plans will clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each worker in supporting these children and families.

In addition, we are currently finalising the pathways for how we work with colleagues in other teams where parents request assistance with a return to school based education from EHE and also in cases where the authority's duty to investigate is triggered.

Nationally, there is an increasing awareness of issues relating to Elective Home Education, as can be evidenced by the attention devoted to this area by the Parliamentary Education Select Committee and one focus for their work relates to how local authorities seek to support children in their area who are being home educated. The County Council is actively exploring further ways in which we can support children and families within the home educating community, and additional developments planned for next year include:

- Awareness raising sessions for relevant staff within the county council and partner agencies to help professionals understand the role of the local authority in respect of EHE, and also to assist partner agencies in considering how that impacts on the services they offer.
- Identifying how best to signpost EHE families for careers advice following the transfer of the duty to provide careers advice from the local authority to schools.
- Associated discussions relating to information sharing to ensure that EHE families are able to benefit from the September Guarantee related to Further Education provision.
- Discussions will also take place with the Young People's Service to ensure the needs of EHE families are considered in the development of work to support the Raising of the Participation Age agenda.
- Exploring the option to access funding via the Alternative Census to assist EHE families to access FE provision during their final two years of compulsory school age education.
- Work with colleagues from other teams to assist families in accessing some form of employment opportunities within the limitations of child employment regulations, in the absence of opportunities for formal work experience.
- Clarifying where Flexi-Schooling sits within the range of educational provision available for children in Lancashire, and issuing guidance to support schools in responding to requests for such arrangements.

Consultations

We have invited members of the home education community within Lancashire to volunteer to join an informal ongoing consultation network. One meeting of that group has taken place to review the documentation used by the EHE team, and meetings have also been held with members of the Lancashire Home Educators Forum including a consultation meeting with the Inclusion and Disability Support Service.

Implications:

N/A

Risk management

There are no implications for risk management arising from this report.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
Lancashire County Council Elective Home Education Procedures	March 2012	Frances Molloy, CYP, 01772 532722
Overview and Scrutiny Elective Home Education Task Group Report	2009	Frances Molloy, CYP, 01772 532722

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A



Elective Home Education Procedures

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 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.

1.2 Home education is an option that any family may consider for their children. The reasons for deciding on this approach are many, as are the styles of education undertaken. For some families it is a decision based on their philosophical, spiritual or religious outlook, for others it is to meet the specific needs of a child or children. It may be because of dissatisfaction with 'the system' or used as a short-term intervention for a particular reason. Whatever the circumstances the local authority aims to work closely with and support parents in their choice.

1.3 The purpose of this document is to set out the current legal position and to outline Lancashire's procedures.

1.4 In compiling this document the local authority has drawn heavily on the information and guidance provided by the DfE and other local authorities. The responses to a consultation undertaken in late 2011 and those gathered as a result of an open consultation have been used to inform the final draft.

2.0 The law relating to elective home education

2.1 The responsibility for a child's education rests with their parents. In England, education is compulsory, but school is not.

2.2 Article 2 of Protocol 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights states that:

"No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching is in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions."

Parents have a duty to secure an appropriate full-time education for their children. Some parents choose to do this by educating their child at home. They do it because they judge it to be the best way to carry out their duty.

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 provides that:

"The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable –

- (a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and*
- (b) to any special educational needs he may have,*

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”

2.3 Education is considered efficient and suitable if it enables their child to achieve their full potential, and it prepares them for adult life in their community, as long as it does not foreclose the child’s options in later years to adopt some other form of life if he/she chooses to do so.

Full time does not mean being bound by school hours and terms, as this measurement of contact time is not relevant to home education where there is often almost continuous one-to-one contact.

3.0 Parental rights and responsibilities

3.1 Parents may decide to exercise their right to home educate their child from a very early age and so the child may not have been previously enrolled at school. They may also elect to home educate at any other stage up to the end of compulsory school age.

3.2 Where a child has been registered at school, parents are required to notify the school in writing when withdrawing a child for EHE. This is to confirm that provision is being made for the child’s education otherwise than at school and requesting removal from the school’s roll (see section 6 for more detail).

3.3 Parents are not required to register or seek approval from the local authority to educate their children at home. However, parents must obtain the consent of the local authority to de-register pupils placed at a special school under arrangements made by a local authority. Where a child is registered at a school as a result of a school attendance order parents must ask the local authority to revoke the order.

3.4 Parents are required to provide an efficient, full-time education suitable to the age, ability and aptitude of the child. There is currently no legal definition of “full-time”.

3.5 The type of educational activity can be varied and flexible. It is recognised that home-educating parents are **not** required to:

- teach the National Curriculum
- provide a broad and balanced curriculum
- have a timetable
- have premises equipped to any particular standard
- set hours during which education will take place
- have any specific qualifications
- make detailed plans in advance
- observe school hours, days or terms
- give formal lessons
- mark work done by their child
- formally assess progress or set development objectives
- reproduce school type peer group socialisation
- match school-based, age-specific standards.

3.6 Parents who choose to educate their children at home must be prepared to assume full financial responsibility, including bearing the cost of any public examinations.

4.0 Local Authority responsibilities and outline of procedures

4.1 Lancashire recognises that there are many, equally valid, approaches to educational provision. What is suitable for one child may not be for another, but all children should be involved in a learning process.

4.2 When the local authority first becomes aware that parents have elected for home education initial contact will be made in order to establish what provision is being made. Many people find a home visit helpful, but parents may wish to meet at another venue, with or without their child. Alternatively they could write a brief report to let the authority know the provision that they are making. Lancashire accepts that in the early stages, parents may not yet be in a position to respond fully to enquiries. In such cases a reasonable timescale for responding will be agreed with the parents.

4.3 Although the local authority has no statutory duty to monitor the quality of home education on a routine basis contact will be made with parents once a year to ask for up-to-date information. However, parents are under no duty to respond to this request. The local authority's Elective Home Education officers are available to provide more frequent support if required.

4.4 If it appears that a suitable education is not being provided, the local authority will seek to gather any relevant information that will assist reaching a properly informed judgement. This will include seeking from the parents any further information that they wish to provide which explains how they are providing a suitable education. Parents will be given the opportunity to address any specific concerns that the authority has. The child will be given the opportunity, but not required, to attend any meeting that may be arranged or invited to express his or her views in some other way. Whilst parents are under no duty to respond to such a request, DfE guidelines comment that:

'it would be sensible for them to do so'

and refers to the legal case Phillips v Brown (1980).

