

Electively Home Educated (EHE) Children Implementation Plan

Context

What the law says:

- The first term after a child reaches 5 years old, they must be either enrolled in school (maintained, academy, independent etc) **or educated other than at school e.g. home educated**
- It is the choice of the child's parents or guardian on which method to use, but they must be in education by statutory school age.
- The local authority has a duty to check by reasonable enquiries the suitability of all those being home educated and where this duty is not dispensed to decide whether formal action must be taken e.g. School Attendance Order
- Parents do not have a duty to oblige reasonable enquiries or state why they are off rolling their child/ren from school

Sandwell EHE Support team:

EHE Service Manager

Elective Home Education Support / Traveller Engagement Manager

3 x EHE Support Officers (HLTA)

Key Challenges:

- Exponential Increase in numbers of parents off rolling to EHE who are not always clear on implications (financial responsible for all costs including exams, tutors, equipment)
- The team is overstretched and unable to manage their cases loads efficiently
- No dedicated admin support means admin tasks take up a significant amount of the team's time e.g. off rolling from schools, emailing schools to chase safeguarding files
- Team responds quickly to queries from parents and are on track for contacting parents for yearly updates, but this is becoming more challenging as the numbers of EHE pupils increase
- Some children have been successfully progressed for an EHCP assessment or have now got an EHCP with support from the EHE team
- The Council's EHE Policy and paperwork was out of date and is not regularly reviewed
- Processes need updating
- New processes for support/RAG Rating need to be implemented
- There is no current targeted support for families not engaging (although yearly learning updates are sought)
- Line of sight to **all** children is lacking and safeguarding scrutiny of the service has not been robust
- Parents do not have to engage/accept support which leaves around 30% of the cohort not engaging
- Lack of understanding of EHE and how this is supported means social workers / family support workers are not discouraging EHE with their families when capacity may be an issue
- Links with multi agency partners are tenuous and ad hoc and reliant on relationships as opposed to protocols/Systems

- SEN protocol needs reviewing/updating
- Significant delays in off rolling from school when child has an EHCP as school await confirmation from ILS

Schools Bill Proposals are likely to impact on the future cohort of EHE Children and how support is provided:

10. All councils must have 'children not in school' registers, with a duty to support parents on their registers. Children in scope are those not registered at a school or receiving some of their education outside of school (ie flexi-schooling and unregistered alternative provision). Schools will have to check with councils if children being withdrawn are in these categories. Out-of-school education providers must also provide details, and can be fined if not.

11. Some parents will need council consent to home education their child. It will apply to those with children subject to protection orders, on a protection plan or at a special school under arrangements made by the local authority. LAs can also compel home educated children on protection orders to attend school.

12. School attendance orders will be standardised nationally, with councils compelled to check whether the home learning environment for a child is suitable when making such orders. Parents would also face prosecution if they don't comply.

No:	Assurance	Sandwell Current Position - Education	Actions	Who will take forward actions and timeline	Progress	Success Criteria
1.	Children are clearly identified as Electively Home Educated (EHE) and characteristics/ issues of concern are highlighted to EHE team	School will notify EHE team and provide information on who is already working with the family so the team can liaise with them. For those children who are home educated but never been on the roll of a school	Update to Policy, School Off roll form and guidance for schools	EHE Team (Overseen by Lisa Harvey) – Immediate		Multi Agency (MA) partners are familiar with EHE and work in partnership with the EHE team to support families ensuring a more robust line of sight to C&YP. MA partners are alert to the possibility of educational neglect are alert the EHE team to C &

		<p>Sandwell has set up a Child Not in School referral system through My Sandwell Portal where families can notify, they are home educating.</p> <p>There is a robust system in place for EHE/Unregistered children who move in and out of area (process for EHE teams in each LA).</p> <p>Data on CME/EHE is reported to: Dept for Education Sandwell children's Safeguarding partnership Assurance DCS Databook</p>				<p>YP they have concerns about.</p> <p>Data shows increased use of alerts via MySandwell Portal</p> <p>Increase in Parents completing initial consultation process and subsequent support</p> <p>Parents are better informed regards EHE</p> <p>Increase in the numbers of parents/carers using the MY Sandwell portal to notify of intention to EHE</p>
			Get all team set up on EHM so they can check involvements for all children referred in to the service	Lisa Harvey – January 2025		EHE team to routinely check EHM system and contact key professionals to work collaboratively to support families.
			Awareness raising/briefing sessions across multi agency services	Lisa Harvey – September 2025		

