HCAT

Elective Home Education Policy and Procedures

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1	Original	February 2026

HCAT Elective Home Education Policy and Procedures

1. Introduction

Schools have a duty to keep pupils engaged, act early when attendance risk appears, and give families support that helps children stay settled in school. Parents can choose home education, but sudden withdrawal often follows unmet need, weak connection, or limited early help. The aim of this procedure is to reduce unnecessary elective home education by identifying risk early, understanding what a family needs, and responding quickly so school remains a viable and positive option

2. Legal Duties

Schools must operate within the statutory framework that governs elective home education. Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents have the legal right to educate their child at home, provided the education is efficient, full-time, and suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and SEND needs.

At the same time, schools have a statutory duty to promote regular attendance and to identify and respond to barriers that may affect a child's engagement in school. All actions within this procedure align with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- The SEND Code of Practice
- Local authority Children Missing Education (CME) protocols
- Duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the requirement to make reasonable adjustments.

Where a parent indicates they may withdraw their child, the school must consider whether there are safeguarding, SEND, welfare, or attendance concerns that require referral to Early Help, the Local Authority, MASH, or other agencies. CME thresholds must be applied in all case.

3. External Professionals

Health, social care, and education support services may outline a child's needs, describe stressors linked to school, or advise on adjustments and support. They must not recommend elective home education. Decisions about EHE sit only with the parent, and statutory duties to assess and address barriers to education sit with the school and the local authority. This applies to CAMHS clinicians, paediatricians, social workers, early help practitioners, education psychologists, and any other agency involved with the family. If any external professional is reported as having recommended EHE, the school should request written confirmation from that professional for both the school and the parent, so the advice is clear, accountable, and accurately recorded

4. Track Early Indicators

Schools identify families with any history of elective home education so they can monitor risk and offer support that helps pupils stay in school. Transition meetings with previous settings should confirm whether the pupil has been home educated before. Admissions processes must ask direct questions about the pupil's education history. This information is recorded and used to shape early oversight.

Once the pupil is on roll, staff watch for early signs that a family may be moving toward elective home education. Indicators include inconsistent or falling attendance, anxiety reported by the parent or pupil, repeated complaints, pressure around unmet SEND need, or reduced parental engagement.

The attendance lead reviews attendance for all pupils weekly. Any students showing patterns of illness-coded or anxiety-coded absence, should be flagged to the senior lead.

5. Procedure

Stage 1 - If family expresses an interest in Elective Home education

- If the school has reason to believe there is a genuine risk of withdrawal, contact will be made with the parent without delay. The purpose of this informal contact is to understand the concern, offer support and agree early steps that keep the child engaged in school.
- Parents /Carers will receive an intent to EHE letter from school emphasising their responsibilities regarding EHE and inviting them in for a meeting understand the concerns, offer support and agree next steps to keep both parent and family engaged in school.

Stage 2 - EHE meeting

- The meeting will be led by a Senior Leader responsible for attendance, also in attendance will be appropriate staff members such as wellbeing officer, pastoral team or a member of the SEND team.
- During the meeting the intent to EHE proforma will be completed – outlining the reasons for intent to EHE, previous and current support and then agreed actions to ensure the child remains on roll and attends regularly
- Parent/carers' guide to EHE leaflets to be shared during this meeting
- Actions are then reviewed regularly by both the attendance and pastoral team
- Parents are under no obligation to attend such a meeting and the school acknowledges their statutory right to educate their child at home.
- If the parent refuses to attend or will not engage, the Head of School or a member of SLT must attempt contact by phone to conduct the meeting. A short-written summary of the offer to meet, the parent's decision not to engage and any known concerns must be logged

Stage 3 – Written notification of home education received

- If parents and carers didn't show any prior indication of EHE - ensure stage 1 and 2 are completed before proceeding to off roll.
- If both stage 1 and 2 have been offered - then proceed to stage 4. This will apply whether parents engage with the process or refuse to attend meetings.

Stage 4 – Removing a child from roll

- The school will complete the Local Authority EHE 1 Form and share with the local authority
- Sharing any necessary information with the LA where safeguarding or welfare concerns are present
- The school will remove from roll – stating the reason as EHE
- The Head of School will send out to parents/carers the off-roll letter

Reintegration: Where a family requests to return their child to school following a period of EHE, the parent must contact school admissions and request to return. School admissions will contact the school. If it is appropriate to accept the student back on roll – school will then make contact complete to a reintegration meeting with the parent/ carer. The school will create a reintegration plan with clear adjustments, responsibilities and review dates. This plan must be monitored for the first half term.