4.5 If it appears to the local authority that a child is not receiving a suitable education we may wish to contact the parents to discuss the on-going educational provision. Contact will normally be made in writing to parents to request further information. A written report will be made after such contact and copied to the parents stating whether the authority has any concerns about the education provision and specifying what these are, to give the child's parents an opportunity to address them. If there are concerns, parents will be given the information in a written report outlining what the local authority is concerned about and why. Wherever possible, parents will have been informed of this beforehand, and have been given guidance about ways

in which suitable education that meets the needs of the child may be provided. The authority may be able to suggest other services that may be useful or may suggest other contacts that can provide advice. The report will suggest timescales and arrangements for future contact to ensure progress has been made.

4.6 In the instance outlined above, some parents may welcome the opportunity to discuss the provision that they are making for the child's education during a home visit but parents are not legally required to give the local authority access to their home. They may choose to meet a local authority representative at a mutually convenient and neutral location instead, with or without the child being present, or choose not to meet at all. Where a parent elects not to allow access to their home or their child, this does not of itself constitute a ground for concern about the education provision being made. Where we are unable to visit homes, they should, in the vast majority of cases, be able to discuss and evaluate the parents' educational provision by alternative means. If they choose not to meet, parents may be asked to provide evidence that they are providing a suitable education. Parents might prefer, for example, to write a report, provide samples of work, have their educational provision endorsed by a third party (such as an independent home tutor) or provide evidence in some other appropriate form.

4.7 As stated, whilst there are no statutory duties in relation to the routine monitoring of the quality of home education, under Section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996, local authorities shall intervene if it appears that parents are not providing a suitable education. This section states:

"If it appears to a local authority that a child of compulsory school age in their area is not receiving suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, they shall serve a notice in writing on the parent requiring him to satisfy them within the period specified in the notice that the child is receiving such education."

Section 437(2) of the 1996 Act provides that the period shall not be less than 15 days beginning with the day on which the notice is served.

Section 437(3) of the 1996 Act provides for the serving of School Attendance Orders:

If –

(a) a parent on whom a notice has been served under subsection (1) fails to satisfy the local authority, within the period specified in the notice, that the child is receiving suitable education, and

(b) in the opinion of the authority it is expedient that the child should attend school,

the authority shall serve on the parent an order (referred to in this Act as a "school attendance order"), in such form as may be prescribed, requiring him

to cause the child to become a registered pupil at a school named in the order.

4.8 Lancashire considers that the taking of the above measures shall be a last resort after all reasonable avenues have been explored to bring about a resolution of the situation. At any stage following the issue of the Order, parents may present evidence to Lancashire (or the court) that they are now providing a suitable and appropriate education and apply to have the Order revoked.

4.9 Local authorities also have a duty under section 175(1) of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This section states:

“A local authority shall make arrangements for ensuring that their education functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.”

Section 175(1) does not extend local authorities' functions. It does not, for example, give local authorities powers to enter the homes of, or otherwise see, children for the purposes of monitoring the provision of elective home education.

5.0 Children with Special Educational Needs

5.1 Parents' right to educate their child at home applies equally where a child has special educational needs (SEN). This right is irrespective of whether the child has a statement of special educational needs or not.

5.2 Local authority approval for removal from roll is not required for children with statements of special educational needs who are registered at mainstream schools. Where parents elect to home educate a child with a statement who is registered at a mainstream school the school will remove the pupil from roll in the same way as for children who are not the subject of a statement of special educational needs, following receipt of written confirmation from the parent that educational provision is being made otherwise than at school.

5.3 Where a child has a statement of SEN and is home educated, certain duties will remain the responsibility of the local authority. There will need to be consultation with parents to ensure that needs identified in the statement are being met. The provision identified in the statement almost always covers what a child would need in school. The required provision may be different outside of the school environment where the main educator is also the main carer. Further information and guidance may be found in the Special Educational needs Code of Practice, 2001 (section 8.91-8.96).

5.4 The Code of Practice states that the local authority:

- 'must ensure that parents can make suitable, provision, including provision for the child's special educational needs. If the parent's arrangements are

suitable the LEA are relieved of their duty to arrange the provision specified in the statement. If, however, the parents' attempt to educate the child at home results in provision which falls short of meeting the child's needs, then the parents are not making 'suitable arrangements' and the LEA could not conclude that they were absolved of their responsibility to arrange the provision in the statement.'

5.5 Even if the local authority is satisfied, the local authority retains a duty to ensure the child's needs are met, to maintain the statement and to review it annually, following the procedures set out in the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs. Parents should always be involved in the review process. However, it is not mandatory to see the child or the home as part of the review. Part 4 of a statement can identify provision otherwise than at school, which is considered appropriate.

5.6 If a child is registered at a special school under arrangements made by the local authority the parent cannot de-register them to be home educated without the agreement of the local authority. If a child has a statement of Special Educational Needs, and particularly if they are registered at a special school, parents may wish to contact the Inclusion and Disability Support Service for further advice -

www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/web/?IDSS/29537

6.0 Withdrawal from school to home educate

6.0 First contact between the local authority and home educators often occurs when parents decide to home educate and approach the school (at which the child is registered) and/ or the authority to seek guidance about withdrawing their child from school. It is important that this initial contact is constructive and positive. Whilst parents must inform the school in writing of their decision, they are not legally required to inform the local authority about their intentions unless they wish to remove a child from a special school (see above, section 5.6).

6.1 The school must delete the child's name from their admissions register upon receipt of written notification from the parents that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school. However, schools should not wait for parents to give written notification that they are withdrawing their child from school before advising the local authority. Schools must make a return (giving the child's name, address and the ground upon which their name is to be deleted from the register) to the local authority as soon as the ground for deletion is met, and no later than deleting the pupil's name from the register. They should also copy parents into the notice to the local authority.

6.2 If a child is registered at a school as a result of a school attendance order the parents must get the order revoked by the local authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive suitable education otherwise than at school, before the child can be deleted from the school's register and educated at home.

6.3 Schools must not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding an exclusion or because the child has a poor attendance record. In the case of exclusion, they must follow the statutory guidance. If the pupil has a poor attendance record, the school and local authority must seek to address the issues behind the absenteeism and use the other remedies available to them.

7.0 Reviewing procedures and practices

7.1 Lancashire will review these guidelines and practice in relation to home education on a regular basis. The initial review will be within 12 months of the first date of publication, and thereafter at least every two years. Home education organisations and parents will be involved in the process of review in order to ensure the most effective practice and strengthen partnerships.

