

Local Members' Interest
N/A

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 26th July 2016

Elective Home Education

Recommendation/s

1. The Committee views the paper as an update overview currently outlining areas of EHE support being provided.
2. The Committee note the positive relationships that have been built with Elective Home Educators to improve outcomes for children and Young People.

Report of Cllr Ben Adams, Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills

Summary

3. The work undertaken by The EHE community and SCC officers in a truly co-produced manner has led to improving relationships and ultimately in improving educational outcomes for Children and Young people.

Report

Background

Background Nationally

4. Education is a fundamental right for every child and we recognise that parents have the right to choose to educate their child at home rather than at school. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children receive a suitable education.
5. Where parents have chosen to home educate, we want the home educated child to have a positive experience.
6. This is best achieved where parents and local authorities recognise each other's rights and responsibilities, and work together.
7. The legal premise states that "**The responsibility for a child's education rests with their parents.** In England, education is compulsory, but school is not."

In Staffordshire

8. Since the formation of ENTRUST the contract outlining the expectations was commissioned from Staffordshire County Council to Entrust
9. The EHE community demonstrated that the vocabulary used was not appropriate in some sections and the contract change control was submitted and signed off by customer and provider

Recent Staffordshire context

10. In the Autumn Term of 2014 SCC received an increased number of complaints and Freedom of Information requests from the EHE community both within county and Nationally.
11. Contact was also made by a representative of the EHE community to ask for a forum to discuss concerns.
12. An initial meeting was held in January 15 at which the community presented a view of their concerns regarding the support received and the ways in which they felt certain documentation published conflated the view that EHE families were at higher risk of safeguarding concerns. Following this meeting a number of SCC officers have met with the community, initially on a monthly basis latterly every two months. It has been a coordinated partnership approach and the community have welcomed the seriousness taken by the authority to address the concerns they had.
13. The journey has also educated both parties regarding intent, vocabulary and styles/ approaches of learning which has been very helpful and successful.
14. The community have written an excellent document called Choosing to Educate your child at Home and information booklet for carers and parents (**see Appendix D**) which shows the draft document.
15. They have also co-produced the planned revised Draft Staffordshire EHE policy (**see Appendix E**)
16. From September 2016 a roll out of training delivered in partnership for a range of SCC staff is also planned to be delivered by members of the EHE Community.
17. At our May meeting the SCC officers were taken through the format / content of the training.
18. The number of attending EHE families at our monthly meeting has steadily declined, showing more satisfaction with SCC and the approach.
19. The EHE community has an excellent internal to county and National network often via social media sites and they communicate well and support one another.
20. The small number of representatives who still attend are regulars well informed and all communicate / consult well with the wider EHE community. The reduction of attendees

hopefully also indicates a confidence in the partnership working and the development of a relationship based upon trust and transparency.

21. Any data held linked to known CYP in receipt of EHE is entirely due to parents choosing to notify the authority they are not obliged to.

Entrust Elective Home Education (EHE) service support in the following ways:

22. Provide information, advice and guidance to parents who choose to electively home educate.
23. Work with schools ensuring they follow their legal duties to inform Entrust EHE service when they have received formal notification a parent is choosing to electively home educate.
24. Work with Local Support Teams (LST) to gather information, advice on EHE matters, carry out joint visits resulting in child receiving a suitable education, family signposted to appropriate educational provision or return to school, attend Team around the Child (TAC) or Team around the Family (TAF) meetings.
25. Work with LST where there have been historical or current welfare concerns.
26. Work in partnership with SCC relevant officers eg work closely with SCC Fair Access Officer (Admissions) to support families where they are choosing to return C&YP to school roll as EHE not working out.
27. Work closely with social services where there are Children in Need (CiN) or Child Protection (CP) conferences, core group meetings to promote C&YP to receive a suitable education back on school roll or otherwise.
28. Work closely with SCC SEND assessment teams to provide information for Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) assessments, attend TAC EHCP meetings contributing to EHC plan, attending annual reviews of EHC plans previously statements and providing information towards the review.
29. Work closely with colleges and other training providers who offer access to courses for those C&YP who are 14-16 years of age and are home educated resulting in decrease in figures who are Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET).
30. Work closely with the Entrust Skills and Employability Service to offer information, advice and guidance and provide home educated C&YP the Year 11 offer resulting in reduction of NEET figures for SCC.
31. EHE service manages and collates data with reference to EHE C&YP, see Appendix A - and provides data analysis reports to SCC commissioner.
32. EHE service sends welcome pack containing the following information: welcome letter, examination centre leaflet of centres that are prepared to accept private candidates, Skills and Employability leaflet, list of suitable resources and web links (This welcome pack is being reviewed by the EHE community currently).

33. EHE service offers and carries out home visits or meetings in neutral venues which offering bespoke information, advice and guidance to parents, parents receive both verbal and written records containing specific recommendations with consideration of family circumstances and C&YP age, ability, aptitude and SEND resulting in high confidence that the majority of CYP are receiving a suitable education identifying and offering additional support to others.
34. Offers and carries out additional support visits where families have identified a concern in learning, this results in families understanding their C&YP learning needs, having advice and bespoke recommendations to support their child to receive a suitable education specifically for SEND.
35. Attend meetings in school/LST offices prior to EHE where parents have intimated this may be a route they follow to avoid prosecution for non-attendance or to avoid a permanent exclusion as a result parents are fully informed of what they are undertaking if they chose to EHE.
36. Make referrals to LST to consider serving a S437(i), School Attendance Order where there are concerns that a C&YP is not in receipt of a suitable education.
37. Send e-updates/news updates via email distribution list or website.

GRT (Gypsy Roma Traveller)

38. Historically SCC commissioned support from a regional consortium for the Gypsy Roma Traveller community. This consortium closed December 2014 and SCC TUPED the two advisors into SCC.
39. They successfully were employed by SCC May 2015 and support currently 100 Children and young people from 64 families who are home educated all receive and welcome the visits from the advisors.
40. The GRT community are very efficient in ensuring they inform SCC of their desire to Electively Home educate and welcome the advisory support of the two colleagues.
41. The two advisors regularly holds awareness raising sessions for SCC officers and other related partners.
42. They have the trust and confidence of the community and have when asked offered support at wider areas like planning permissions etc. The 100 GRT EHE students – all registered and receiving visits
43. Examples of support in addition to home visits include:
 - a. Support to transition from EHE to college – increase in uptake this year
 - b. 3 GRT students at Cannock College 2015/2016
 - c. 15 GRT students enrolled at Cannock, Stafford, TORC, Tamworth, Rodbaston and Stoke.
 - d. 1 GRT student is taking up an apprenticeship in September.
44. Support to achieve a suitable education includes:

- a. signposting to resources etc including suitable websites, commercially available materials, libraries;
 - b. home visits – as part of holistic approach with families, EHE will be discussed at regular intervals with more formal celebration of work at arranged review visits;
 - c. examples of suitable programmes of study shared – including proformas and writing frames for book review, diary.
 - d. Advice given and signposting to other agencies where appropriate.
45. 7 students who were EHE have returned to mainstream schools – some were EHE for inappropriate reasons, others were unable to access the school of choice initially.
46. Increased number of Y11 pupils have had engagement with careers and participation.
47. All feedback from the GRT EHE families is 100% positive.

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity – December 2014 Prosperous Select Report.

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Appendices/Background papers:

Appendix A – EHE Data

Appendix B – Examples of positive outcomes following support

Appendix C - Evaluations

Appendix D - Choosing to educate your child at Home and information booklet for carers and parents

Appendix E - Draft Staffordshire EHE policy