

London Borough of Barking & Dagenham
Children's Services



Elective Home Education

Local Authority Policy and Guidance

May 2011

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Introduction

It is the statutory responsibility of parents¹ to *cause their child to receive education* from the time they reach statutory school age, either at school or *otherwise than at school*.

The term, *Education Otherwise* has traditionally been used to describe any educational provision parents make outside the school system (either state-funded or privately). The term *Elective Home Education* has recently been introduced as an alternative (albeit an imprecise one).

Parents choose to educate their child(ren) *otherwise than at school* for different reasons. The most common include the following.

- The parent has a desire to educate their child in a way that they think is best, in line with their own social or religious philosophy. This notion lies behind much of the current legislation.
- The child has been unhappy at school. In these cases, schools may have failed the child.
- The child was not allocated a place at the school of choice. In these cases, parents often want to access a school place and view elective home education as a stop-gap measure or, possibly, a way of applying pressure on the Local Authority to provide the place they seek.
- The parents are dissatisfied in some way with the school the child was previously attending. This may be associated with bullying or a perceived failure on the part of the school to deal with concerns.
- The parents wish to avoid a potential prosecution for poor attendance or non-attendance.
- Parents seek to avoid a threatened permanent exclusion.

Much home education is a deliberate choice, made for philosophical reasons. In a significant number of other cases it provides an expedient solution, sometimes temporary, to a particular issue the parent or the child faces. The involvement of the Local Authority in particular cases needs to be tailored to the circumstances, the predicted duration of home education and the likelihood of being able to address any difficulties which have caused the family to withdraw the child from school. However, the same criteria for judging the suitability and efficiency of the education provided should be used in all cases. The Local Authority must establish whether a family is genuinely providing education or whether it is simply avoiding engaging with the school system. In the latter case officers must consider both child protection and educational issues and respond accordingly within the legal frameworks available. Guidance is provided below.

Many parents make a success of home education and make at least satisfactory provision. However, because home-educated children are not monitored and supervised with the same frequency or attentiveness as might be the case when they attend a school there is the potential for neglect or abuse to go unnoticed. This possibility has been thrown into sharp

¹ Throughout this document, the term 'Parent' is taken to encompass carers.

relief by some recent high-profile cases in which children have been murdered by parents or carers who had opted for home education.

The law on what is required of parents and of Local Authorities in relation to Elective Home Education is imprecise. The current legal framework and its implications for the Local Authority's response are described below in the form of detailed information and guidance for officers.

Information and guidance

Parents' right to exercise choice

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child receives an *efficient full time education suitable to his or her age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise*². Education is statutory. Attendance at school is not.

A child is of compulsory school age from the school term after his/her 5th birthday until the last Friday in June of the academic year in which they reach the age of 16. There is no obligation to provide education before or after this period.

Usually, the responsibility to cause a child to receive education is discharged by enrolling him or her at a school. However, parents are at liberty to '*educate their child otherwise than at school*'. This is now generally referred to as providing *Elective Home Education*. In practice *education otherwise than at school* may be provided anywhere the parent decides and not just in the home. The general principle involved is that children are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents³.

Requirements on the parent

The law is less than clear over what parents are required to provide as part of Elective Home Education.

The basic legal requirement on parents to provide *efficient* and *suitable* education is not elaborated upon and the terms are not defined in statute. However, some clarification has been provided through case law.

In one case, *suitable education* was defined as '*education in line with the child's age, aptitudes and abilities and any special educational needs*'. This was further defined as education which enabled the children '*to achieve their full potential*', and was such as '*to prepare the children for life in modern civilised society*'. The educational provision offered might, therefore, be expected to offer not only knowledge, skills and understanding but some formal preparation for life in society, including social contact.

Elsewhere, suitable education was defined as one that '*primarily equips a child for life within the community of which s/he is a member, rather than the way of life in the country as a whole, as long as it does not foreclose the child's options in later years to adopt some other form of life if s/he wishes to do so*'.

Efficient education has been defined as '*provision which achieves what it sets out to achieve*'.

² Education Act, 1996, based on the wording of the 1944 Education Act.

³ In practice, the preferences expressed by parents in the context of Local Authority Provision, will be governed by the availability of provision and issues of cost-effectiveness. In the context of Elective Home Education, parents are responsible for financing whatever provision on which they decide. This is also likely to have a limiting effect.

Given that the terms are not defined in more than the above detail, there are significant problems in monitoring provision and in reaching definitive judgements, particularly where it appears that there are shortcomings of one kind or another.

It is essential to establish at an early stage what the parents' objectives are (what they set out to achieve). Only in this context can the *efficiency* of the provision be judged. The *suitability* of education is considerably harder to determine, except in the broadest terms, or where a child has specific needs, which must be met.

Local Authority's right to monitor

Guidance issued by the (former) Department for Children, Families and Schools⁴ in February 2010 made it clear that Local Authorities are expected to monitor elective home education. However, the legal position remains less definite than the guidance might imply.

Some previous guidance was established in case law⁵ which said '*an LEA⁶ is entitled, though not required, to make informal enquiries of parents*'. However, parents will be under no duty to comply. In his judgement, Lord Donaldson said, however, that it would be '*sensible for them to do so*'. If parents '*give no information or adopt the course ... of merely stating that they are discharging their duty without giving any details of how they are doing so, the LEA will have to consider and decide whether it 'appears' to it that the parents are in breach of Section 36 of the 1944 Act [now Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act]*'

In a previous case⁷, it was held that: '*...an education authority should not, as a matter of policy, insist on inspection in the home as the only method of satisfying themselves that the children were receiving full time education.*' However, in terms of gaining a reasonable picture of the *suitability* and *efficiency* of the provision, this appears to the Local Authority to be the best option. If parents refuse access, other approaches are possible and these are set out below.

Local Authorities have powers *to act* only if something comes to their attention which gives reason to suppose a breach of the parent's obligation to provide *suitable* education. The law gives no power or duty to investigate any instances of Elective Home Education which come to its attention, unless there are grounds for suspicion that a suitable education is **not** taking place. This is clearly an untenable position in that, without gathering information in a reasonably systematic way, the Local Authority will have little basis on which to judge.

The difficulties faced by Local Authorities were summed up by Ofsted in 2010:

The 1944 Education Act set out a parent's right to educate their child at home; this was confirmed in the 1996 Education Act. However, the parent is not required to inform either the local authority or any other public body that they are educating the child at home unless the child is to be removed from a special school. Local

⁴ Now the Department for Education (DfE)

⁵ (Phillips v Brown, Divisional Court [20 June 1980, unreported] Judicial review by Lord Justice Donaldson)

⁶ Local Education Authority, now called a Local Authority.