8.0 Contacts/useful addresses

8.1 The EHE team is a small team within the School Attendance Service. This service is within Lancashire County Council's Directorate for Children and Young People under the Quality and Continuous Improvement group within Universal and Early Support Services.

8.2 Overall responsibility for the EHE team sits with the School Attendance Lead, and the team consists of a Business Support Officer and a number of part time EHE Support Workers and EHE Support Officers. Enhanced CRB clearance is mandatory for all EHE Support Workers/Officers and specific EHE training will be delivered in addition to LCC standard training including Induction, Safeguarding, Common Assessment Framework, Equality and Diversity, Health & Safety including lone worker arrangements.

8.3 The EHE team will explore the options for access/signposting to other LA services and facilities, within available resources, and will also seek to ensure EHE children have appropriate access to services and facilities from other agencies that would generally be delivered via school.

8.4 EHE officers understand that there is no one 'correct' educational system. All children learn in different ways and at varying rates. It is vital that parents and children choose a type of education that is right for them, and it is important that EHE officers understand and are supportive of many differing approaches or "ways of educating" which are all feasible and legally valid.

8.5 The role of the EHE team is not to tell parents how to educate their children or to promote registration at school. It is to respond to concerns that a child is not receiving a full time education suitable to his or her age, ability and aptitude and, where appropriate, provide support and information for parents.

The team can be contacted by telephone on 01772 532289, by fax on 01772 532214 or via email enquiries.ehe@lancashire.gov.uk and further information can be found on the [Elective Home Education](#) page of the Lancashire County Council website"

9.0 National and regional organisations

9.1 There are many websites that provide information for anyone considering EHE – some links to such sites are provided below.

Education Otherwise: www.education-otherwise.net

Lancashire Home Education: www.lancashire-he.org.uk

Ed Yourself: www.edyourself.org

Home Schooling: www.home-schooling-uk.com

Ahome: www.ahomeeducation.co.uk

Home Education Advisory Service: www.heas.org.uk

Department for Education: www.education.gov.uk

Home Education in the UK – Special Educational Needs: <http://www.he-special.org.uk>

March 2012

Overview and Scrutiny Review

Elective Home Education



For further information please contact:
Beverley Reid, Overview and Scrutiny
(01772) 532229
beverley.reid@lancashire.gov.uk.

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Introduction to the Review

Parents are required by law to ensure their children of a school age receive an appropriate full-time education. In most instances this is achieved by registering their children with a school. However, some parents choose to educate their child other than at school; in the UK this is commonly known as Elective Home Education (EHE). The number of children in Lancashire registered as home educated has steadily increased over the last eight years and this reflects the national trend.

The county council fully acknowledges a parent's right to choose to educate their children other than at school and has procedures in place to support parents who opt to home educate.

At the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July 2008, members were presented with a report about the current picture of Elective Home Education in Lancashire. Members of the committee raised concerns about the infrequency of visits to those children being educated at home and the ability of the local authority to ensure that they are safe.

As a result of the following discussion it was resolved that a Task Group should be formed with the aim of investigating and considering relevant information in more detail in order to provide the Committee with a greater understanding of EHE issues.

The task group was agreed at the September 2008 Management Committee, where it was decided that the task group would

consist of six members; five being County Councillors and one co-opted member.

The task group met between October 2008 and March 2009. The following report details witnesses with whom the task group met; the information the task group received and the conclusions that the task group reached. It also includes recommendations that the task group wishes to make about the issue of Elective Home Education in Lancashire.

Membership of the Task Group

The following members served on the task group:

- **County Councillor Tim Ashton**
- **County Councillor Mrs. Pat Case CBE**

- **County Councillor
Graham Davies**
- **County Councillor
Stephen Large (Chair)**
- **County Councillor
Miles Parkinson**
- **Mr. John Withington, Parent
Governor, Primary Phase**

Scope of the Scrutiny Review:

At the first meeting of the task group in October 2008, the task group agreed that the review should address the following objectives:

- To examine the issues arising from the increasing number of children in Lancashire being educated away from school. This should include a consideration of:
 - The strength of the current legislative framework and how effectively it allows the council to ensure that the education and safeguarding of all children is accounted for;
- Each of the five Every Child Matters Objectives, with a particular emphasis on 'staying safe';
- The capacity of the council's current support structures in meeting its obligations as a Children's Services Authority.
- Concerns raised by the Children and Young People O&S committee about the usual, single annual visit to children who are Home Educated.
- Whether it would be possible to encourage early intervention before a child is removed from the school environment in order to be home educated; including finding ways for schools to work with families who wish to remove their children;
- The suggestion that issues affecting children should be considered by each of the council's directorates in their daily work;
- The situation regarding Traveller Children registered

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as being Home Educated. Other authorities do not include Traveller children who are not in school as part of their Home Education statistics but this demographic does form a large proportion of children who are registered as being home educated in Lancashire.

- To make recommendations for any improvements to current EHE policies adopted by the county council that the task group deems as necessary.

Methodology

Witnesses

The following witnesses met with the task group and shared information:

Lancashire County Council Officers

- **Maureen Davenport**, Lancashire Education Inclusion Service (LEIS) – Head of Service, Children and Young People Directorate
- **Frances Molloy**, Schools Attendance Lead, Children and Young People Directorate
- **Angela Robinson**, LEIS Teacher, Children and Young People Directorate
- **Greg Vickers**, Children Missing Education (CME) County Co-ordinator, Children and Young People Directorate
- An officer from the DCFS

Home Educators

The task group met with a group of Home Educators and their children, **Lynda Howard** was the contact point for this meeting

- **Alison Sauer**, Director SC Education and Business Development and the lead trainer for local authorities about Home Education in the UK
- **Fiona Nicholson**, Chair Education Otherwise Government Policy Group, Member Education Otherwise Disability Group, Trustee Education Otherwise

Documents

The task group considered the following documents during their review:

- **Elective Home Education** – the original report to committee in July 2008 and the Minutes following the meeting
- **LEIS – Elective Home Education, Guidelines for Parents** – The county council's main document for supporting Home Educators in Lancashire

- **Elective Home Education, Guidelines for Local Authorities** – from the DCFS, guidelines on Local Authority responsibilities and rights related to Elective Home Education
- **Every Child Matters Framework** – The overarching framework, the task group considered this as a way to structure their approach for considering the provisions and potential gaps for the welfare of children in relation to Elective Home Education
- **Revised Statutory Guidance for local authorities in England to identify children not receiving a suitable education** – While Home Educated children are not necessarily children who are missing an education, there is guidance in this document which suggests local authorities need to be ensuring the educational welfare of all the children in their area. This is also from the Department for Schools, Children and Families

Websites

Education Otherwise -

<http://www.education-otherwise.org/>

Education Otherwise is the largest support network for Home Education in the UK, the task group met with representatives/members from the organisation

ContactPoint -

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/contactpoint/>

This was referred to by the EHE team and CME team as a possible way to find children who are potentially missing education and to add unknown children to the register of home educated children.

