

Protocols for Managing Parental Choice for Elective Home Education

The shared view of Truro and Penwith Academy Trust, Governors and School Leaders is that the educational progress, welfare and personal and social development of secondary age children is best provided for within a school setting. Based on this principle, the school will do all it can to support children to attend school, in partnership with their parents. The following protocol will be followed for all children whose parents raise a query about elective home education or inform the school that they have decided to home educate their child.

This protocol will be followed alongside the Cornwall Council procedures for Elective Home Education which state that:

"Parents have a duty to ensure that their children receive a suitable full time education. This can be either by regular attendance at school or otherwise:

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that parents have a duty to secure education of children of compulsory school age.

"The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

(a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and

(b) to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise."

The law allows parents / carers to educate their children at home instead of sending them to school, if they fulfil certain conditions.

Once a parent / guardian informs the school in writing of their decision to home educate their child, the school should follow the Elective Home Education (EHE) Inter-Agency Protocol. The child should be removed from school roll. A copy of the letter with the completed Elective Home Education Form should be sent to the Local Authority."

Supporting parents who are considering elective home education

Where a parent informs the school that they are **considering** elective home education, the school will make every effort to work in partnership with the parent to retain the child on roll. The school will provide advice, individual support and enhanced levels of communication to facilitate this aim. Typically this communication will be led by a member of the pastoral team. The DSL will be informed of any families who are considering EHE to ensure that any associated safeguarding concerns can be acted on at an early stage. The SENDCo will be informed if the child is on the register of need (K or E) and will contact the parents to discuss their child's needs, support and provision within the school and the implications of EHE.

Included in this advice will be:

- That local facilities and networks to support elective home education of secondary age children are limited
- That the breadth of curriculum knowledge, expertise and resources required to match the quality of secondary education within a school setting are extremely challenging for most parents to provide
- That the social and personal development of children is difficult for parents to fully facilitate outside of a school setting
- That the school has access to safeguarding and welfare support which may not be available to parents outside of a school setting
- That the capacity of Cornwall Council home education teams to support parental decisions to home educate children is limited

The school will provide the parent with a copy of Cornwall Council's Guide for Parents and Students (see Appendix 1) along with the contact number of the CC EHE team (01872 323400).

Supporting parents who decide to electively home educate

Where the parent informs the school that they have decided to electively home educate their child and to remove them from the school roll, the Head of School will contact the family, (by email or phone call) and reinforce the advice previously provided by a member of the pastoral team. In addition, the Head of School will ensure that parents know that they can re-apply for admission at any time and that the safeguarding and pastoral team will remain available to the parent should they need help or advice in the future. (See Appendix 2 for communication exemplar.)

The DSL will be informed of any families who have decided to remove their child from the school for the purpose of EHE to ensure that any associated safeguarding concerns can be acted on and escalated if appropriate.

After an initial period of 2 weeks, the Head of School will write to the family, ensuring that they are aware of the support available from Cornwall Council and to offer further support from the safeguarding and pastoral team. This communication will ensure that parents know the process for re-applying to the school should their family circumstances change in the future. (see Appendix 3 for exemplar letter.)

All communication with families will be managed supportively, recognising the family's legal duties to provide appropriate full time education and their entitlement to educate their children at home if they fulfil certain conditions.

Monitoring of Elective Home Education

Governors will monitor the frequency and reasons for children moving into elective home education from the school's role bi-annually through 'migration' reports and termly through safeguarding reports. Appropriate benchmarking information will be provided to enable Governors to compare levels of EHE within the school to local and national contexts.

Appendix 1: Cornwall Council Guide for Parents (2019)

<http://www.st-ives.cornwall.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/elective-home-education-a-bitesize-guide-for-parents-and-carers.pdf>

Appendix 2: Model letter to respond to parental decision to home educate

Dear Parent/ Carer

Further to recent communication with the school, I am contacting you to confirm that your child has been removed from our school role as you have decided to electively home educate them. The school will inform Cornwall Council of your decision and you should be contacted by a member of their team within the next few weeks. Should you need to contact them for advice, their phone number is 01872 323400.

It is the shared view of Truro and Penwith Academy Trust, Governors and school leaders that the educational progress, welfare and personal and social development of secondary age children is best provided for within a school setting. Whilst I do not have direct parental experience of home education, I am aware that local facilities and networks to support elective home education of secondary age children are limited. I also feel that the breadth of curriculum knowledge, expertise and resources required to match the quality of secondary education within a school setting are extremely challenging for most parents to provide. In addition, the social and personal development of secondary age children may be difficult for parents to fully facilitate outside of a school setting and we have access to safeguarding and welfare support which may not be readily available to parents.

If at any point your families circumstances change, or you need advice and support about the welfare of your child, please do not hesitate to contact us. A member of our pastoral or safeguarding team will be happy to help you and can be contacted via Reception or on (insert contact details). Our school admissions are managed on our behalf by Cornwall Council: you can apply to them for a place in our school. Our pastoral team will be happy to support you with your application and to provide advice about how we can provide individual support for to re-join our school community.

On behalf of the school staff, I wish every success in the future and know that they will be very much missed by their teachers and peers.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher/ Head of School

Appendix 3: Follow up letter re decision to electively home educate

Dear Parent/ Carer

It has now been several weeks since was removed from our school role to begin their home education. I hope that the Home Education Team from Cornwall Council have been in contact with you to provide support and advice. If they haven't, and you need their support, their phone number is 01872 323400.

You will know that, as a school, we strongly believe that the educational progress, welfare and social and personal development of students is best provided for within a school setting. We also acknowledge and respect the entitlement of parents to educate their children outside of a school.

Should your family circumstances change in the future or if you need advice and support about the welfare of your child, please do not hesitate to contact us. A member of our pastoral or safeguarding team will be happy to help you and can be contacted via Reception or on (insert contact details). Our school admissions are managed on our behalf by Cornwall Council: you can apply to them for a place in our school at any time during the school year. Our pastoral team will be happy to support you with your application and to provide advice about how we can provide individual support for to re-join our school community.

On behalf of the school staff, I wish every success in the future and hope that they continue to make excellent progress in their learning and development.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher/ Head of School