

Strategy for Supporting Home-Educated Learners in Vulnerable Circumstances

*We recognise that most families provide time and resources to successfully electively home educate their children and we respect this decision. This strategy relates to children and young people whose circumstances indicate that elective home education may not be suitable for their age, ability and aptitude.

This strategy is a shared approach—created to respect families' rights while enabling local authorities to fulfil their responsibilities.

Strategic Overview

Section	Focus	Key Points	Intended Impact
Purpose	Why the strategy exists	Respects parental choice; focuses on children where EHE may not be suitable; shared responsibility between families and LA	Balanced, lawful, child-centred decision-making
Values	How we work	<p>Child centred -Creative, innovative and flexible Education tailored to individual needs, interests, and pace.</p> <p>Respect for Autonomy- Empowering families and learners to make informed educational choices with clear, honest and freely accessible guidance</p> <p>Responsibility and Accountability- Ensuring education meets legal requirements and supports learner progress.</p> <p>Equity of Access-Striving to remove barriers so all families and young people within them can build supportive networks with professionals, educators, and communities and so can access resources and support whatever their needs and current circumstances.</p> <p>Transparency-Clear, non-judgemental communication between families and local authorities.</p>	Trust, consistency, and fairness
Vision	What good looks like	We want every young person to grow in confidence, supported by families who feel respected, informed, and empowered. Learning should fit each child – be flexible, personal, and at their own pace—while meeting legal requirements and helping them make progress. We will build positive relationships with families through open, honest communication and make sure information is easy to access so that children have the skills to access opportunities to move on and excel.	Positive outcomes and future pathways
Ambitions	What we aim to achieve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build honest, transparent, respectful, and trusting relationships between families and the local authority. • Support high-quality and flexible education tailored to the child’s educational needs. • Work together with other services to ensure safe learning environments for each child. • Offer helpful information and resources to all and support those who are seeking it. • Schools, services, and EHE officers will work closely and promptly to support families where EHE might not be fully elective. • Children’s opinions, thoughts, and feelings are taken into account at each stage. • EHE children have fair access to appropriate support back into an education setting where this is indicated as needed. • Parents feel supported, have the necessary information, and are able to take steps to return their child to an education setting where this is deemed most appropriate. • Possible access for specific families to Functional Skills literacy and numeracy to open pathways and build confidence in abilities. • Clear and consistent communication. • Officers have self-awareness of the impact on families of the processes. • Parents are well-informed and confident about their rights and responsibilities, supported to make decisions that are right for their child, and empowered to engage in constructive conversations with schools and local authority officers. They also know what they can reasonably expect from schools and the local authority in terms of support for their child’s access to a suitable education. 	Reduced conflict; improved suitability

Key Priorities (What We Will Do)

Priority	Focus	Core Actions	Primary Partners
Early Identification of Vulnerability	Prevent EHE children becoming invisible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively identify children who may be at risk due to factors such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Previous safeguarding concerns ➢ Known involvement with social care ➢ Domestic abuse, parental ill health, or isolation from wider society ➢ Severe or persistent absence whilst at school ➢ Multiple suspension and permanent exclusion from school ➢ Additional needs that may not as yet be fully identified or a child with an EHC plan who may be awaiting a placement outside of mainstream. ➢ Emotionally based school avoidance ➢ Frequent previous episodes of EHE • Ensure these risk factors are known and shared with CYP services and schools. • Use professional curiosity and multi-agency data sharing to avoid children becoming ‘invisible’ to services • Ensure any child who is not in school/EHE is instantly identifiable from the basic demographics page on Liquid Logic • All staff in CYP services to complete a mandatory e-learning module on responsibilities for children not in school, including EHE children. This should include the potential impact on their risk of becoming not in education, employment or training. (NEET) • Information to be provided to the integrated front door and the system for doing that is established. 	EHE Team Education and Learning services Family Support Social care services
Safeguarding as a Core Responsibility	Keep children safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all CYP teams recognise that while most home-educated children thrive, the absence of school removes a key protective factor for others and ask them to ensure this is reflected in their processes and threshold decisions. • Ensure robust safeguarding checks when concerns arise, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Liaising with social care ➢ Escalating through statutory processes if harm is suspected ➢ Consideration via the EHE panel of any need for welfare visits ➢ Any non-response to annual requests for information are prioritised for this group and processes reflect this ➢ Consultants are invited to statutory meetings for children with social workers ➢ CIN and CP plans are reviewed and reflect the change of education provision and risk assessments around frequency of statutory visits are completed. 	Social Care, Safeguarding Leads, EHE Team
3. Multi-Agency Collaboration	Joined-up response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share EHE data across children’s services to monitor trends and respond quickly to emerging risks and via the Children Not in school dashboard. • EHE officers to alert, challenge and work closely and promptly with schools, CYP services, and any other involved service to support families where EHE might not be fully elective to be able to return to school or access suitable education via EHE or otherwise. • EHE leads and consultants build relationships with schools to produce packs of information about EHE, the process, and LA expectations • Ensure all schools have accessible information to share with parents about the full implications and responsibilities around elective home education and the possible impact of the decision on their child’s access to education, employment and training. • Risk factors for a child becoming non-electively home educated are shared with all CYP services and schools • Clear pathways and criteria are developed within CYP education and learning services, for an EHE child who is not in receipt of a suitable education and other needs that may present a barrier to immediate attendance are clearly evidenced, can quickly access the support needed to return to a suitable education setting. 	Schools, CYP Services, Education & Learning