Site Visits

EHE Team Meeting – the task group attended a team meeting for the county council's EHE team in order to understand better the everyday implications and caseloads of the EHE team

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Surveys and Publicity

Press Release – The council arranged a press release to inform the public that the review of Home Education was taking place. Overview and Scrutiny also encouraged those with experiences of home education to approach the task group with information. There was a high level of response and much general interest in the task group with various radio stations, newspapers and even North West Tonight running a story about the review.

Responses to the Press Release – The task group considered the responses from many people involved in Home Education across Lancashire.

Findings

Lancashire County Council's Elective Home Education (EHE) team

At the time of gathering evidence for this review (Oct 2008), 467 Lancashire children were registered as being home educated. In Lancashire there has been an increase in the number of children being home educated since 2001, and in the last four years the number has doubled. During the Lancashire Education Inclusion Service (LEIS) teacher's initial visit to see a child who is being home educated they will complete an EHE1A form with the individual who is responsible for the education of the child. This form is used to record why the family is choosing to home educate and how they intend to deliver the child's education, as well as

considering how each aspect of the Every Child Matters agenda will be fulfilled. The EHE team records the reasons that parents give for choosing to home educate their child, though the team recognises that it is often a mixture of reasons rather than just one. The categories used are as follows:

- **Medical** - Parents feel that medical needs are too great for school attendance
- **Refuser** - The child/young person has elected not to attend school and parents support this decision
- **Bullying** - Parents feel that bullying issues have not been dealt with effectively
- **Religious** - Parents believe Home Education is important to maintain their faith
- **Excluded** - Parents wish to avoid exclusion

- **Reactive** - Parents choose EHE to avoid a range of problems
- **Proactive** - Parents actively choose EHE as they feel it can best promote their values
- **Traveller** - Children, particularly at Key Stages 3 and 4, may be expected to assist in the home setting or family business

There is a concern that children who leave the school system because of bullying may find it more difficult and traumatic to access social activities and may become isolated within the home or education environment.

There is a further concern that it may be more difficult for home educated children to access services that are readily provided through the school environment, such as support networks and career advice. The potentially detrimental impact on the child's social well-being is also considered to be an issue. The home educated child's access to other people and to children their

own age was also raised as a concern by the task group.

When a child is removed from school to be home educated the Lancashire Education Inclusion Service (LEIS) teachers from the EHE team will usually make an initial visit to the family no earlier than forty school days after the child is registered as being home educated, but no later than sixty school days after the commencement of home education. Where there are no concerns about the education the child is receiving or the child's welfare this initial meeting will usually be followed by a further visit after 25 school weeks. Following this visit, further visits will usually take place annually. Where there are concerns about the education the child is receiving, the LEIS teacher will arrange to visit more frequently or seek further evidence of the education being provided; this will usually take place within fifteen school days.

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The LEIS teachers do not have a statutory right to access the family home or even see the child being home educated, though in Lancashire the team has found that there are very few homes and children that are consistently inaccessible.

Where access to a child is refused, it is often difficult, under current legislation and statutory guidance, for the LEIS team to move towards a resolution that ensures the child is safe and receiving a suitable education. The first point of contact would be the Children Missing Education team who would escalate any further concerns they had to Lancashire's Safeguarding Board. In making this judgement, LEIS teachers consider whether the child is in good physical health and whether they appear to be sound of mind. The confidence of the child is also considered as a factor in judging their well-being.

In the situation where a child enters the country there is currently no failsafe system that will allow a local authority to recognise if that child is in their boundaries. However, the county council and many other authorities have agreements with the Immigration Office that they can approach them with details that they have about a child that they believe has recently entered the county and have this information confirmed. ContactPoint is expected to be a potential solution to this problem; however, schools are the most efficient point for collecting the information that would be entered into the ContactPoint database. ContactPoint will also be used to identify children in Lancashire who the authority may not currently have registered as being home educated.

More information about ContactPoint can be found at the following website: <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/contactpoint/>

The task group had further concerns about the use of tutors and other adults to help with the education of EHE children. These adults can often be from outside of the family and it is the responsibility of the parent to have these adults CRB checked. There is, however, no legal requirement for parents to do so. It was suggested that the Local Authority should perhaps consider providing an umbrella process by which to complete these checks on the behalf of parents. It has also been suggested by other organisations and home educators that the use of tutors is not a common occurrence across home education in Lancashire.

It should be recognised that the EHE team are operating on very limited resources and that they would require extra staffing to be able to increase the number of visits per year to home educating families or to provide services beyond the annual visits that currently take place.

Lancashire County Council's Children Missing Education (CME) team

Where there are concerns about the education that a home educated child is receiving, the EHE team would refer that child to the Children Missing Education (CME) team.

The County Council has a CME database with over 250 cases in progress. The exact number, at the time of receiving the evidence, was unknown but it is thought there are about 311 current cases: 102 of these being in the East; 73 in the North and 66 in the Central region. About 70 of these cases had been actioned or closed and of the cases that are related to

home education, 9 have now been successfully closed.

There is a schools portal tool which is expected to be used more in the future and this allows for referrals from the schools of children who are suspected as being CME. This would potentially be widened in the future to allow public referrals which would hopefully highlight any children who are registered as being home educated but where there are concerns in the community that they are not receiving an education.

There are number of sources from which CME referrals are currently received:

- Professional colleagues
- General Public
- EHE team
- Other Authorities
- School referrals

There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that some children are now on the children missing education register because their

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parents were advised by the school to remove their child from that environment and that alternative educational provisions would be made available by the local authority.

EHE and the Law

The legal grounding for home education is found in Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 and is limited to just a couple of sentences:

'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable —
(a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and
(b) to any special educational needs he may have,
either by regular attendance at **school or otherwise.**'
[emphasis placed by the report author]

EHE is also subject to the law which dictates

compulsory school age. This states that a child must remain in education or training of some form until the last Friday in June after they turn 17.

