

Inquiry into Exclusions, Elective Home Education and Off-rolling (Part 2) – Session one

Date: 3rd November 2021

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- During 2019/20, the Children and Families Scrutiny Board commenced an Inquiry into Exclusions, Elective Home Education and Off-rolling and anticipated its inquiry work to continue into the 2020/21 municipal year. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic emergency, the Board agreed to pause its inquiry while focusing its attention on how the Council and its partners worked to support all children and their families during such an unprecedented and difficult period.
- The Children and Families Scrutiny Board gave a commitment to recommence its inquiry into Exclusions, Elective Home Education and Off-rolling work during the 2021/22 municipal year. The terms of reference relating to part two of this ongoing inquiry were agreed by the Scrutiny Board during its meeting on 13th October 2021.
- This report presents information linked to the first session of the Scrutiny Board's Inquiry into Exclusions, Elective Home Education and Off-rolling.

Recommendations

Members are asked to consider the information shared during today's meeting as part of its inquiry into Exclusions, Elective Home Education and Off-rolling.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

1. The Children and Families Scrutiny Board gave a commitment to recommence its inquiry work this year in relation to Exclusions, Elective Home Education and Off-rolling.
2. The terms of reference relating to part two of this ongoing inquiry were agreed by the Scrutiny Board during its meeting on 13th October 2021 and are appended for information (Appendix A).
3. During today's meeting, the Scrutiny Board will receive information linked to this first evidence gathering session.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards affected: All

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

4. In accordance with the agreed terms of reference, the purpose of this first session is to consider the following areas:
 - An update on any further developments stemming from earlier national reviews by Timpson and the School Commissioner.
 - A general overview of attendance across local schools.
 - Latest local figures relating to Elective Home Education (taking into account the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic) and the work being undertaken by the Council in offering support to those pupils, but also in terms encouraging and building confidence towards a return to mainstream education.
5. A report has been provided by the Director of Children and Families in relation to Elective Home Education (see Appendix B) and senior representatives from the Children and Families Directorate will be attending today's meeting to present this report as well as provide a verbal update to the Scrutiny Board on the other two key areas highlighted above.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

6. Senior representatives from the Children and Families Directorate will be attending today's meeting to contribute to this inquiry session and address the relevant key areas set out in paragraph 4 above.

What are the resource implications?

7. This report has no specific resource implications.

What are the legal implications?

8. This report has no specific legal implications.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

9. There are no risk management implications relevant to this report.

Does this proposal support the council's three Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth

Health and Wellbeing

Climate Emergency

10. Ensuring children and young people “do well at all levels of learning and have the skills they need for life” is a key outcome of the Best City Council Plan.
11. The latest Best Council Plan also highlights the challenges to education settings as it states, “As a Child-Friendly City, Leeds continues to invest in the future of our young people which has led to improvements in health and educational outcomes. However, we are acutely aware of the potentially significant immediate and longer-term impacts of Covid-19 on the health, wellbeing and learning of our children and young people and so now, more than ever, there is much more to do to ensure everyone is equipped with the education and skills they need to succeed in life. The council is working with families, schools and others to secure a brighter future for every child in Leeds.”

Appendices

12. Appendix A – Agreed terms of reference relating to part two of the Scrutiny Board's Inquiry into Exclusions, Elective Home Education and Off-rolling.

Appendix B – Report of the Director of Children and Families on Elective Home Education.

Background papers

13. None.