⁷ Lord Parker in the case of R v Surrey Quarter Sessions Appeals Committee, *ex parte* Tweedie (1963).

authorities therefore encounter serious barriers in carrying out their statutory duty 'to establish the identities, so far as it is possible to do so, of children in their area who are not receiving a suitable education' and finding out whether home-educated children are receiving an education which is 'suitable', 'efficient' and 'full-time', as required by the 1996 Education Act.⁸ The lack of definition in legislation or guidance about what constitutes a 'suitable' education presents authorities with a further barrier to fulfilling their duties.⁹

At the heart of these difficulties lie the following facts:

- Parents are not obliged to register their children as being home educated¹⁰. Many cases may be unknown to the Authority, particularly if a child has never been to school.
- Parents are not obliged to inform the Local Authority of any change of address. On this basis, children could disappear.
- The requirements on parents are, at best, ambiguous.
- There is no statutory right to see the parent or the child or to enter the place at which the child is educated, including the home.
- Monitoring is not required in law and it is therefore difficult to engage with parents who are resistant or resentful of Local Authority contact.

The above might lead a Local Authority to decide not to engage with monitoring Elective Home Education. However, despite clear difficulties and impediments, this Local Authority will do all it can to monitor each case which comes to its attention. This is viewed as important in order to safeguard children and to ensure that a suitable educational experience is provided, so children are enabled eventually to take their place in society and to contribute to it. Monitoring also provides the opportunity to offer parents advice and to signpost opportunities available. This is not a statutory role but is clearly desirable in the interests of supporting the children and families. The Local Authority subscribes strongly to its responsibility to act as Champion for the Child.

⁸ DCSF (2007); *Elective home education: guidelines for local authorities*, www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/publications/elective/

⁹ Ofsted (June 2010) *Local Authorities and Home Education*

¹⁰ Save in the case of pupils with statements who are leaving special schools to be home educated.

Guidelines and procedures

The following guidelines are to be used by relevant officers of the Local Authority. An overview of the procedures is shown in a [Flow Chart of Local Authority Procedures](#) (follow the link).

Identifying Elective Home Education cases

- It is important to ensure that cases of home education are known about at an early stage. Schools are under a duty to inform the Department where a pupil is removed from the school roll because a parent intends to provide home education¹¹. The Elective Home Education Manager will periodically encourage schools to do so.
- The school will de-roll pupils whom they understand are to be home educated using the 'MMM MMMM' code. This will ensure that the Common Transfer File is uploaded to the Lost Pupils Database.

The only circumstances under which parents are under an obligation to inform the Local Authority directly of the intention to home educate a child concerns pupils registered at a special school.

- Special schools should not automatically remove a child from their roll because a parent states that s/he intends to opt for home education.
- Parents must seek the consent of the Local Authority before making arrangements to home educate. Until this is provided, the child should be expected to attend school as normal. Failure to attend without reason should be treated as unauthorised absence.
- In the case of pupils with dual enrolment at a school and Local Authority-run referral unit or special school, the consent of both proprietors is required.

The Local Authority may also receive information that a child is either not attending schools and/or being home educated from a number of sources. These include: the Admissions team, Social Care, Truancy Patrols, Health services, Housing or other Local Authorities.

- In all cases where it becomes apparent that a child is being home educated, the guidelines below should be followed.
- If it is unclear whether a parent is simply absenting a child from school or providing education, the situation should be explored and clarified as a matter of urgency.
 - While a child remains on a school roll, the school should treat any ambiguous failure to attend as an unauthorised absence. On this basis an attendance officer can legitimately visit the home to explore the reasons for the absence. Schools must be advised to seek this service where any ambiguity over education provision exists.
 - If a child is not on roll at a school, the Children Missing Education Officer should investigate.
 - It should not be assumed that home education is being provided until a parent states that this is the case.

¹¹ Pupil registration regulations (2006)

Monitoring of Elective Home Education

Two sorts of contact will be made with parents who opt to home educate:

- Initial contact will be made by an Elective Home Education Officer. This will be aimed at establishing the position, gathering initial information and providing help if the parent is actually seeking a school place.
- Where parents intend to continue to home educate, the case will be assigned to an educational professional, usually a Senior Adviser from the School Improvement Service, to commence educational monitoring.

These roles are described in more detail below.

Relationships with parents

It is always desirable to develop and sustain supportive and productive relationships with children and parents engaged in elective home education. In practice, many parents make a good job of providing home education and in these circumstances relationships should be relatively straightforward. Clearly, relationships are likely to be more difficult if it emerges that provision is not suitable.

The Local Authority must operate professionally and must not shirk the clear imperative to seek (where possible) to identify both strengths and weaknesses in educational provision, or (particularly) to respond to any concerns over safeguarding.

Where it is necessary to point out weaknesses, officers should always seek to sustain positive relationships with the parent. It is important to encourage the parent to cooperate. If this is not done, monitoring may become difficult or impossible. However, it is vital that those carrying out monitoring do not become enmeshed in unprofessional collusion, by failing to note and act upon significant shortcomings. (See [Safeguarding](#) below.)

Preparation by the Elective Home Education Officer

- An initial visit will always be made by the Elective Home Education Officer (a member of the attendance team). Before arranging the initial home visit, the Officer will seek to answer the following questions:
 - **Is the child in the care of a Local Authority?**
 - (This can be checked with Social Care or the Officer responsible for maintaining Welfare Call). If yes, then contact with the allocated Social Worker must be made before contacting the family. Other Local Authority services involved with Children in Care must also be informed if a child is educated at home.
 - **Does the child have a statement of special education needs?**
 - (This can be checked with the Special Educational Needs Assessment and Review Team (SENART)). If 'yes', then contact must be made with the SENART case worker before contacting the family. The

requirements of the Statement must be met through Elective Home Education.

- **Is the child known to Social Care?**
 - Does the child have a Child Protection Plan? Is the child a ‘Child in Need’? (This can be checked via the Social Care Assessment Team).
 - If ‘yes’, then contact must be made with the allocated Social Worker before contacting the family.
 - If the child has been known to Social Care, but the case is not currently active, then a memo/letter must be sent to the Social Care Assessment Team informing them that the child is now educated at home.
 - In all cases, the officer designated to monitor the family must be informed and, briefed as appropriate.
- **Is the child a Gypsy/Roma/Traveller child?**
 - This may not be apparent until contact with the family is made.
 - If ‘yes’, then this information must be recorded and shared with anyone connected to the case.

Initial contact with the family by the Elective Home Education Officer

- The Elective Home Education Officer will send an appointment letter, or make personal contact, so that initial contact with the family can be made within one month of receiving information that the child is being home educated. This should allow time for the parent to prepare for the visit. There should be as little delay as possible in making this initial visit.
- An initial visit will be made by the Elective Home Education Officer. This will seek to establish a relationship with the parent and will provide information about their obligations.
- The parent should be invited to make a statement of their plans (what they are setting out to achieve). A form is included at [APPENDIX 1](#)). The parent is under no legal obligation to provide this information or to complete paperwork.
- The Elective Home Education Officer will seek to ensure basic information about the child and family is recorded. See [APPENDIX 1](#)).
- Other discussions may be held as appropriate, including the following:
 - The parent’s future intentions, for instance in relation to examinations;
 - The Local Authority’s process of monitoring, and the way it may assist the parent in doing the best possible job.
 - Sources of help and advice.
- It may also be appropriate to discuss the parent’s reasons for home educating. If the parent is not home-educating for philosophical reasons, it may be helpful to suggest ways of accessing a suitable and acceptable school place. See table below.
- If the child falls into a vulnerable group, including being known to Social Care, the Elective Home Education officer can complete the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). The information will be forwarded to the CAF team.