The term full-time is mainly applicable to the school system and is much more difficult to explain when connected to home education due to the diverse nature of the education delivered

'Suitable' in terms of education is defined as, 'an education which achieves that which it set out to achieve'. It is also supposed to be an education that equips the individual for life within their community but does not restrict them from becoming part of another community if they would wish to do so in the future.

If a parent chooses to home educate before their child ever enters the school system they are not required

to inform anyone, though the council would encourage all parents considering home education to contact them. If the decision to home educate is made after the child has entered the school system, the parents of the child must inform the school, and the school must remove that child from their register and inform the local authority of this action within two days.

The local authority has no legal right to access the family home or to see the child that is being home educated and while written work is often requested as proof of the education being completed, it is not a legal requirement for parents to provide such evidence.

Home education can be used by parents to avoid accusations about truancy being made against them but it is thought that this is not common and, that if this

was the case, it would become clear during LEIS teacher visits through lack of educational evidence and this issue could then be referred to the Children Missing Education team.

Traveller Communities with children being Home Educated

Traveller communities were considered separately as their way of life and approach to education can be very different to the approach considered by the current school system. It was noted that a common experience of LEIS teachers visiting traveller sites was to find children registered as being home educated doing work in the community or looking after their families rather than undertaking a 'traditional education'. However, many traveller communities have their own language which may make engagement in the classroom/school setting difficult.

During visits to traveller families where a child is being home educated, LEIS teachers have

often found that these children are working within their family businesses and while this may be considered educational, there are strict laws about when children can work, how long for, and the types of activities that they can be engaged in.

The task group was also informed that many local authorities do not include traveller communities in their statistics for the number of children who are registered as being home educated.

Other Organisations

Department for Children and Families (DCFS)

In January 2009 it was announced that a National Review of Home Education was to be conducted. This national review is being conducted by the DCFS and will consider various aspects of home education. The review has invited as many stakeholders as possible to contribute and this report will be passed on to those running the review.

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The Review will not question a parents right to home educate but it will aim to consider the power of Local Authorities and whether they should place more influence on safeguarding and monitoring of children who are home educated

It was recognised that there is a valid consideration to be made as to whether home education achieves the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters frameworks as readily as schooling. It was explained that officers are entitled to ask about the education that a child is receiving and that there are protocols in place for ensuring safety and welfare. Further to this, concerns were re-iterated as to where the 'child's voice' sits in the decision about their education.

The enormous amount of flexibility that currently exists for home education was

seen as a possible obstacle and it was questioned as to whether there might be a benefit in more structure and guidelines being applied to education other than at school.

It was felt the Local Authority does have appropriate tools for ensuring the safety of children in Lancashire but the National Review will consider any barriers that are being reported and is consulting with as many stakeholders as possible.

There is a question about whether the problems with access and barriers to communication with home educators being raised by council officers are perceived or real. It was suggested that some concerns can perhaps be explained by a lack of understanding of the statutory duties and rights available to the county council now.

Trainer and Consultant for Local Authorities in home education

The task group was concerned by the suggestion that the county council does not know of all children who are being home educated in Lancashire.

The job title of LEIS teacher was suggested as a point of friction with home educators who often see the visits by these officers as intrusive and undertaking more of a policing role than a supportive one.

Education at home should not just be seen as school at home, it can take many forms that may never involve any written work. The county council recognises that not all education at home will follow a national curriculum or indeed has to follow the pattern of school at home. The council does ask for written examples of work but

the statutory guidance does not state that this is a mandatory requirement for home educators to fulfil.

The task group was informed that home education usually fails when it does not involve the full interaction of the parent and child in the process.

The task group heard that the council should trust the judgement of its officers or provide more training as an experienced and skilled officer would recognise the signs of abuse or a child who is not entirely safe or enjoying their education at home.

The safeguarding duty of the county council is suggested as being a passive one. The authority only has a duty to act when it has a concern and the mechanisms are in place or being developed to escalate situations where there are concerns.

The task group was informed that there were at least two serious

cases known in the UK where home education had been used as a cover for instances of abuse or forced marriage but this is out of at least 50,000 children who are thought to be home educated.

Education Otherwise

Education Otherwise is a national organisation which works on a membership basis. It provides an online community and support for its members and also lobbies for change in government policy. Education Otherwise now has a local contact in nearly every region and uses this contact to facilitate workshops for the sharing of best practice and for encouraging contact amongst home educators. The organisation is also actively involved in regular meetings with government officials and ministers where they attempt to shape national policy.

One particular aspect that Education Otherwise is trying to change is the relationship between local authorities and home educators. They would like the

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relationship to be more about home educators knowing who to contact at the local authority when they need support, rather than enforced visits at massive intervals, such as the situation in Lancashire of annual visits.

Education Otherwise consider the whole Every Child Matters agenda in their approach to home education which is something that the task group had highlighted as important.

The task group heard that more resources should be made available for children who are home educated. In particular access to exams should be more readily available.

Other areas such as North Yorkshire and Somerset were cited as examples of best practice for trying to take a different approach and that these authorities

provided regular support to home educators.

There was a suggestion that members of Education Otherwise often find out about home educators who are known to the local authority and who need support. Education Otherwise will usually contact the local authority to ask them to contact such families.

Examples given suggested that much of the relationship between home educating families and the local authority depended on the officer that the family had contact with. Good experiences framed good relationships, whereas bad experiences have, on occasions, upset children in particular and left them fearful of local authority involvement.

It was felt that nationally there is an inconsistent approach by local

authorities to home education and that the role and responsibilities of the local authority would be better served by a supporting rather than instructing role.

Education Otherwise have found that that home educators in some areas are concerned about trying to change their approach to home education as they believe that they may not be allowed to continue educating their children at home. The overall impression that Education Otherwise have taken from correspondence is that home educators are fearful about their relationship with the local authority.

It was further suggested that an advocacy service may be beneficial to home educators when they are wary of the local authority. The task group suggested that this could be provided through the Voluntary,

Community and Faith Sector, where a group of home educators could bid for funding to provide such a service.

Evidence from Home Educators – Meeting and Correspondence

Correspondence

The correspondence from Home Educators identifies the following common themes:

- Where a child has been removed from school to be home educated they are seen to be thriving academically and much happier than they were;
- Home education is generally seen as a positive experience whereas the child's experience of school has usually been a negative experience;
- Home educators seem to find the Council approach to be intrusive and abrasive;
- Children benefit from the close attention within their family and one-to-one learning.