6. Record Keeping

On admission, parents should be asked whether the pupil has previously been electively home educated. Any known EHE history must be recorded and used to inform early monitoring.

Schools must use a consistent tag in CPOMS for any EHE risk or confirmed withdrawal. All updates, contacts, and decisions must be logged under this tag so the case can be monitored clearly by senior staff and the safeguarding team. A chronological timeline must be maintained so the full history of the case is visible.

Schools must ensure ARBOR holds an accurate record of every leaver. Each entry must include the reason for withdrawal or the reason the pupil has left the school.

Schools must share relevant records with other professionals or agencies when a legitimate request is made. Information shared must be accurate, proportionate, and logged on CPOMS and ARBOR.

When a pupil returns to school following a period of EHE, the school must confirm with the LA that the child has been removed from the EHE register. Any known EHE history must be recorded on CPOMS and ARBOR. The SENDCO, DSL, and class teacher must be informed and review the pupil's support needs before the start date.

6. Trust Level Oversight

- The trust will maintain a live register of all EHE withdrawals across its schools.
- The trust will review EHE data each half term.
- Through headteacher 1:1's the Trust will support analysis, and identify patterns, hotspots, repeated concerns, SEND links, and attendance trends.
- If a school shows a rise in EHE risk or withdrawals, the trust will initiate a focused review. This review will examine individual cases, check adherence to procedures, and coordinate support with the LA to stabilise the situation.
- An anonymised summary of EHE trends and trust-level patterns will be provided to the Standards Committee each term.

7. Preventing Off-Rolling

Schools must not, under any circumstances, suggest or influence a parent to electively home educate their child. Elective Home Education must never be presented as a solution to issues relating to attendance, behaviour, SEND, anxiety, pastoral need or conflict between the school and the family.

In line with DfE and Ofsted expectations, the school's role is to: support the child to remain on roll wherever possible; address barriers to attendance and learning; work openly with parents to resolve concerns; ensure no pupil is removed from roll unless statutory processes have been followed correctly.

Any indication that a parent feels pressure to withdraw must be reviewed immediately by the headteacher, DSL and attendance lead.

Appendix 1: Elective Home Education Escalation Flow Chart

Concerns arise about risk of withdrawal / parent unsettled

Stage 1 – Early contact and support:

If the school believes there is a genuine risk of withdrawal:

1. Contact parent/carer without delay to understand concerns.
2. Offer support and early intervention to keep the child engaged in school.
3. Send Intent to EHE letter explaining:
    - Parent responsibilities regarding EHE
    - Invitation to attend a meeting
    - Aim to discuss concerns and next steps.

Decision point:

Yes → Continue support and monitor attendance

No → Move to Stage 2

Stage 2 – EHE Meeting

Led by a Senior Leader

Attendees may include:

- Wellbeing Officer
- Pastoral Team
- SEND Team member
- Other relevant staff

During the meeting:

1. Complete **Intent to EHE proforma**
    - Reasons for EHE request
    - Previous and current support
    - Agreed actions to keep the child on roll and attending.
2. Provide parents with:
    - **Parent/Carer Guide to EHE**
3. Attendance and pastoral teams **review actions regularly**.

Important:

- Parents are **not obligated to attend** the meeting.
- If parents **refuse or do not engage**:
    - **Head of School or SLT must attempt phone contact**
    - Record a **written summary** including:
        - Offer to meet
        - Parent decision not to engage
        - Any concerns identified.

Decision point:

Has the parent submitted written notification of EHE?

No → Continue engagement and support

Yes → Move to Stage 3

Stage 3 – Written Notification of Home Education received

1. If parents **previously gave no indication** of EHE:
   Ensure **Stage 1 and Stage 2 are completed first**.
2. If **Stage 1 and Stage 2 have been offered**:
    - Proceed to **Stage 4**.

This applies whether parents engage with the process or decline meetings.

Stage 4 – Removing a child from roll.

- **School completes Local Authority Form EHE1**.
- Submit the form to the **Local Authority**.
- Share **relevant safeguarding or welfare information** if necessary.

Remove pupil from school roll with reason recorded as **EHE**.

Head of School sends Off-Roll letter to parents/carers.

Reintegration (if requested)

If a family wishes their child to **return to school after a period of EHE**:

1. Parent must contact **School Admissions** to request return.
2. **Admissions contact the school**.
3. If appropriate to accept the pupil back:
    - School arranges **Reintegration Meeting** with parent/carer.
4. School creates a **Reintegration Plan** including:
    - Adjustments and support
    - Responsibilities
    - Review dates.
5. Plan is **monitored for the first half term**