Responses to parents' different motivations for opting for Elective Home Education

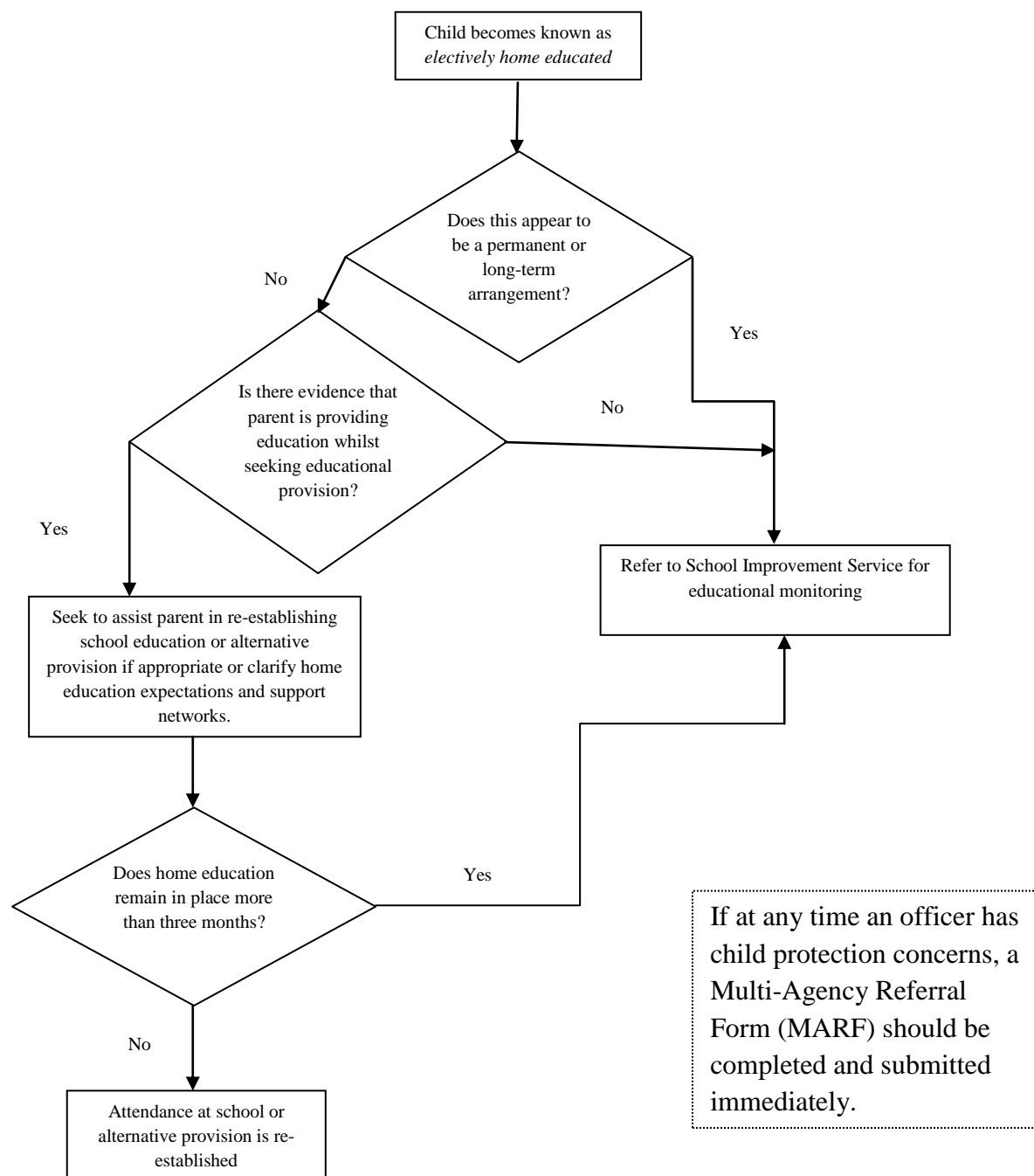
The following table lists the most frequently occurring reasons for parents' decisions to home educate, together with advice to officers on appropriate responses.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The parent has desire to educate their child in a way that they think is best, in line with their own social or religious philosophy. 	<p>→ Develop a relationship with the parent in order to establish arrangements for educational monitoring (see below)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The child has been unhappy at school or the parents are dissatisfied in some way with the provision made. 	<p>→ It is essential to seek to overcome the problem. If the parent is willing, the Elective Home Education Officer (or Attendance Officer) will liaise with the school to seek an acceptable remedy to the problem. If this is achieved, the child will resume schooling, with monitoring of the ongoing situation by the Attendance Officer.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The child was not allocated a place at the school of choice. 	<p>→ The Elective Home Education Officer will liaise with the parents and will seek to identify a suitable and acceptable school place. It will be made clear to the parent that they are expected to provide education until the child commences school. If the child fails to attend school within one month, steps will be taken to commence educational monitoring of home education in the usual way.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The parents wish to avoid a potential prosecution for poor attendance or non-attendance. 	<p>→ In practice, this will mean that a planned prosecution is not pursued. It is unlikely to be in the public interest to continue the prosecution.</p> <p>→ The Elective Home Education Officer must make the responsibilities of Home Education clear to the parent. Parents must understand that a failure to provide suitable and efficient education may still lead to legal proceedings in the form of a school attendance order.</p> <p>→ Educational monitoring will be commenced at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>→ Any failure to cooperate with educational monitoring will be followed up in the ways described below. If there are child protection concerns, these will also be followed up as below.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parents seek to avoid a threatened permanent exclusion. 	<p>→ All possible steps should be taken to avoid exclusion. If the parent is willing, the Elective Home Education Officer (or</p>

Attendance Officer) will liaise with the school. If the parent still decides on Home Education, educational monitoring will be commenced at the earliest possible opportunity and normal procedures will be used.

Decision on whether to refer the case for educational monitoring

The Elective Home Education Officer will discuss each case with his/her manager. A series of decisions need to be made, as shown in the chart below.



Educational monitoring

- Following an initial visit by the Elective Home Education Officer and where indicated in the flow chart (above), the case will be assigned to a Senior Adviser or Advisory Teacher, who will seek to establish a programme of monitoring.
- Where the family or the child is potentially vulnerable, arrangements will be made for a monitoring visit to be made at the earliest opportunity. See [Safeguarding](#) (below).
- If the child is not identified as vulnerable, the first monitoring visit will be made within a month (unless it proves impossible to make arrangements).
- It may sometimes be difficult to make arrangements for monitoring visits. If this is so, the case should be referred back to the Elective Home Education Manager for consideration of strategy.
- This first monitoring visit will be used partly to establish a positive relationship with the family and the child. The main priority is to gain a picture of what has been done so far and what the parent's objectives are for the future (what they set out to achieve).
- The legal expectations for home education should be discussed and explained as necessary. The officer should ensure that any description is in line with the law and should not be tempted to provide personal views about what is 'right'.
- Every effort should be made to see the child. If this is not achieved, the fact should be recorded on the monitoring form. This should, at the earliest opportunity, be drawn to the attention of the Elective Home Education Manager, who will explore information known to Social Care, Health and other agencies.
- If the child is known to Social Care or if the child has significant special educational needs, this information must be discussed with the officer assigned to monitor the case and at the termly meeting with Social Care staff (see below).