Meeting with Home Educators in Lancashire

Home educators consider home education to be the 'natural state' of education as it is the parents' responsibility to ensure their child is receiving an education.

One major barrier home educators feel exists in Lancashire to interaction with the county council is the choice of language in Press Releases and the title of LEIS teacher as well as the need to show evidence of a broad 'curriculum' and other such school related terminology.

Many parents feel that the visits from the EHE team involve them being told how they should home educate rather than being assessed on how they are home educating. There are many different ways to home educate and many home educators feel that this variety in methods is not being recognised or understood.

Many parents thought that this was a more effective way for their children to learn. Rather than being taught through a timetable of

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subjects and a curriculum, a child is able to engage in learning about what they want and when they want to.

Many parents would like to see more support provided to home educators; one suggestion made was that the local authority could provide drop-in centres or opportunities for parents to contact them with issues.

It was also felt that regular forum meetings between the county council and local home educators would be beneficial to both sides; both in terms of networking and in keeping the council informed of changes and trends in home education.

Many parents felt that home educators in general were being singled out and that perhaps more effort should be being concentrated on protecting children when they are in the school

environment. Further to this, parents accepted that there are some home educators who need to be considered more closely by the local authority and that not all home education is suitable; however, they feel that the local authority is grouping all home educators together rather than focusing on those who are the problem.

Criticisms were made of the form used to assess home educators during the initial visit by an LEIS teacher. Many home educators felt that the information about the home education programme they intend to adopt and their reasons for choosing to home educate should be kept separate.

The parents who gave evidence felt that nothing was excluded to their children in terms of their children's' overall well-being. However, it was felt that something should be done

to make it easier to access sports and science facilities as well as GCSE exams.

Many home educators who have removed their children from school did not know that home education was an option and felt that parents should be informed at the same time as they are asked to make a decision about which school to send their child to.

Home educators put forward the evidence that it was offensive that the local authority considered home educated children to be at any higher risk than those children who are at home at the weekend or during the holidays.

It was also raised that once a parent chooses to home educate there is no support network through which to contact other home educators and to share experiences and best

practice. They would also like to see a continuous dialogue with the local authority rather than just an annual meeting for the purpose of assessment.

The task group heard that parents have found that they have been stopped by the police and accused of allowing their child to not receive education when in fact the child is receiving education by going to visit museums and libraries and engaging in other such activities away from the home.

The task group was informed that many families had not entered home education because they saw school as a bad thing and when asked many said they would allow their children to go to school if that was what they wanted to do; though one individual said that they would not be happy for their children to go to school. This suggests that the child does at least have some say about the education that they receive.

Conclusions

The county council respects the rights of parents to educate their children other than at school and does provide support to those families through their website and the contact of officers with families. It is also recognised that home education is not merely an alternative to school but is an active choice of the parent and child. However, home education must be considered as different situation to children at school because of the added pressure it puts on the local authority to ensure the safety of those children who are educated other than at school.

In an ideal situation, the only reason for home education would be the want to home educate, both for the parent and the child. However, it is more common that many other reasons push children out of school or mean that school is not the best environment for a child to learn in.

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There are many reasons for choosing to home educate and these are as individual as the families in question. The council should do more to recognise the values and possible restrictions to each of these reasons and to understand that education is tailored to the child. A better understanding of the styles of home education would perhaps contribute towards a more positive relationship between the council and home educators in Lancashire.

Differing styles of education mean that it can often be difficult for LEIS teachers to recognise certain aspects of education as suitable. Much has been done by the team to understand traveller communities but more time could perhaps be spent with other individual families to understand their style of education and the benefits it presents. However, it is

recognised that this may require more resources for the EHE team and a willingness from home educators to spend this time with the officers.

There is potential for more support to be provided by the county council but in order to do this, there would need to be more resources dedicated to the EHE team and a clearer understanding across directorates in relation to the relevance of home education and its importance to the entire Every Child Matters agenda.

It could be possible to do more to allow children access to exams and sports or science equipment, though it may be that home educating families are still expected to pay to use these services.

The county council knows many, but not all of the

children being home educated in Lancashire.

There are valid guidelines and reasonable powers in the statutory guidance on home education for the Local Authority to escalate situations where they believe there is a problem. However, there are perhaps not strong enough guidelines for guaranteeing access to the family and child so as home education can be assessed for any issues. Further to this, the county council does not know of all the children who are being home educated in Lancashire.

The current legal guidelines which describe what can be determined as a suitable education are vague and make it difficult for the officers who form the county council's EHE team to make a sound judgement about the overall well-being of any

child they see. This is particularly true of reported incidents in traveller communities where children are working in their family trade.

Home educators in Lancashire would prefer to be supported rather than policed, though it is recognised that there are resource constraints placed on the EHE team.

More home educators would be likely to interact with the local authority and to agree to be registered as home educated if the relationship were to be more about accessing support when it is needed than being 'checked up on'.

The current contact between families who home educate and the local authority is too infrequent and more should be done to maintain a continuous link between the two. Both the local authority and the home educators that the task group met with agreed that they would like to maintain increased contact. However, the way that this is done would need

to be carefully managed to ensure that it does not place an ever greater requirement for resources to the EHE team and that it does not further intrude onto the lives of those families who choose to home educate.

Home education is not currently promoted as an option in Lancashire at the point of applying for school choices.

Recommendations

1. The county council and home educators should work more closely to develop a relationship of trust and mutual support within which the child can achieve and flourish.
2. LEIS teachers should be renamed to reflect the fact that, when working with home educators, their role is not a teaching one, but a support one.
3. The approach of the LEIS teachers should reflect the support and assistance they can provide

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home educators, against a background of the County Council's statutory duty to safeguard all children.

4. In the light of the increasing numbers of children being educated other than at school, extra support should be considered for the EHE team to help them cope with this increase in workload.

5. Support should be given to home educators in Lancashire to bid for Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector funding with the aim of setting up an advocacy provision for home educating families and their children for discussions/meetings with the local authority where the family/child feels that they need that support.

6. Regular meetings should take place between LEIS and home educators in

order to facilitate a positive relationship and exchange of information within a group forum setting.

7. More information should be available to home educators either through improvements to the council's current EHE website or through the use of a contact number.

8. When a parent chooses to home educate a child currently attending school, the school and officers of the local authority should do all that they can to ensure that the parent discusses this decision with the school. The aim should be to seek to resolve any problems that the child is having at school and, where appropriate, of maintaining a relationship. If the matter cannot be resolved at this stage, there should be the possibility for a referral for conciliation.

