

This matter is being dealt with by:
Marion Clay
Reference: Cllr P Owen/CR
T 0115 9772502
E supporttoschools@nottscc.gov.uk
W nottinghamshire.gov.uk

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To be opened by addressee only

The Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP
Secretary of State for Education
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Mr Hinds

22 May 2018

I am writing to you as Chairman of Nottinghamshire's Children and young People's Committee to formally express the concerns of both myself and my Committee and senior Members with regard to the ongoing increase in the number of known children being Electively Home Educated in this County.

Nottinghamshire's Children and Young People's Committee on 23rd April 2018, received a report providing an update on Elective Home Education. This Committee regularly receives formal reports on Elective Home Education and other matters regarding the education and safety of children and young people in Nottinghamshire's publicly funded schools and academies. The purpose of this letter is to ensure that you are aware of the high level of concern that I have about the ongoing increases in the number of children and young people being home educated and the urgent need for mandatory registration.

This update report of 23 April 2018 is attached and captures in more detail the issues and concerns of Members and officers within this Council. It is of further concern that since presenting the April Report, which incorporated the EHE data as of February 2018 with 619 children known to be EHE, these numbers have continued to rise; as of 15 May 2018, there are 711 children and young people formally registered as EHE. The needs of this cohort continue to cause significant concern with most presenting with additional special needs.

Whilst we will be formally contributing to the DfE's Consultation, 'Home Education – Call for Evidence and revised DfE guidance', it seems to me as Chairman of Nottinghamshire's Children and Young People's Committee that there is an urgency to immediately address within an academised sector, the relentless increase in secondary aged pupils in particular, becoming home educated. Consultations are processes that take time to inform national policy development. It is apparent to my Committee that it is simply far too easy for academies to advise parents to home educate children and young people whose needs should quite clearly be met in publicly funded academies.

I would welcome assurance from you as Secretary of State for Education of the immediate actions that you can and will take to address this alarming rise in the number of children being withdrawn from academies in particular, to apparently be educated at home.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Philip Owen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and a trailing flourish.

Cllr Philip Owen
Chairman
Children and Young People's Committee

cc Ofsted
Chair of Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Board
Regional Schools Commissioner
Edward Timpson MP

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of Colin Pettigrew
Sent: 30 July 2019 11:25
To: Debbie Lee
Subject: FW: Elective Home Education

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 May 2019 11:50
To: [REDACTED]
Colin Pettigrew <Colin.Pettigrew@nottsc.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Elective Home Education

[REDACTED] – thanks – keep us updated. Disappointing that parents are not meeting HMI – they need to think of other ways to speak to them! Telephone calls!!!

[REDACTED]

Service Director
Education, Learning and Skills
Children and Families
Nottinghamshire County Council
NG2 7QP
Telephone 01159 77 3589
PA Bridgette Barlow

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 May 2019 11:40
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Elective Home Education

Morning,
I have had a very useful interview with two HMIs on the transition from school to EHE.

Now they are meeting with senior staff from Magnus, Kimberley, Manor and Bramcote.

It looks like there are no EHE parents or children coming to this afternoon's session, which seems not unusual, the HMIs said, as this was organised too quickly for that to be successful - plus the fact that the Edwinstowe venue is miles distant from where the schools and families are.

More later,
[REDACTED]

Sent from my Windows Phone

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 02/05/2019 12:31
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Elective Home Education

[REDACTED]

Just a prompt to discuss how to set up and mediate a HT working party around EHE. Christine will be keen to hear from us sooner rather than later

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

Service Director
Education, Learning and Skills
Children and Families
Nottinghamshire County Council
NG2 7QP
Telephone 01159 77 3589
PA Bridgette Barlow

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 April 2019 09:24
To: [REDACTED]head@elizabethan[REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Bridgette Barlow <Bridgette.Barlow@nottscc.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: Elective Home Education

[REDACTED] please find attached the letter which was sent to [REDACTED]; this was posted out on 2 April and hopefully the hard copy has reached you by now but just in case please find attached an electronic version.