The basis of judgements

Education monitoring officers (Senior Advisers and Advisory Teachers) must take care to arrive at judgements in line with the law. A previous section indicates that the requirements on parents are, at best, ambiguous. However, it should be noted that the parents are specifically *not* required to:

- teach the National Curriculum or any national programmes of study;
- follow any form of standard timetable;
- meet age-related expectations;
- follow school term and holiday arrangements;
- teach for a specified number of hours per day.

Parents are also not obliged to engage with monitoring. The officer has no right of access to the home or to the child. However, see the guidance below on safeguarding children.

The criteria for judgements

As noted above, parents are required to provide *suitable* and *efficient* education. The terms are amplified below on the basis of case law and reasonable practical interpretations thereof.

- ***Suitable education*** – This is defined in case law as ‘*education in line with the child’s age, aptitudes and abilities and any special educational needs*’. This is further defined as education which enables children ‘*to achieve their full potential*’, and ‘*to prepare ... for life in modern civilised society*’.
 - Officers might legitimately argue that education which does not provide a reasonable range of subject matter, including access to basic skills of literacy and numeracy, ICT, and some knowledge and understanding of the world in which we live, would be failing to equip the child to take his/her place in modern civilised society.
 - Children’s social and emotional development are crucial. Those educated at home may not have as wide a range of possibilities in these areas as those who attend school. It is, therefore legitimate to expect parents to make provision for these areas. Contact with peers and the development of emotional resilience should be regarded as essential elements of equipping the child to take his/her place in modern civilised society.
 - The notion of reaching one’s full potential is problematic. However, a suitable education could reasonably be expected to provide some challenge and stretch to the child across a reasonably wide range of study.
 - Whilst the National Curriculum and national standards provide a benchmark for schools, these do not apply to Elective Home Education. Officers must be cautious about making assumptions that particular skills or knowledge should be gained by particular ages. They should be aware, for instance, that in most European countries, children do not start formally to, read, write or calculate until the age of six-and-a-half or seven.
 - There is some research that says ‘late readers’ can take off rapidly if not branded as a failure by an over-demanding education system at an early age.
- ***Efficient education*** – This is defined in case law as education which ‘*achieves what it sets out to achieve*’.
 - Implicit in this notion is that parents should know and articulate what they set out to achieve through the education they provide.
 - It is important that, at every visit, an Education Monitoring Officer establishes what the parent intends the child to learn next.
 - Subsequent judgements should be made in the light of parents’ stated objectives.
 - Parents may find it hard to specify their objectives and so rely on broad ideas, such as ‘read, write and do sums’. It is reasonable to assume that this would entail making progress in such areas between visits at a rate which appears to be in line with the child’s apparent ability.
 - It is legitimate to offer advice on realistic objectives for the next period of learning. Parents are not obliged to accept this advice.
 - In relation to a child’s social and emotional development, it would be legitimate to expect an efficient education to provide frequent and regular opportunities for social contact and interaction with his or her peers.

- The notion of ‘autonomous’ education is unconvincing in relation to the case-law definition of *efficient education*. Case law implies that the parent should have a clear idea of what they set out to achieve, not simply to follow the random choices of their child. It is probably insufficient for the parent simply to have the objective of teaching the child that which the child chooses to learn. There is, however, no case law to support this view.

Recording educational judgements

Judgements should be recorded on the forms provided at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

There are two versions.

The first ([APPENDIX 1](#)) is for the first educational monitoring visit, which seeks mainly to establish the parent’s objectives and the child’s achievements to date.

The second form ([Initial information on a child to be educated at home](#))

Parents/Guardians are asked to provide the following information about their child and their plans to educate him/her at home.

Name of child:	Date of birth	Current age
Names of parents/Guardians:		
Address of family home:		
Telephone (home):	Telephone (work):	Mobile:
Child’s last school:	Year group the child would be in if at school:	
What are you setting out to achieve through your home education? (What do you hope your child will learn over the next year (or more)?)		
What do you see as your child’s special interests and aptitudes? (What is he/she interested in or good at?)		
What do you plan to do to address your child’s special interests and aptitudes?		
Do you think your child has any special needs, for instance in terms of learning or social development? If so, what are they?		

If you said 'Yes' to the last questions, what to you plan to do to address these needs?	
What do you think your child has achieved since you began home education? (What has he/she learnt?)	

<p>What work have you been doing with your child since you started home education?</p>	
<p>How well do you think the work is going? Is there anything you need advice on?</p>	
<p>How do you see your child's educational future? For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you plan to keep home educating up to the age of 16? • Do you plan reintegration into school at any point? • What do you plan to do about public examinations or other qualifications? 	

Personal data in this form may be used only in accordance with London Borough of Barking and Dagenham notification under the Data Protection Act 1998 and in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. To comply with statutory and government requirements, data may be disclosed to external agencies such as (but not exclusively) local PCT, local NHS, care agencies police, or courts. London Borough Barking and Dagenham will not disclose any personal information to any other third parties, except where required by law, without the express consent of the data subject. From January 2005 personal data may, in exceptional circumstances where the public interest outweighs the individuals rights to privacy, be released under the auspices of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 2 Educational monitoring of elective home education) is to be used to record judgements made at subsequent visits and should focus on the progress made in relation to the parent's objectives. Both forms should be used to evaluate the suitability of the provision, taking into account the guidance offered above.

It is essential to note whether the monitoring visit took place in the home and whether the child was seen. The second form (Appendix B) requires specific information to be recorded.

If access to the child or the home was denied, the commentary should make clear, in professional terms, the degree to which the parent was willing to engage with the process and the nature of the interaction.

The officer will write a brief report after each visit and will send it to the parent for comment before it is finalised. In line with the reporting template:

- the report should provide clear judgements which should be justified by evidence and examples.
- a summary judgement should be made about the degree to which the provision is suitable
 - Positive judgements would be likely to arise from:
 - a curriculum which gives some emphasis to the development of basic skills, including ICT;
 - some depth of wider educational experience, including visits and social contact;
 - discussion with the child on some recent educational experiences which demonstrates growing knowledge and understanding. It is not necessary for all work to be recorded.
 - Negative judgements would be likely to arise from:
 - a limited curricular experience;
 - narrow completion of exercises;
 - lack of a coherent set of objectives for learning;
 - a failure to address identified special educational needs.
 - In these circumstances, the child may not be making progress and the provision could be judged to be inefficient. Bear in mind that progress is not simply about that which is recorded.
 - Where a child has identified special educational needs, the curriculum should make provision to address them. If necessary, the monitoring officer should seek expert advice.
 - The requirements on a Statement of SEN are expected to be met. If they are not, this must be raised immediately with SEN staff. The Local Authority's statutory role still applies.
- a summary judgement should be made about the efficiency of education. Is it achieving what the parent has set out to achieve? If insufficient progress is being made, the provision is likely to be inefficient.

The report should not include reference to national standards or National Curriculum expectations.

A summative judgement will be made from the following three descriptors.