9. The EHE1A form should be reconsidered, in consultation with home educators in Lancashire.

10. More support should be given by the county council to home educating families to help their children access exams services, whilst recognising that those families may have to pay to use these services.

11. The county council should consider giving more support to home educated children in accessing sports and science facilities whilst recognising that families may have to pay to use these services.

12. The county council and Home Educators should work together to ensure that the voice of the child is heard in decisions around their education

13. The legislation that governs the local authority's

ability to ensure the well-being and safety of children being home educated should be strengthened.

14. The county council's responsibility for the safeguarding of every child in Lancashire must be acknowledged and Home Educators and the council should work together to establish the best ways to achieve this for home educated children.

15. This report should be passed onto the DCFS for consideration in their review of Elective Home Education.

Acknowledgements

The task group would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to write to the task group or meet with the task group. The task group would also like to thank all those officers who helped the task group in their understanding of home education in Lancashire.



Agenda Item 7

Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on 10th July 2012

Electoral Division affected: All

Update on the current Lancashire County Council position on Academies.

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information: Bob Stott, Director of Universal and early Support Services, Directorate for Children and Young People. 01772 531652

bob.stott@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

The reports set out the County Council's current position in relation to academies within Lancashire. It updates the information provided to the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1st November 2011

Recommendation

The Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the report and give its views on the information provided.

1 Background and Advice

In the summer of 2010 the Department for Education (DFE) set out its plans to enable maintained schools to become Academies and the Secretary of State wrote to all schools judged outstanding by OfSTED to encourage them to apply for Academy Status, these are often referred to as Converter Academies.

Since that time all maintained schools have been encouraged by the DFE to consider becoming Academies and the County Council has, at the request of headteachers and governors, held a series of briefing sessions over the past two years to help governors to make informed choices when considering whether or not to apply for Academy status.

Academy is the legal term that includes Free Schools of all types, University Technical Colleges (UTC's) and most Studio Schools. These new forms of school are independent from the local authority, and report directly to the Secretary of State.

In June 2011 the Secretary of State indicated that there were 200 under-performing primary schools nationally for which he considered the most appropriate strategy for improvement was that they become Sponsored Academies - linked to, and sponsored by another Outstanding Academy or Outstanding College. The Secretary

of State also indicated that there were a further 500 under-performing primary schools nationally for which movement to becoming a Sponsored Academy should also be considered.

Since August 2012 the Department for Education has been in regular contact with all Local Authorities including Lancashire to discuss schools that were included in the original 200 and 500 underperforming categories. In the case of Lancashire this initially amounted to 7 schools in category 1 and 17 in category 2.

The Education Act 2011 received Royal Assent on 15th November 2011. The Act is wide ranging and amends or repeals 47 separate issues connected with education and children law which were previously covered in 18 education and children Acts. The Act makes changes to the arrangements for setting up new schools, and amends the Academies Act 2010 to make provision for 16 to 19 academies and alternative provision academies. The full Education Act is contained on the Department for education website:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/departmentalinformation/educationbill/a0073748/education-bill>

The new academy presumption in the Education Act 2011 requires local authorities to first seek proposals for an Academy where they consider there is a need for a new school.

County Council position on Academies

The County Council has adopted a clear and consistent position around academies, namely that all categories of school are of equal value. There is no prejudice for or against a particular category.

The current position

- All maintained primary, secondary and special schools can apply to become an Academy
- In early 2012 there has been consultation on pupil referral units converting to Academy Status
- Once the funding order for an Academy is agreed the local authority is directed to cease to maintain the school

The National Position

The Secretary of State in June 2012 reported that by September 2012 around 50% of secondary schools nationally would either be open academies or in the process of becoming academies. With regard to primary schools this figure for September 2012 would be around 6%.

These national figures clearly point to a variance in the number of academies within local authorities. In some local authorities the vast majority of schools are now academies whilst in others this is not the case.

Lancashire's current position

Academy conversions to date

- 18 schools have converted to become an academy
- Of these 14 are secondary schools and 4 are primary schools.
- A further 6 schools are in the process of converting (5 secondary and 1 primary, of which two are sponsored Academies). These schools have Academy Orders agreed and are currently developing funding agreements with the Secretary of State for September 2012.
- The first Free School in Lancashire, which was an independent school, opened in September 2011.
- There are currently 2 validated other new Free Schools wishing to open in Lancashire, both in East Lancashire.
- The local authority will continue to work closely with academies and Free Schools in terms of planning for the provision of school places.
- The DfE has contacted the Local Authority regarding the sponsored academy program, and identified schools that it wishes to be considered to become a sponsored academy. This has been an ongoing dialogue around a changing cohort of schools since August 2011.

A list of the current free schools and academies in Lancashire is set out at Appendix 'A'.

Consultations

n/a

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

There are no implications for risk management arising from this report.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
Update on the current County Council position on Academies in Lancashire	November 2011	Bob Stott, Directorate for Children and Young People, 01772 531652

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate N/A

Academies / Free schools / Studio Schools / UTCs

Section A: Academies. To date 18 schools have received approval from the Secretary of State to change their status to Academies.

A full list of **approved academies** is provided below:

School	LCC Number	District	Date of Conversion
Accrington Academy	11/501	Hyndburn	01/09/08
Fulwood Academy	06/501	Preston	01/09/09
Hambleton Primary Academy	02/501	Wyre	01/01/11
Clitheroe Grammar Academy	11/502	Ribble Valley	01/01/11
Lancaster Girls Grammar School	01/501	Lancaster	01/01/11
Lancaster Royal Grammar School	01/502	Lancaster	15/04/11
Hodgson Academy	02/502	Wyre	01/05/11
Ripley St Thomas – A C of E Academy	01/503	Lancaster	01/05/11
St Michael's CE Academy	09/501	Chorley	01/07/11
Bowland Academy	11/503	Ribble Valley	01/08/11
Lostock Hall Academy	07/501	South Ribble	01/08/11
Parbold Douglas C.E. Primary Academy	08/501	West Lancashire	01/08/11
Bishop Rawstorne Church of England Language Academy	09/502	Chorley	17/08/11
Garstang Community Academy	02/503	Wyre	01/09/11
Accrington St Christopher's CE High	11/505	Hyndburn	01/09/11
Belthorn Academy Primary School	11/504	Hyndburn	01/10/11
Clayton le Moors All Saints C.E. Primary School	11/506	Hyndburn	01/11/11
Tarleton Academy	08/112	West Lancs	01/01/12

A further **6** schools are **pursuing a change of status** to become an academy and have now received an initial proposal approval from the Secretary of State, but have not yet established a Funding Agreement.