4. SEND & Mental Health Support	Equity for additional needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share data with the SEND/Inclusion leadership on the number and profile of EHE children with SEND termly, so it can inform comparisons with overall trends, sufficiency planning, and targeted work with schools to support inclusion. • Social Care, and Family Support teams will work collaboratively to encourage parents to actively participate in Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) reviews. Where parents do not engage, this will be considered as a potential failure to provide a suitable education, and teams will respond in line with their established processes. • EHE officers will signpost to family support, mental health services, and SEND support if needed • Education and learning services will identify and ensure information is available to health services to be able to offer equality of access to services for all EHE children, particularly those who internalise rather than externalise trauma. 	SEND & Inclusion, Health, Social Care
5. Positive Engagement with Families	Build trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all correspondence with parents via letters, emails and website reflects and open, respectful and accessible communication between parents and professionals • EHE officers build trust through non-judgmental communication and clear, accessible information about responsibilities and expectations of the LA in regard to EHE • EHE officers ensure they are up to date and aware of available support in their area so they can provide advice on curriculum, safeguarding, and social opportunities for children • All officers will avoid adversarial approaches, demonstrating restorative practice models of support and challenge, unless education is demonstrably unsuitable • EHE officers maintain knowledge by sharing known examples of good practice seen with their families and attend and deliver training as appropriate and available; to be able to celebrate the diverse ways children learn and succeed with home education to inspire and inform • EHE officers will provide voluntary sessions and events for families seeking advice • Officers will work with CYP colleagues and schools to rebuild trust in the school system with those families where EHE is not suitable or a choice • EHE officer will seek to understand the impact of professional involvement on families and be mindful of their possible reactions. They will work collaboratively with other teams to build a full picture of the family's needs and history and share information appropriately to foster trust and support positive engagement 	EHE Team CYP Colleagues
6. Post-16 Transition	Avoid NEET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EHE officers will refer on to young person workers and work collaboratively with the participation team to support vulnerable home-educated children to explore post-16 options, apprenticeships, and college pathways • EHE team focuses for young people who become EHE during KS4 will be on helping young people access exams, colleges, apprenticeships, and other opportunities by working with • Parents and young people are supported by all CYP services with clear information about how choosing Elective Home Education (EHE) may affect the transition to post-16 education, along with guidance access to on the opportunities available for qualifications and skills at all levels • Identify and collaborate with local services to expand access to diverse future pathways for learners. 	Participation Team, Family support leads

Measures of Success (What Will Change)