- The provision is suitable
- The provision is generally suitable but needs the following improvements ...
- The provision is not currently suitable

The report will be sent to the parent, who will be invited to comment on it. If the parent makes comments within seven days, the monitoring officer will consider them and, if appropriate, modify the report to reflect them. If the comments cannot be accommodated within the report, they should simply be included in the parent’s comment box on the form.

The officer carrying out monitoring will send a final version of the report, amended as appropriate, within a further week. This report should be filed centrally by the Elective Home Education Officer.

Action to be taken where educational provision is unsuitable or inefficient is outlined below.

Timing of second and subsequent visits

The second, and subsequent visits will be timed on the basis of the previous evaluation. There are two versions of the relevant timescales, as shown in the following table. They refer respectively to children not known to be vulnerable and to those known to have potential vulnerabilities.

Any modifications of the frequency of visits to vulnerable children will be considered at strategy meetings.

<i>Existing educational judgement</i>	<i>Vulnerability judgement</i>	
	<i>Children who are not known to be vulnerable</i>	<i>Children who are vulnerable, particularly those who are known to social care services or have, or appear to have significant special educational needs or disability.</i>
Suitable provision	One year	Monthly until provisions is secure. Then extend visit periods to three months, then six months, then one year
Suitable but needs improvement	Six months	Monthly until suitable, then as above.
Unsuitable	Three months (or less, depending on issues and severity)	One month. Refer immediately to manager for strategy decision.
Unsafe (safeguarding concerns)	Contact lead professional immediately. Complete MARF and make referral.	

Making and recording judgements at second, and subsequent visits

- Second and subsequent visits should maintain a clear focus on progress and future plans.
- Parents and children should be asked to show the monitoring officer or explain what has been achieved since the last visit, particularly in terms of the previously stated objectives.
- Where progress has been good, the officer should say so.
- Where progress has been limited (always in relation to the parent's objectives) the monitoring officer should seek to agree this with the parent and suggest ways in which progress might be enhanced. The officer should make it clear that the parent is not obliged to follow advice but that the child is expected to make progress.
- It is vital to establish the parent's objectives for the next period. The officer should record what is said carefully since this statement is the basis for the judgement on the efficiency of the provision to be made at the next visit.
- The officer should record information and judgements under the headings on the form provided at [Initial information on a child to be educated](#) at home

Parents/Guardians are asked to provide the following information about their child and their plans to educate him/her at home.

Name of child:	Date of birth	Current age
Names of parents/Guardians:		
Address of family home:		
Telephone (home):	Telephone (work):	Mobile:
Child's last school:	Year group the child would be in if at school:	
What are you setting out to achieve through your home education? (What do you hope your child will learn over the next year (or more)?)		
What do you see as your child's special interests and aptitudes? (What is he/she interested in or good at?)		
What do you plan to do to address your child's special interests and aptitudes?		
Do you think your child has any special needs, for instance in terms of learning or social development? If so, what are they?		

If you said 'Yes' to the last questions, what to you plan to do to address these needs?	
What do you think your child has achieved since you began home education? (What has he/she learnt?)	

<p>What work have you been doing with your child since you started home education?</p>	
<p>How well do you think the work is going? Is there anything you need advice on?</p>	
<p>How do you see your child's educational future? For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you plan to keep home educating up to the age of 16? • Do you plan reintegration into school at any point? • What do you plan to do about public examinations or other qualifications? 	

Personal data in this form may be used only in accordance with London Borough of Barking and Dagenham notification under the Data Protection Act 1998 and in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. To comply with statutory and government requirements, data may be disclosed to external agencies such as (but not exclusively) local PCT, local NHS, care agencies police, or courts. London Borough Barking and Dagenham will not disclose any personal information to any other third parties, except where required by law, without the express consent of the data subject. From January 2005 personal data may, in exceptional circumstances where the public interest outweighs the individuals rights to privacy, be released under the auspices of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

- APPENDIX 2 Educational monitoring of elective home education. He or she should make evaluative comments about strengths and weaknesses, referring to suitability (whether the provision is suitable to the child's age, aptitude and any special educational needs) and efficiency (the degree to which the child has achieved what the parent set out to achieve).
- The officer should seek to agree the timescale for the next visit, based on the overall evaluation. The timescales are shown in the table above.
- It is essential to ensure that unsuitable, or barely suitable, provision for vulnerable pupils is recorded clearly and that the issue is referred to the Elective Home Education Manager for discussion at a managers' strategy meeting without delay.
- The Monitoring Officer should provide brief advice on ways in which the parent might make improvements. The parent is not obliged to follow the officer's advice.

Approaches to be adopted if the parent refuses to engage with those seeking to monitor educational provision

One website says: *'The Local Authority will need to be satisfied that the parent is willing and able to provide a suitable education. ... Local Authorities have no automatic right of access to parents' homes. Parents may wish to offer an alternative way of demonstrating that they are providing suitable education, for example through showing examples of work and agreeing to a meeting at another venue.'*

If a child is not known to be vulnerable, the above advice is acceptable. Parents may be invited to provide written evidence that the provision being made is both suitable and efficient. A letter for this purpose is provided at [Appendix 3 Standard letter in response to additional information provided by parents.](#)

However, if parents refuse to cooperate at all, the various attempts at making contact should be recorded and passed with urgency to the Elective Home Education Officer, using the form at [Appendix 4 Record of unsuccessful attempts made to monitor Elective Home Education.](#)

If the child is known to be vulnerable, a refusal to cooperate is more serious in view of the potential safeguarding risks. In these cases, any refusal to cooperate, including allowing access to both the child and the home, should be referred as a matter of urgency to the Elective Home Education Manager, who should, in turn refer the issue for discussion and decision to senior officers. See additional notes below on safeguarding.

Safeguarding

The Law says that a local education authority *shall make arrangements for ensuring that the functions conferred on them in their capacity as a local education authority are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.* This would include children who are electively home educated. Given that the Local Authority has little legal right to inspect or monitor elective home education, this duty is also difficult to enact.

In 2010, Ofsted¹² said:

... legislation has given local authorities statutory responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people within their boundaries.¹³ However, authorities cannot carry out these responsibilities effectively because they do not know of all the children in their area or where they are being educated. The local authorities visited were alerted by schools to children who were deregistered because their parents wanted to educate them at home and the authorities made contact with the parent. However, there was no reliable way to establish how many children were resident but 'invisible', having never entered the school system. Sharing information across a local authority depended largely on the quality of the professional relationships developed between education departments and health services.

A number of recent, high-profile cases in which children have been murdered whilst being electively home-educated suggest the following.

- Home-educated children are subject to less monitoring and scrutiny than those who attend school. Services are less likely to become aware of the signs of abuse or neglect.
- Parents of children with special educational needs, particularly those with complex and/or profound needs, are likely to struggle with the practical and emotional difficulties of providing home education. Such parents may lack the support of others and become isolated. There have been examples where these parents have resorted to desperate measures in the face of overwhelming challenges.

It is, therefore, vital to gather information about vulnerable children families and to share it systematically with relevant officers and workers. The following section provides information on the way this is to be done.

Action to be taken to safeguard children

The Elective Home Education Officer should have identified newly referred children who may be vulnerable. The following groups fall into this category¹⁴:

- Children in the care of a Local Authority.
- Children known to Social Care, including those who have a child protection plan or those who have been designated as children in need.
- Children who have previously been known to social care, but where the case is not currently active.