These schools are:

School	LCC Number	District	Provisional Approval	Comments/start date
Priory Sports & Technology College	07/110	South Ribble	Yes	1 st Sept 2012
Parklands High School	09/102	Chorley	Yes	1 st Sept 2012
Albany Science College	09/105	Chorley	Yes	1 st Aug 2012.
Burnley Springfield Community Primary School	12/043	Burnley	Yes	1 Sept 2012. Sponsored. Sponsored by Burnley College
Colne Primet High School	13/101	Pendle	Yes	1 st Sept 2012 .Sponsored Sponsored by Nelson & Colne College.
Worden Sports College	07/103	South Ribble	Yes	1 st Sept 2012

The Local Authority has been informed that the schools below have expressed an interest in converting to Academy status.

School	LCC Number	District	Comments
Brierfield Walter Street Primary School	13/018	Pendle	Governors have voted for conversion. Statement of Intent to be a sponsored Academy with Nelson & Colne College as sponsor. Open Jan 2013.
The Ridge Primary School	01/011	Lancaster	Governors have voted for conversion. Discussions are taking place with Academies Enterprise Trust (AET) as a possible sponsor.

Section B: Free schools, studio schools and UTC's

a) currently open

School	District	Comments
Maharishi Free school	West Lancashire	Reception to year 11. (primary and secondary) maximum of 15 children per year group. http://www.maharishischool.com/infozone.html

b) wishing to open

School	District	Comments
Hyndburn Studio School	Hyndburn	Backed by Accrington and Rossendale College in partnership with Rhyddings Business and Enterprise School .Proposed to open the first Studio School in Lancashire in September 2012, with support from Hyndburn Borough Council and St Christopher's C of E School. The Hyndburn Studio School will offer 100 places from September 2012 , rising to 300 by 2015. DfE consultation ended in May. http://www.hyndburnstudioschool.co.uk/news/Hyndburntobethelocation.html
Chorley Free school	Chorley	Update: DfE have NOT entered into a funding agreement with this school and therefore DfE support has been withdrawn as of June 2012.
Burnley UTC	Burnley	14-19 provider Backed by Training 2000. specialisms are in engineering and construction; supporting advanced manufacturing employers within the aerospace supply chain, the nuclear industry and green utilities and technologies. Open from Sept 2013 . http://burnley.co.uk/invest/9-3-m-decision-for-university-technical-college-in-burnley/3271/

Education Scrutiny Committee
Meeting to be held on 10th July 2012

Electoral Division affected: All

School funding reform – next steps towards a fairer system

Contact for further information: Bob Stott (01772) 531652 Children and Young People, bob.stott@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

On 26 March 2012, the Secretary of State for Education announced the next step in reforming school funding by launching a consultation ' School funding reform: Next steps towards a fairer system'. The closing date for responses was 21 May 2012.

The consultation focussed on reducing the number of "factors" within the formula funding calculation. The Local Authority, Schools Forum and individual schools have fed back their concerns as to the possible impact of these proposals on small schools. This response to National Government proposals was misinterpreted by some in the media as current proposals by the Local Authority to consult on the future of a large number of small schools. This is not the case and this paper seeks to clarify the position.

Recommendation

Education Scrutiny is asked to note the report.

Background and Advice

On 26 March 2012, the Secretary of State for Education announced the next step in reforming school funding by launching a consultation ' School funding reform: Next steps towards a fairer system'. The closing date for responses was 21 May 2012

From the next spending review period (2015/16) the Government intend to introduce a national school funding formula, however, from 2013/14 it proposed to put the building blocks in place by simplifying local arrangements for distributing funding to schools and other providers. The consultation set out the Government's proposals for school funding from 2013/14 and invited views on areas where different options are available for consideration.

The DfE have established Education Funding Agency (EFA) who, from April 2012, will be responsible for capital and revenue funding for 3-19 education and training.

Lancashire's Response to the Consultation

Three seminars were arranged in April and May to provide schools with further information on the Government's proposals and a special meeting of the Schools Forum was also arranged for 1st May to shape a Forum consultation response.

Consultation responses from the County Council and the Schools Forum have been submitted by the 21st May 2012 deadline and individual schools were encouraged to respond where appropriate.

Approval has been received from the Cabinet Member for Children and Schools, at the Decision Making Session on 20th June, to enter a period of formal consultation with schools and other stakeholders about changes required to the Lancashire funding formula. This will run to 1st October 2012. As part of this modelling work has been undertaken around the new formula requirements to assess and illustrate the impact on individual schools.

Media interest

The consultation referred to above made reference to the possible impact of the Government's proposals around small schools. This was misinterpreted by some elements of the media to imply that the Local Authority had current plans to consult on the future of a large number of small schools. To correct this misunderstanding the following press statement was released by the Cabinet Member for Children and Schools:

County Councillor Susie Charles, Cabinet Member for Children and Schools, said:

"Throughout Lancashire, there are about 100 primary schools with fewer than 100 pupils on their roll, mostly based in small rural communities.

"The county council's funding arrangements for schools include a number of elements that reflect the needs of the pupils in small schools, as well as the costs of providing education in these specific settings.

"The government is currently consulting on proposals that would simplify the funding arrangements for schools. These proposals would remove the council's ability to use a number of factors to determine the level of funding, including those that specifically relate to the needs of small schools.

"The county council is still evaluating the potential impact of the proposals. We are working with headteachers from small schools to make appropriate representations to government and to develop solutions that will continue to support viable and vibrant provision in rural communities.

"The county council recognises the valuable contribution schools in rural areas make to their communities and we will do everything we can to help them to continue."

Current position

Separately and in response to a very significant fall in pupil numbers at the school to from over 50 to 14 at present and with the agreement of the Governing Body, the Blackburn Church of England Diocesan Authority and Local Authority are currently consulting on the future of Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary School. This consultation will end on 20th July 2012.

In September the Cabinet Member will consider these responses and decide whether or not to publish a Statutory Notice of the proposal. If this is published then there would be a further six weeks for representations with a final decision reached in December 2012.

Consultations

NA

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

There are no significant risks associated with this item

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
Cabinet Member for Children and Schools decision http://council.lancashire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=1976	20 th June 2012	S. Edwards, Directorate for Children and Young People, (01772) 531628

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate
NA