			Website updated to include key information	EHE Team - September 2025		
			Clear signposting to My Sandwell portal on EHE Paperwork/guidance and EHE Section of Sandwell Website	EHE Team – September 2025		
			Data reports to show SEN status, gender, ethnicity and reason category for EHE/CME	Lisa Harvey – March 2025		
2.	Proactive action is taken to reduce numbers of children who are EHE when it is not in their best interest and timely reintegration back in to schools	<p>Analysis of data is taken to look at Characteristics of children and reasons for home education.</p> <p>Correlations of reasons for EHE (e.g. dissatisfaction with school) and commonality of school.</p>	DATA analysis to identify correlation of data to better understand the reasons behind the increase in numbers, blockages to school access/engagement and enables targeting of concerns/issues to reduce EHE.	<p>Lisa Harvey – June 2025</p> <p>Lisa Harvey & Suzanne Starrs – September 2025</p>		<p>Data indicates a reduction in children home educated.</p> <p>Parents indicate at initial consultation stage they have been offered information leaflet and face to face meeting with school/SASSO.</p> <p>At initial consultation stage with parents they indicate they wish to enrol child(ren) back in school.</p> <p>Evidence of learning progress for children</p>

						shows EHE is appropriate for that family
			Development of an information leaflet for parents intending to home educate that school will share.	Lisa Harvey – March 2025		An increase in children and young people returning to Schools
			Working with schools who are off rolling a proportionally high number of children to be home educated.	Suzanne Starrs/ SASSO's – September 2025		Increase in SAO's that result in return to school
			Agenda slot on JE, primary and secondary partnership meetings to seek support	Lisa Harvey/Sue Moore – November 2025		
			Target newsletter articles such as funding for GCSE's is at parental costs when child in year 9.	Jannath Ahmed – Ongoing		
			Working with SEN teams and SASS to establish support for effective reintegration into school	EHE Team/SEN Team/SASS – Ongoing		
			Work with SASS to ensure appropriate/ effective use of	EHE Team/SASS – Ongoing		

			school attendance orders			
			Update EHE section of Sandwell Website to ensure parents are clear on the implications of home educating their child	EHE Team - September 2025		
3.	Children's voices, needs and perspectives have been considered in the decision by the parent/carer to home educate them.	<p>Childrens needs are assessed at the point of referral into the EHE service via off roll form but this does not consistently capture voice of the child</p> <p>The EHE Initial contact sheet has a section for the view of the child to be captured.</p> <p>For children on roll at a school it is expected that parents will meet with school staff to discuss intention to EHE and explore</p>	Add voice of child box to off roll forms and Initial Consultation forms	Lisa Harvey - May 2025		<p>Children's voice is influential in their education setting</p> <p>Increase in parent take up of meetings to discuss intention to EHE</p> <p>Increase in the numbers of children being spoken to about their education.</p> <p>Increase in feedback from professionals regards appropriateness of EHE</p>
			Develop a range of Events for EHE children	EHE Team – October 2025		
			Working with schools to ensure a meeting/discussion with parents takes place with the most appropriate professional (e.g. to discuss implications of EHE)	SASS & EHE Team – Ongoing		
			Links with key professionals	EHE Team – Ongoing		

		appropriateness and capacity.	involved with the family/child/young person to gather information to determine if EHE is in the best interests of the child and the best option to meet their needs.			
3.	Roles and responsibilities in relation to EHE are understood by all statutory agencies, including local authority education teams, and that they know what to do if they are concerned that children who are EHE may be at risk of harm and may be being deliberately hidden from the sight of statutory agencies.	EHE team comes under the LA Education Safeguarding Manager (MASH) and have appropriate oversight/links to the MASH. MASH Health partner currently alerts HV and GP via their systems when a child who is being EHE comes in via MASH A brief overview of EHE is covered in the SCSP Core Working Together training Factsheets are produced for	Develop a 7-minute briefing to be disseminated via SCSP.	Lisa Harvey – January 2025		Increase in contact from multi agency partners to highlight concerns/alerts to children not in school
			All EHE staff to gain access to EHM and check their case load for involvement by other agencies.	EHE Team - December 2025		Professionals working with families are discouraging EHE when it is not appropriate and liaising with EHE team to support children back into school.
			Utilising various forums (Summits, Safeguarding Forums) to talk about the work of the team and elicit support/line of sight	EHE Team – Ongoing		Levels of support are proportionate to children's needs and safeguarding concerns are identified quickly
			Request that all single agency training covers awareness of EHE/CME	LH – Dec 2025		Data shows that Year 11 cohort are fully supported into employment, education and training
			Exploring a joint protocol for informing SHN/GP and other health teams that a	Lisa Harvey with Lorna Webley & Anne Holloway – July 2025		Data shows that contact with all EHE children has