¹² Op cit.

¹³ Children Act 1989; Education Act 2002; Children Act 2004; *Working together to safeguard children*, DCSF 2006, revised 2010; www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/safeguardingandsocialcare/safeguardingchildren/workingtogether/workingtogethertosafeguardchildren/

¹⁴ This list is not exhaustive

- Children who have significant levels of special educational need, including those who have a statement or are awaiting one.
- Children who belong to Gypsy/Roma/Traveller groups.
- Children for whom a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) form has been created.
- Pregnant girls.

The Elective Home Education Officer and the Elective Home Education Manager will brief those designated to monitor particular cases about the family background and any relevant issues. Where necessary, the Elective Home Education Manager will consult and brief senior managers in the School Improvement Service and, for particularly vulnerable cases, the Director of Children's Services.

In relation to **vulnerable children**, the following guidelines must be followed:

- The Elective Home Education Officer will establish the identity of the Lead Professional for each vulnerable child and will ensure those carrying out monitoring have access to all relevant paperwork, including the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) form.
- Following the initial visit of the Elective Home Education Officer, educational monitoring should be commenced as rapidly as possible and in all events in under a month.
- If it proves impossible to see the child, the provision must automatically be viewed as unsuitable¹⁵. This should be explained to the parent. In these cases, strategy will be decided upon by managers.
- If the situation is considered to be potentially unsafe, a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) should be completed and submitted without delay.
- If it is not possible to arrange monitoring at all, the case should be referred to the Elective Home Education Manager for decision on strategy. The Manager should consider making an immediate referral to Social Care or the Police and should consult senior managers in the Education Division as necessary. The following appendices provide further guidance: [Appendix 5 Protocol for joint working with the Police to safeguard children who are receiving Elective Home Education](#) and

¹⁵ This is in line with guidance provided by the Department for Children, Families and Schools in February 2010.

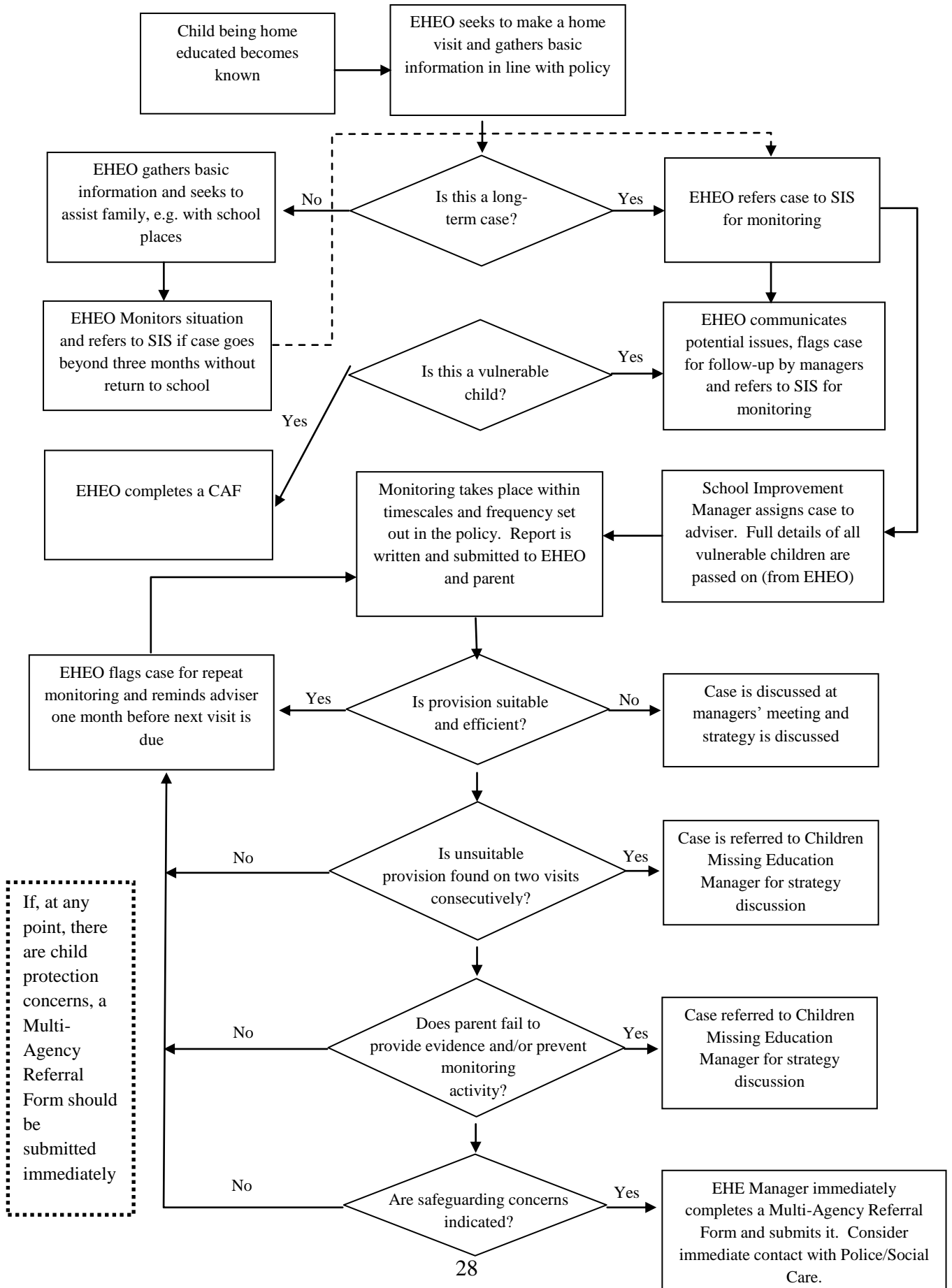
- [Appendix 6 Protocol for joint working between staff from Education and Social Care services to safeguard children who are receiving Elective Home Education](#)
- Cases which cause any concern should be discussed with senior managers in the Education Division at a meeting which should also include a designated representative of Social Care.
- Until the Education Monitoring Manager is confident that the provision is safe, suitable and efficient, monitoring should be attempted at no less than monthly intervals. If the child is not seen, attempts should be made to monitor again at the earliest opportunity. .
- If there are concerns about the immediate safety of the child consideration will be given to seeking the involvement of Social Care staff and/or the Police. See appendices referred to above.

Meetings of managers

In order to protect vulnerable children, the following steps must be taken:

- The Children Missing Education Manager shall convene a meeting on a half-termly basis to discuss vulnerable children and the information available as a result of monitoring, or attempts to monitor.
- The meeting will involve:
 - Elective Home Education Manager (also the Children Missing Education Manager)
 - Elective Home Education Officer
 - A Senior Manager from the Education Division
 - A Senior Manager from Social Care
- At the meeting, full details will be presented of the following:
 - Monitoring visits or meetings and judgements made in each case
 - Whether the child was seen, and any observations on his/her apparent wellbeing
 - Any difficulties in arranging monitoring visits
 - Whether there is evidence of neglect or abuse in relation to the provision being made
 - Any action required, particularly from Social Care or the Police in order to address immediate concerns or to enforce legal requirements.