Many thanks [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Business Support Administrator - Central Services Business Support
County Hall
Nottinghamshire County Council

[REDACTED]

The following message has been applied automatically, to promote news and information from Nottinghamshire County Council about events and services:

Do you know anyone that has recently graduated or due to graduate from university this summer? If they are a Nottinghamshire resident, they could be eligible to apply for the Council's Graduate Development Programme to start September 2019. Applications open to County Council employees also. [Find out more](#). Closing date 30 April 2019

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This matter is being dealt with by:

Reference:

T 0115 9772505

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Martyn Oliver
CEO OGAT

06 March 2019

Dear Martyn,

Unfortunately I have not been able to locate the copy of the letter sent to North Notts college some months ago. [REDACTED] and I am unable to locate my emails from before December 2018 at this time. I am also aware that the communication was sent at the time that [REDACTED] left the College, although was not aware of this at the time the mail was sent.

I understand why you will be keen to evidence to Ofsted that the matters around EHE have been discussed with the LA and I certainly can confirm that this is the case. We have over time also raised concerns directly with the local college's approach to marketing EHE students.

Whilst we are aware that OGAT is implementing plans to reduce both the number of children moving onto EHE particularly from KS4, as well as the number of fixed term exclusions, the LA will continue to have concerns about the impact of fixed term exclusions on young people and about any young person who is so readily prepared to move from a high performing school to a part time college EHE provision.

LA partnership teams will continue to challenge any practice across Nottinghamshire where concerns become apparent.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Service Director
Education, Learning and Skills
Nottinghamshire County Council

This matter is being dealt with by:

[REDACTED]

T 0115 9773589

E [REDACTED]@nottsc.gov.uk

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**Nottinghamshire
County Council**

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[REDACTED], Principal
The Elizabethan Academy
Hallcroft Road
Retford
Nottinghamshire
DN22 7PY

2 April 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter of 8th March expressing your extreme concern regarding the number of vulnerable students whose parents are electing to home educate and asking schools to remove from roll.

The County Council shares your concern and has frequently voiced it in a number of forums, including communication with the Secretary of State in 2018. As you will be well aware, the number of children being withdrawn from school to be home educated by parents/carers is increasing inexorably and comprises a disproportionate amount of students with complex needs and states of significant vulnerability. NCC is very concerned about the high numbers of children being off-rolled and the unregulated simplicity of the process that enables so many parents/carers to choose this option.

I would also agree that a long overdue co-ordinated response by government and local authorities must be part of a strategy to ensure the safeguarding of home educated children and note that today the DfE has announced plans to establish mandatory registration of all children not educated in school. Consultation has begun on 'proposed legislation to establish a register maintained by local authorities of children not attending mainstream schools, together with associated duties on parents.' and, in addition, '.... consults on proposed legislation to establish a duty to support parents who educate children at home and seek support from their local authority in doing so.'

NCC maintains an EHE team of four staff at County Hall and sixteen EHE advisers, who register all children being withdrawn and arrange contact with the overwhelming majority of home educating families that agree to LA involvement. Central to this process are the safeguarding checks carried out with Social Care, Family Service and NHS agencies, that in some cases lead to a child being retained on roll by a school - as the risks of home education and severance of links with day-to-day services are judged too high for off-rolling to be safe. In many other cases, Intervention Visits by our EHE advisers enable a child to return to school or access other appropriate provision without being withdrawn from the safety net of LA provision.

For vulnerable families to be adequately supported at such crucial times, requires a high level of co-ordination between schools and services, and particularly with the NCC EHE team. Much development work has been achieved with schools so that early intervention can occur before the final decision to home educate has been confirmed by parents/carers. However, this is not uniformly demonstrated across secondary schools, especially, in the county; some EHE parents have reported that they have been actively encouraged by academies to remove their child from the academy to electively home educate thus avoiding the need for either a fixed term or permanent exclusion. Clearly, when this becomes known to the LA, in every case, this is

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challenged. Sadly, however, this is often too late when the relationships between vulnerable families and academies have fractured if not broken down completely.

