

REQUEST FOR TOPIC TO BE CONSIDERED BY SCRUTINY

Title of report – Safeguarding and Elective Home Education (EHE)

<p>Purpose of Report</p>	<p>To consider the Authority’s arrangements to monitor EHE in relation to assuring the safeguarding of children.</p> <p>Background In the UK, education is compulsory but going to school is not. Elective Home Education (EHE) is the term used to describe parents’ decision to provide education for their children at home.</p> <p>The numbers of children who are EHE in the UK, Wales and in Wrexham have increased in recent years.</p> <p>In January 2018, there were 2292 children of statutory school age known to be EHE across all 22 Welsh Authorities: an average of 104 per Authority.</p> <p>In Wrexham, recent figures are as follows: 10th January – 85; 10th February – 96; 10th March – 97; 10th April – 100.</p> <p>Home education is not, in itself, a risk factor, but there is a potential that these children can become ‘invisible’ and there is a safeguarding risk of isolation from professionals.</p> <p>Experience has shown that a multi-agency approach to monitoring could highlight concerns that cumulatively could meet the threshold for statutory safeguarding intervention.</p> <p>Welsh Government (non-statutory) EHE Guidance 2017 states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘The protection of children from abuse or neglect, as well as the broader requirement for safeguarding and promoting children’s welfare depends on effective sharing of information, collaboration and understanding between agencies and professionals... ‘ • ‘Effective sharing of information by professionals is central to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children...’ • ‘It should also include having in place agreed systems, standards and protocols for sharing information about a child and their family within an agency and between agencies...’ <p>https://beta.gov.wales/elective-home-education</p> <p>Wrexham’s Education Department is reviewing its policy on EHE – this work and a review of EHE cases is due to be completed by September.</p>
<p>Expected Outcomes</p>	<p>To provide assurance that the council is working across departments and agencies to ensure that all possible actions are taken to ensure the wellbeing and safeguarding of EHE children in the county borough.</p>
<p>Value of bringing to Scrutiny</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of children who are EHE is increasing across the UK and in Wrexham. • The Education Department is in the process of updating its EHE policy. This would give the committee the opportunity to review the

	<p>policy in practice and discuss the processes in place across the council in relation to safeguarding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of the reasons for EHE may identify issues for referral to the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee. 	
Information Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The legislative position of the local authority in relation to EHE Details of safeguarding protocols and processes in place in relation to EHE Data relating to the number and profile of EHE in Wrexham, and any information relating to reasons for becoming EHE – for possible referral to LLSC 	
Suggested Officer / Lead Member attendance	<p>Service Manager - Safeguarding (Francine Salem) Education Lead (John Grant) Service Manager Prevention & Support (Donna Dickenson)</p>	
External involvement and benefit		
Lead Member / Head of Department Comment	The Service Manager Prevention & Support supports the TSF.	
Submitted by: Date:		
	<p>This Scrutiny topic request is supported by the following Members (optional).</p> <p>1. _____ (print) _____ (signature)</p> <p>2. _____ (print) _____ (signature)</p> <p>3. _____ (print) _____ (signature)</p> <p>4. _____ (print) _____ (signature)</p>	
<p>Please tick all that apply and ensure that you have provided the necessary supporting detail.</p>		<p>Please tick √</p>
1	Referral from other Committee / Council / external body or partnership	
2	<p>Committee steer / recommendation for Lead Member or Head of Department (not proceeding to Executive Board or Council at this stage)</p> <p>Committee steer / recommendation for Executive Board /Council (please provide date of Executive Board / Council meeting)</p>	X

	Information Only	
3	Official Consultation Document (e.g. proposed Government Legislation / Guidance)	
4	Does the issue involve public dissatisfaction with Council's performance? Insert relevant Council Priority Outcomes number(s) which are listed overleaf:-	
5	Has the issue been considered in the last 12 months by any other Member Forum? Please specify:- No	
6	Please specify which meeting of the Scrutiny Committee you wish to submit the report to and why:- Safeguarding Communities & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee – September/October	

COUNCIL STRATEGIC THEMES AND PRIORITY OUTCOMES

ECONOMY OUTCOMES:

- E1 – Encouraging people to live, work, learn, visit and invest here
- E2 – Supporting Businesses to locate and grow here
- E3 – Helping Tackle Poverty

PEOPLE OUTCOMES:-

- Pe1 – Supporting people to have positive aspirations, learn and achieve their potential.
- Pe2 – Supporting people to live active, independent lives within their community.
- Pe3 – Safeguarding those who are vulnerable.
- Pe4 – Working with our partners to make Wrexham a safe place where people feel included.
- Pe5 – Enabling access to leisure and cultural activities.

PLACE OUTCOMES:-

- PI1 – Promoting good quality homes and regeneration.
- PI2 – Pride in our environment.
- PI3 - Communities with sustainable, attractive settlements, neighbourhoods, buildings and spaces.
- PI4 – Well-connected and sustainable communities.

ORGANISATION OUTCOMES:-

- O1 – Continuing to modernise our services.
- O2 – Supporting a resilient Council.