Flow Chart of Local Authority Procedures



Action to be taken where provision is either not suitable or not efficient

1. The Local Authority's first objective is to help parents to succeed in what they are setting out to do. However, it is not the job of the Local Authority to intervene, to provide materials or to shore up unsuitable provision.
2. If, after two visits provision is not suitable and/or not efficient, the monitoring officer should consult the relevant manager with a view to taking action. The following actions will be taken by the Elective Home Education Manager and/or Senior Managers in the Education Division.
 - The evidence from monitoring activities will be reviewed. Is it clear that the provision is unsuitable and/or inefficient?
 - A letter will be sent to the parents, asking them to demonstrate that they are now providing suitable and efficient education as required.
 - The response of the parent will be acknowledged by the Elective Home Education Manager.
 - The response will be evaluated by the officer previously assigned to the case to monitor educational provision and the judgement will be sent to the Elective Home Education Manager. This must be done quickly and in writing. The judgement must be signed and dated, or sent by email. In these circumstances, a copy of the message must be archived.
 - The Elective Home Education Manager will inform the parent of the judgement.
 - If the parent has provided convincing evidence of a suitable education, monitoring will recommence by whatever means possible in no less than three months.
 - If the parent has not provided convincing evidence, the shortcomings or omissions in information will be advised in writing and the parent will be given a further short period to provide additional evidence.
 - If any further response does not provide suitable evidence, action will be taken to allocate a school place and to issue a School Attendance Order. This will be done as soon as possible.
 - If at any time the parent provides further evidence, this will be acknowledged and assessed as shown above and the resulting judgement will be notified. If the evidence suggests that the provision is then suitable and efficient, the process of issuing of the Attendance Order will be stopped and attempts will be made to resume normal monitoring.
 - A model letter showing possible responses to any additional information provided by a parent is included at [Appendix 3 Standard letter in response to additional information provided by parents](#).
3. If the parent acts on a School Attendance Order, the involvement of service will end.
4. If any further information is received during the process associated with issuing a School Attendance Order it must always be acknowledged and assessed. The evaluation must be made expeditiously and must be communicated at once to the parent.
5. If the parent fails to obey a School Attendance Order, it may be necessary to prosecute him or her. Under these circumstances, the Attendance team will pursue legal action. The following is likely to be required from the Elective Home Education Officer and the Education Monitoring Officer:
 - Copies of all of the reports sent to the parents, including the judgements made and the explanation given.

- A witness statement, summarising the processes followed, the judgements included in the reports, and the reasons for the judgements made at various stages.
- Attendance at the Magistrate’s Court as a witness. This would involve a commitment of several days and is likely to include some detailed cross-examination by both the prosecution and the defence lawyers.

Additional guidance for particular cases

When the parent does not provide information regarding the education provision or decides to stop Elective Home Education and requests a school place

- The Elective Home Education Officer will liaise with the Admissions Department regarding allocation of a suitable school place/education provision. If the school place is not taken up, then further consideration will be given to instigating a School Attendance Order (sect 437 – 443, Education Act 1996).

If the child has a statement of special needs

- SENART must be informed/involved

When confirmation is required that a child is now on roll at a school

- The Elective Home Education Officer will contact the school to confirm that the child is on roll and the Elective Home Education case can be closed.

When the whereabouts of the child is not known;

- The Elective Home Education Officer will undertake investigations to locate where the child is living.
- If the child is discovered to have moved home, but still resides in the borough, the case will be referred back to the Education Monitoring Officer.

If the child has been located living in another borough

- The relevant Local Authority will be informed.

If the whereabouts of the child is not discovered

- The case will be referred to the Children Missing Education Officer for investigation.

Elective Home Education and SEN

This section is written in the light of guidance from The Department for Children, Schools and Families issued guidance, in February 2010.

Pupils with a statement

The Statutory Review of a SEN Statement for an Electively Home Educated child is also to include an annual review of that child’s Elective Home Education provision. The review will be called and administered by the SEN Assessment and Review Team (SENART). The monitoring officer should contribute to the review. Preferably the review will take place in the family home following on immediately from a visit by the monitoring officer.

School Action Plus

Pupils who had been on a school roll and who had received *school action plus* in relation to special educational needs may continue to receive support from the Local Authority in relation to his/her identified needs. This is not a statutory obligation but may be regarded as good practice. For any Local Authority support to be practicable, the parent will need to engage with officers and allow monitoring activity.

Record keeping and paperwork

The Elective Home Education Officer will be responsible for making sure that all Elective Home Education paperwork (including paperwork from Education Monitoring Officers) is placed on file in the Attendance Team filing system in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board Recording Standards.

Elective Home Education Database

The Elective Home Education Manager will be responsible for ensuring the Elective Home Education database (containing the information of both the Attendance Team and the Education Monitoring Officers) is maintained.

The Elective Home Education database will be maintained in an agreed format and will be integrated into the Local Authority's Case Management System as soon as this is practical.

APPENDIX 1 Initial information on a child to be educated at home

Parents/Guardians are asked to provide the following information about their child and their plans to educate him/her at home.

Name of child:	Date of birth	Current age
Names of parents/Guardians:		
Address of family home:		
Telephone (home):	Telephone (work):	Mobile:
Child's last school:	Year group the child would be in if at school:	
What are you setting out to achieve through your home education? (What do you hope your child will learn over the next year (or more)?)		
What do you see as your child's special interests and aptitudes? (What is he/she interested in or good at?)		
What do you plan to do to address your child's special interests and aptitudes?		
Do you think your child has any special needs, for instance in terms of learning or social development? If so, what are they?		
If you said 'Yes' to the last questions, what to you plan to do to address these needs?		
What do you think your child has achieved since you began home education? (What has he/she learnt?)		

<p>What work have you been doing with your child since you started home education?</p>	
<p>How well do you think the work is going? Is there anything you need advice on?</p>	
<p>How do you see your child's educational future? For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you plan to keep home educating up to the age of 16? • Do you plan reintegration into school at any point? • What do you plan to do about public examinations or other qualifications? 	

Personal data in this form may be used only in accordance with London Borough of Barking and Dagenham notification under the Data Protection Act 1998 and in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. To comply with statutory and government requirements, data may be disclosed to external agencies such as (but not exclusively) local PCT, local NHS, care agencies police, or courts. London Borough Barking and Dagenham will not disclose any personal information to any other third parties, except where required by law, without the express consent of the data subject. From January 2005 personal data may, in exceptional circumstances where the public interest outweighs the individuals rights to privacy, be released under the auspices of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 2 Educational monitoring of elective home education

Notes on a discussion with Local Authority Adviser

Name of child:	Date of birth	Current age
Names of parents/Guardians:		
Address of family home:		
Telephone (home):	Telephone (work):	Mobile:
Child's last school:	Year group the child would be in if at school:	
Date of this meeting or visit:		

<i>On what information (evidence) is this informal enquiry based?</i>
<i>Where did the meeting take place?</i>
<i>Was the child seen? (Yes/No)</i>
<i>Visit number since the child commenced elective home education:</i>
<i>Date of the previous visit:</i>
<i>What has the parent been setting out to achieve (brief details only, based on previous information)?</i>

Based on the available information:

- *How successful has the parent been in achieving what he/she set out to achieve?*
- *Has the child learned efficiently? Has satisfactory progress been made?*

How suitable is the education?

