

## Portsmouth Schools Protocol for Elective Home Education (EHE) January 2019

The numbers of electively home educated pupils has risen in recent years both nationally and locally<sup>1</sup>, and there is clear evidence that for many of these pupils elective home education was not the appropriate route to take. Against this background, schools in Portsmouth are committed to ensuring that only those pupils whose parents have **actively chosen** to provide a **suitable education** for their child otherwise than at school<sup>2</sup> are registered with the local authority as having elected to home educate.

Furthermore, schools are committed to ensuring all children and young people of statutory school age, whatever their background or circumstances, are given appropriate support so that they can remain in full time education. Given the range of challenges it brings, schools will actively discourage parents and carers from taking a home education route as a way of addressing difficulties and encourage them instead to discuss any problems their child has with the school so that they can be resolved and enable their child to fully participate in school education.

The points below set out the key requirements of the schools' protocol (this is in addition to the city council's EHE guidance<sup>3</sup> for parents):

1. In order to ensure that parents and carers are only electing to home educate in circumstances where they are genuinely motivated to provide an alternative suitable education, all schools in Portsmouth will work with the local authority to ensure that parents or carers do not regard elective home education as a viable option to:
  - avoid exclusion
  - avoid legal action in relation to school attendance
  - access an alternative school place
  - receive education due to a child's health/emotional health needs
  - deal with unresolved bullying
  - resolve perception of unmet need, particularly SEND
  - resolve dissatisfaction with provision
  - avoid challenge or intervention in relation to safeguarding concerns
  - secure a route to a 14-16 college placement. It should be noted that from September 2019, local Further Education (FE) colleges will not be offering 14-16 provision to pupils who are electively home educated. This provision will only be able to be secured through a mainstream school, unless exceptionally this is agreed via the local authority. All secondary schools must make this clear for any parents or carers who are considering EHE for their child.
2. There are a number of circumstances where a change from existing provision may be appropriate. In all cases all restorative<sup>4</sup> and supportive measures<sup>5</sup> to

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<sup>1</sup> [ADCS EHE Survey Analysis 2018](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Section 7 - Education Act 1996](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Portsmouth City Council's EHE guidance](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Portsmouth Education Partnership - Restorative Practices Strategy](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Ordinarily Available Provision](#)

retain the pupil in their home school should have been explored prior to considering these arrangements. The circumstances where a change from existing provision may be appropriate are set out below:

- a parent or carer may seek a placement at a new school
  - a school may suggest a managed transfer under the Fair Access Protocol (because there is a valid reason why a fresh start may be appropriate)
  - a school may explore the possibility of alternative provision on a dual registered basis
  - a change of placement may be sought through an annual review for a child with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
3. Where a parent or carer is determined to proceed with home education, schools will in all cases invite them to a meeting which includes a member of the LA's School Attendance Team together with (as applicable) staff from the Prevention and Early Help Service, Children's Social Care, SEN Team or the Virtual School. It is recognised that to be responsive to the situation and ensure that issues are dealt with in a reasonable timescale, all professionals with need to prioritise these meetings. This will enable the full implications of the proposal to be reviewed with the parent or carer and advice provided by support staff as appropriate.
  4. The school will only delete the child's name from their admissions register after:
    - having had a meeting with all parties (or having at least invited them to a meeting), as described in point 3 above (which includes presentation of the EHE FAQs document<sup>6</sup>) **or**
    - the headteacher has formally written to the School Attendance Team, indicating that the parent or carer declined the offer of a meeting and has confirmed that they wish for their deregistration letter (stating elective home education) to be actioned.
  5. Information about the numbers of pupils that have left each school and when the de-registrations took place will be included in school level information about attendance and exclusions. This will be shared with schools across the city on a half termly basis.
  6. Where a parent or carer submits an in-year application for a pupil who has Hard to Place (HTP) indicators and is registered as EHE or who has been deregistered from their school, their last registered school (until at least 6 months has elapsed and this is a Portsmouth school) will be required to put them back on roll before any change of placement can be considered. In the case of an oversubscribed school the case would go to Inclusion Support Panel (ISP) for consideration under the Fair Access Protocol.

**School Attendance Team - Elective Home Education**

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<sup>6</sup> [Elective Home Education - Frequently Asked Questions](#)