Theme	Indicators
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in the number of children RAG rated as red and high red on initial removal from school settings. • Risks are shared promptly and responded to proportionately. • A complete flag/marker on Liquidlogic for “not on a school roll/EHE • Reduction in the number of children with a social worker who are EHE • SCC CYP staff will have a basic understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the LA/ Schools and parents with regard to EHE and are able to identify a child at risk of becoming un-electively home educated and highlight this to the appropriate professional/ EHE team • Children referred to the CYP service front door who are at risk of or may be EHE will have a clear pathway to support and will the time taken to achieve a suitable education will be minimised. • Percentage of children receiving a suitable education will be increased. • The risk of Neet for EHE children will be reduced in comparison to the overall cohort.
Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk assessments / common assessment frameworks, child protection and child in need plans will explicitly reference EHE as part of the child’s context. • Reduction in the number of families who do not respond to annual requests for information. • Consultants will be present at statutory meetings for children with social workers, ensuring education changes are part of the safeguarding conversation. • CIN and CP plans reflect the education change and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated risk assessments. ○ Adjusted frequency of statutory visits to match the child’s needs. • Professionals will have a clearer picture of the child’s daily environment and if this may impact on the child’s ability to receive education so this can be taken account of in the review of suitability • More timely interventions when risks emerge, leading to improved safety and well-being.
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CYP teams will have accurate information on numbers and needs of EHE children in their locality available at team meetings • Parents will have accurate information available about their rights and responsibilities when making the decision to EHE from schools and the possible impact of this decision. • There is a reduction in children becoming EHE in KS4. • Children in unsuitable EHE with existing barriers to immediate school attendance will be able to access support to go on a school roll.
Positive Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents feel less adversarial pressure, leading to better quality information being shared . • Greater percentage of EHE children are receiving a suitable education • Families can confidently meet educational responsibilities or when this is not the case and feel supported and confident to seek a school place. • Families feel respected, which encourages cooperation with all professionals. • Smooth and timely transitions back to school when needed. • Reduced percentage of NEET
SEND & Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans will be more accurate and reflective of the child’s current needs. • Where parents do not engage, processes will be able to ensure the child’s has an offer of a suitable education. • Faster access to interventions that will support school attendance / access to education • Reduced risk of long-term isolation leading to NEET. • Health services have the right information. • More equitable access to therapies, assessments, and health interventions.
Post 16 transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child will understand available options such as college, apprenticeships, and vocational routes. • They’ll have clearer understanding about what qualifications or skills are needed for <p>Reduced percentage of NEET in comparison to the overall cohort. Increased access to exam centres for private candidates.</p>

Measures by Ambition

Ambition	Measures
Build honest, transparent, respectful, and trusting relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent survey • Responsiveness to annual contact • Complaints & compliments
Support high-quality and flexible education tailored to the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of children with suitable education • Number of children returning to school when education was unsuitable
Work together with other services to ensure safe learning environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MARFs that lead to intervention and positive change for the child
Offer helpful information and resources; support those seeking it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased attendance at voluntary events • Increased responses following PC1/2 • Website visits
Work closely & promptly where EHE might not be fully elective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-engagement success: % of children returned to education setting within 60 days (with parental agreement) • % suitable education
Children's opinions, thoughts, and feelings are taken into account	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child voice capture: increase in child's views being recorded
Fair access to appropriate support back into a setting when needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access pathways to MAF or similar support agreed and implemented
Possible access to Functional Skills literacy & numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with colleges/other providers to identify a route for families on low income/benefits to access Functional Skills math's & English

Measures by Key Priority

Key Priority	Measures
Early Identification of Vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instant identifiability in case system (e.g., lozenge on Liquid Logic) • Mandatory e-learning within package for 2026/27
Multiagency Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of cases where schools/services join an initial meeting within 10 working days (where EHE may not be fully elective) • Information pack produced and distributed to all schools
Support for Children with SEND & Mental Health Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EHCP annual review engagement: % of EHE families attending reviews / reviews completed on time
Maintain Positive Engagement with Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % suitable education increases • Increased responses to parental contact letters 1 and 2 • Reduction in number of SAO referrals
Preparing for Post-16 Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased response rate from parents to Year 11 transition letter • NEET and unknown figures show lower risk ratings within the EHE cohort

Governance

Element	Detail
Ownership	EHE Lead / CYP Senior Leadership
Review Cycle	Termly
Reporting	Mark Bennet

Consultation has taken place with	
Statutory SEND Services	/
Participation Team	/
Social care services	/
Family support services	/
Inclusion Team	/
Youth Justice Team	/
Parents representatives	/