- *To what degree does the work covered match the age, aptitudes and any special needs the child has?*
- *To what degree does it promise to enable the child to take his/her place in a civilised, modern society?*

Comments from parent (to be added or described once the draft notes have been seen)

<i>Overall evaluation (Tick appropriate box and complete additional information)</i>	
The provision is suitable. In line with Local Authority policy, visit again within ___ month(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
The provision is generally suitable but needs the following improvements:	<input type="checkbox"/>
The provision is not currently suitable because:	<input type="checkbox"/>

Date of this set of notes: _____

Signature: _____

Name and job title: _____

Appendix 3 Standard letter in response to additional information provided by parents

Please note that this sample letter only suggests responses, which can be modified to suit the circumstances of the case. Typically, this sort of letter will be sent where parents refuse visits and choose to provide written evidence. It will also be applicable where a decision has been made to issue a School Attendance Order and parents have responded to a request for additional information aimed at showing that the provision is now suitable and efficient.

Dear

Elective Home Education

Thank you for sending additional information about the provision you are making for NNN's education. Your letter was received on XXX and we understand that the information is retrospective and covers the period from XXX to XXX. We have looked carefully at the information and are grateful for the effort you have put into producing it.

We find [choose one of the following]

- that your information provides good evidence that you are providing suitable educational experiences and that NNN is learning from them. You show convincingly that NNN is achieving what you previously set out to achieve. This leads us to believe that the provision is efficient.
- you are clearly providing a range of interesting activities. Unfortunately, you do not provide any evidence of what NNN has learnt as a result and we cannot therefore be assured that the provision is efficient. If you wish to offer further information, we would be delighted to accept it.
- your description provides some information about what you are doing, but we cannot be sure that it is achieving what it sets out to achieve in terms of N's learning. As I have explained before, a key evaluation we have to make concerns progress made and your report does not provide evidence of this. If you wish to offer further information, we would be delighted to accept it. Please let me know if you would like to discuss this.
- Because we are still not assured that you are providing suitable and efficient education I am recommending that the Council should continue to pursue and School Attendance Order. We are happy to receive further information from you if you wish to provide it.

Yours sincerely

Appendix 4 Record of unsuccessful attempts made to monitor Elective Home Education

This form should be used to record all unsuccessful attempts to make arrangements to monitor Elective Home Education. The record must be accurate since the evidence could be used in any legal action which may be decided upon.

Details of child and parents

Name of child:	
Date of birth:	
Address:	
Name of parent:	

Attempts to make arrangements

Date	Description of request and means of attempting contact. Details of any response.

Appendix 5 Protocol for joint working with the Police to safeguard children who are receiving Elective Home Education

Protocol – Police

Rationale (why this protocol is needed)

It is vital to protect all children and to ensure that they access education in line with legal requirements. From time to time the local authority becomes aware that children may be living at particular addresses, but little or no other information is available. Such children are potentially vulnerable to neglect or abuse and it is therefore essential to establish basic information about them.

Purpose (what this protocol is intended to achieve)

The use of this protocol will assist in establishing the existence of children previously unknown to agencies and whether their parents or carers are causing them to receive education where they are of statutory school age. In turn this is likely to enable services to provide advice and assistance as required, or to take action should it be discovered that there is cause for concern.

Guidelines (agreements on what should be done, and how)

- Where a child or children are reported as living in Barking and Dagenham and it appears that they are not receiving education through the school system, agencies will bring the case to the attention of the Missing Children Officer (School Improvement Service).
- All databases will be searched for educational registration. Enquiries will be made of all other agencies to establish the identity of the child living at the address where reported.
- If evidence suggests that the child or children are of statutory school age, but are not receiving education at a maintained school or a private school, an education officer will visit in order to gather information about the educational provision being made. If it appears that no education is being offered, (at school or otherwise than at school) normal procedures will be followed to offer a school place and (if necessary) to enforce regular attendance. If the parent is home educating the child, normal monitoring arrangements will be attempted.
- If there are ongoing concerns about the child, for instance where contact cannot be established with the residents of the address, the Children Missing Education Officer will gather all available evidence and will call a multi-agency meeting to discuss strategy. The participants will include XXXXXXXXXXXXX.
- The strategy meeting will pool such information as exists and evaluate risks to the child or children.
- The police [DETAILS] will work with local authority services to seek to establish the identity and circumstances of the child. This is likely to involve unannounced visits to the address, if necessary with [XXX].

- Where information gathered indicates that an offence has been committed, appropriate legal remedies will be instituted. Strategies will be decided upon by the multi-agency group in order to secure the safety, well-being and education of the child as appropriate.

Appendix 6 Protocol for joint working between staff from Education and Social Care services to safeguard children who are receiving Elective Home Education

Children for whom access to suitable education causes concern

Protocol – Agreements between Social Care and Education Services

Rationale (why this protocol is needed)

A number of high-profile cases suggest that risks are sometimes increased where vulnerable children are not seen regularly, for instance at school. Where children are known or suspected to be at risk of neglect or abuse, poor school attendance or a parent's decision to home educate, offer additional risks. It is essential that social care and education services work in close collaboration to assess risk and, where necessary, to seek to reduce it.

Purpose (what this protocol is intended to achieve)

This protocol will help education and social care services to work together and share information, so reducing risks to vulnerable children who have low school attendance or who are home educated.

Guidelines (agreements on what should be done, and how)

Social Care staff will:

- regularly seek information on the school attendance when a child (or his/her sibling) is known to Social Care services;
- view school attendance of less than 80% (measured cumulatively on a half-termly basis within a school year) as a possible indicator of neglect;
- work with Education (School Improvement) staff and schools to seek to improve low attendance;
- identify any child known to Social Care who is being electively home educated;
- regard elective home education of a child with special educational needs as an additional safeguarding risk factor;
- inform Children Missing Education Manager (Education) of any case of elective home education of which they become aware;
- share information with School Improvement Staff in relation to a parent's capacity to home educate;
- take into account reports from Education staff who are seeking to monitor elective home education. Where access to the home is denied to Education staff, work in collaboration to seek to explore the suitability of provision being made.

Education staff will:

- provide, on request, information on school attendance for particular children known to Social Care services;

- work with social workers and schools to seek to improve the attendance of vulnerable children;
- share information on children who are electively home educated with Social Care staff;
- take into account Social Care findings when arriving at judgements about the suitability of elective home education. Start with the hypothesis that any neglectful parent is unlikely to be providing suitable home education;
- in cases where a child has special educational needs or disabilities, and/or is (or has been) subject to a *child protection plan*:
 - start with the hypothesis that provision for elective home education may be *unsuitable*¹⁶;
 - regard any failure to allow access to the child as evidence that provision may be unsuitable;
 - work together with Social Care staff to explore the degree to which suitable and efficient education are being provided and share information in order to arrive at a judgement.

¹⁶ Elective home education should be *suitable* and *efficient*. These terms have some limited legal definitions, which must be used when evaluating the provision made.