

Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

20 September 2022

Update on Elective Home Education (EHE) 2022-2023

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide an update on EHE, current position and future development

2. The Wiltshire Context for EHE

The information below is based on academic years.

2.1 Numbers of EHE pupils of compulsory school age

2018-2019	640
2019-2020	648
2020-2021	731
2021-2022	811
2022 (current)	766

2.2 EHE

	AY 2021 Sept	AY 2022 Sept
Total EHE young person known to Wiltshire	743	↑ 766
No of EHE with EHCP	61	↔ 61
No of EHE with Statutory EHC Needs Assessment in process	7	↑ 16
No with SEN Support needs identified	158	↑ 164
Total SEND cases	226	↑ 241
Total SEND as % of the whole	30.41%	31.46%

	AY 2021 Sept	AY 2022 Sept
Total EHE young person known to Wiltshire	743	↑ 766
No of EHE open to Social Care	28	↓ 22
No Child Protection	3	↓ 0
No Child in Need	20	↓ 15
No Support Assessment	5	↑ 7
Total Social Care as % of the whole	3.76%	2.87%
No of EHE eligible for Pupil Premium (Free School Meals)	90	↑ 97
Total Pupil Premium as % of the whole	12.11%	12.66%
Total EHE Primary cohort	285	251
	38%	32.8%
Total EHE Secondary cohort	458	515
	62%	67.2%

2.3 2022-2023 academic year EHE

The number of EHE learners in Wiltshire, and nationally, has risen significantly since the start of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Over the last academic year, we saw the number of children being removed from roll slowing compared to the period where we were in the height of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Overall numbers of EHE are not disproportionately out of line with other local authorities both regionally and nationally. This is supported by regionally collected EHE data for Q1 of the last academic year which ranked Wiltshire joint 9th out of 14 local authorities for the number of EHE starts (1st has the lowest number of new starts per 10,000). Wiltshire had 117 new starts compared to the regional average of 125.

It is important to note that there is no officially published/collected data nationally, other than that collected through the ADCS (Association of Directors of Children's Services) annual survey.

From October 2022, the DfE is working to formalise the data collection for EHE, so we will be in a better position to benchmark our performance in this area going forwards.

3 Children ceasing to be EHE

- 3.1 352 pupils have ceased to be EHE during the previous academic year. Reasons for ceasing EHE status were due to a move out of Wiltshire local authority, returning to an education setting or ceasing to be of statutory school age.

4 EHE causing concern

- 4.1 14 pupils currently have a red RAG rating indicating that they are not receiving a suitable education. This is lower than the previous year and is a result of the Education Welfare Service being able to access families more readily post pandemic. Home visiting to assess education provision allows Education Welfare Officers to provide timely support to families to help them to make improvements where provision is a concern, or to take steps to secure education through a school placement.

4 of these pupils are currently in Yr 11 and EWOs are working with those families to secure education provision with providers through Building Bridges programmes and similar courses, to support positive destination transition post 16.

The remaining cases are in a warning process, or the LA is in consultation with governing boards to commence School Attendance Order proceedings.

There are 2 pupils who have School Attendance Orders in place. 1 of these pupils is now registered with a school but is not attending and enforcement action has commenced. The other pupil has not been registered at a school and the family has been prosecuted for a breach of the School Attendance Order. This family is still not making suitable education provision and are now open to social care.

5 EWS Actions

- 5.1 New EHE referrals are followed up in a timely fashion and appropriate action taken to secure suitable education provision where there is no evidence of this in place.

A resource has been developed alongside colleagues in health to support EHE families to access support and advice and information about voluntary services who may be able to help where there are health/mental health concerns. Regular discussion with colleagues in specialist health services takes place to ensure that children with additional needs are receiving their full entitlement.

An offer remains in place for schools and families to meet with EWO to discuss implications of EHE prior to child being removed from roll. There is limited uptake of this offer as parents are explicitly stating in their correspondence to schools that they decline any such meeting.

6 Service Development

6.1 Our business priorities going forward during the 2022-2023 academic year within the Education Welfare Service for EHE are as follows:-

- i To continue to robustly monitor, support and challenge parents/carers to educate their children within the context of the law and DfE guidance.
- ii To continue to make robust challenge to schools where there are high numbers of children being removed from roll for EHE and take action where there may be evidence of off-rolling.
- iii To continue to work in partnership with NHS providers to ensure that all EHE children have access to routine health programmes, such as immunisations, that would ordinarily be offered in schools.
- iv To develop an online registration system/portal to enable families to easily register their children as EHE once the White Paper actions are a statutory requirement.
- v To continue to contribute to DfE developments in monitoring and data reporting for EHE children and young people.

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