We would very much welcome building a proactive relationship with Elizabethan Academy, as you suggest, and would propose that your academy join a working group being considered by NCC, including other headteachers, to agree 'best practice' in terms of a structured conversation which schools might carry out in all cases where a parent requests moving to EHE.

I look forward to hearing from you again about this matter and meanwhile would remind you that the EHE team, and other NCC services, are available at all times to discuss and intervene early in situations where home education is being considered as an option. In this way, we will be able to at least monitor the safety of some of our most vulnerable children and in some cases, ensure that they remain in school or other formal educational provision.

The EHE team may be contacted on 0115 9772573 or at ehe@nottscc.gov.uk

Yours sincerely




**Service Director
Education, Learning & Skills
Children and Families
Nottinghamshire County Council**

CC:

Mr J Mann, MP

Mr J Edwards, Regional Schools Commissioner

 Elective Home Education Manager, Nottinghamshire County Council
Rachel Green, Project Lead, North East Midlands Team, Academy and Regional Delivery
Directorate, Ofsted

In addition to Cllr Owen's letter to the Secretary of State of 22 May 18, which you already have, I have located in Directorate records an emailed response from Edward Timpson MP's office which, in turn, encloses a letter of response from Lord Agnew.

Please note that the email from Edward Timpson's office erroneously refers to Nottingham **City** Council throughout.

Dear Bridgette

Further to our telephone conversation this morning, I can confirm Edward Timpson received a copy of Cllr Phillip Owen's letter dated May 2018. For ease I have attached a copy of Lord Agnew's letter in response to the concerns raised.

In order for the review to be comprehensive, practical and authoritative, Edward has ensured it has been informed by those with experience working in schools and associated settings together with children who have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion. That is why the evidence to inform the review was gathered in three key phases:

1. Open engagement, through a call for evidence open to all inviting information views and evidence (March to May 2018)
2. Targeted engagement, this included visits to areas highlighted as examples of particularly interesting practice. The review also maintained a focus on those children most likely to be excluded through focussed roundtables on:
 - children with SEND;
 - children in need, looked after children and adopted children; and
 - BAME children

There were also roundtables on cross cutting themes of academic evidence and behaviour.

3. Focussed deep dives in which evidence was gathered from a range of perspectives including mainstream, special and AP schools, local authorities, parents and pupils.

On 16th and 17th July members of the Exclusions Team and Exclusions Reference Group visited Nottinghamshire City Council as part of the Deep Dive phase noted above. We met with Colin Pettigrew, Director of Children Families and Cultural Circumstances and [REDACTED] Group Manager School Improvement, Strategic Planning and Admissions who arranged a series of meetings with members of the City Council, school leaders, inclusion leads and members of the following partnerships/Trusts:

- Mansfield, Newark, and Bassetlaw Partnership
- Stone Soup Alternative Provision
- Delta Trust/Bassetlaw Partnership, North Ashfield and Gedling Partnerships
- Outwood Grange Academy Trust (OGAT)
- DALP Schools – Academy Trust

As a result we were able to gain a full understanding of good practice, challenges and concerns in this complex area. I can confirm Edward very much valued the contribution

Nottinghamshire City Council has made to the review. His Exclusion Review Report and Government's response will be published early 2019.

With kind regards

Senior Policy Advisor Exclusions Team
SEND, Alternative Provision and Attendance Unit (SAPAU)
Social Care, Mobility and Disadvantage
Level 1, Bishopsgate House, Feethams, Darlington, DL1 5QE
Web: www.gov.uk/dfe
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Facebook: www.facebook.com/educationgovuk



From: Bridgette Barlow
Sent: 18 December 2018 17:24
To: MINISTERS
Subject: Letter from Cllr Philip Owen: Elective Home Education

Dear Mr Timpson

Could we please draw to your attention Councillor Philip Owen's letter of 22 May 2018 to the Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP, into which you are copied. A copy of that letter is attached, for ease of reference.

We look forward to receiving a response at your earliest convenience.

Kind regards