		schools and other professionals to raise awareness and understanding of what EHE is, this is also included in newsletters to schools.	child is not in school/EHE			increased via partners and EHE team.
		Monthly reports show which EHE/CME children are linked to MASH/DA episodes, so vulnerability is considered via RAG Rating.	Embed the RAG rating system so support/ contact is allocated accordingly.	Lisa Harvey - February 2025		Increase in contacts for EHE children
		Weekly meetings for the team include invites to a range of multi-agency professionals.	Links with Connexions and data collection when children in year 11	EHE Team – January 2025		Data and reporting demonstrate that Safeguarding concerns are highlighted swiftly
		Sandwell is featured in a national consultation report about models of best practice in Local Authorities produced by	Development and distribution of education neglect Guidance	Lisa Harvey - May 2025		Timely reporting in to MASH when identified a child is at risk of significant harm

		Education Otherwise.				
4.	Children with an EHCP who are being EHE have the right level of support, and the suitability of education is assessed by professionals who have a good understanding of the child's needs.	<p>Children with an EHCP have a caseworker in the SEND service and the suitability of home education is reviewed within their annual review.</p> <p>SENDIASS provides support for SEND needs but for advocacy around the rights of home educators the team refer to Education Otherwise.</p>	<p>Work with a range of professionals to ensure Multi agency plans include EHE team and the strong links with many key professionals e.g. Public Health, CAMHS ensures a multi- agency approach to support for children who are EHE.</p> <p>Team works with the ILS Vulnerable children's pathway and are involved in the Lived experience strategy and framework</p>	<p>Lisa Harvey - July 2025</p> <p>EHE Team - September 2025</p>		<p>Children with an EHCP and their families are supported effectively, and annual reviews are timely.</p> <p>Feedback from parents, children and young people demonstrates greater satisfaction with the support they are receiving, and children are making good progress.</p>
5.	The needs of children who are EHE are understood and supported via a multi - agency approach	<p>Information is gathered from the off-roll form completed by school including submission of a safeguarding file if one is held.</p> <p>Initial EHE consultation with</p>	<p>Work closely with other agencies/services that are involved with children to maintain additional contact/oversight.</p> <p>See relevant actions in 2 & 3</p>	Lisa Harvey & Suzanne Starrs – Ongoing		<p>Reduction in numbers of parents who decline support</p> <p>Reduction in Numbers of children who are being referred through MASH</p>

		parents also gathers information regards involvement with other services (which does help identify gaps)				
6.	Where and when necessary, a suitable multi-agency plan has been developed and implemented to enable the child and family to receive the help and protection they may need.	<p>EHE team are included in EHCP/SEN plan development.</p> <p>The EHE are <u>usually</u> included in MA meetings such as TAF, CIN etc and contribute to plans.</p> <p>MASH Education Report to EHE Team identifies CME/EHE children who have been reviewed via MASH</p> <p>When a child is subject to a CP plan the EHE team work with the allocated social worker to</p>	<p>Further develop awareness and understanding of EHE across the partnership/especially SCT and SFS teams</p> <p>To develop a protocol of how potential risk is reduced where support is declined by families.</p> <p>Use Of SAO's where education is deemed unsuitable</p>	<p>Lisa Harvey – Dec 2025</p> <p>Lisa Harvey & EHE Team – September 2025</p> <p>EHE/SASS – Ongoing</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p>	<p>RAG rating is updated regularly and timely support is offered</p> <p>There is evidence of agency contact at least termly when parents have previously declined support</p> <p>Increase in number of children on any support plan staying in school</p>

		<p>consider if it is appropriate for the child to become EHE or continue to be EHE</p> <p>The team are able to employ School Attendance Orders (SAO) to identify a school, if cases warrant this.</p>				
7.	Particular attention, if appropriate, is given to children where there has been previous safeguarding concerns (cross Reference to 5) .	<p>The EHE team has individuals with expertise in various areas such as SEN knowledge, Mental Health, community working. This improves capacity as a team to meet increasing demands from families requiring additional support.</p> <p>4 weekly reports are now being scrutinised by EHE team manager and Education</p>	<p>Systems and information gathering regards professionals who may be involved with families to work with them to get more regular oversight of children and young people.</p> <p>RAG Rating and linked framework of support to be developed</p>	<p>EHE Team – Ongoing</p> <p>Lisa Harvey – January 2025</p>		<p>RAG rating is accurate and up to date and support is targeted dependant on needs of child.</p> <p>Children where there are significant safeguarding concerns are either back in school or have good oversight.</p> <p>Increase in requests for support for those children who are EHE and there are safeguarding concerns</p>

		<p>Safeguarding manager to look at cohorts of children and identify patterns (specific town, school, reasons)</p> <p>Early Help support and professionally challenge when escalations are required.</p>				
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