



Craig Whittaker MP

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Home Education (Inc flexi-schooling)

Thank you for contacting me about home education.

I respect the right of parents to consider home education for their children if they wish. Every child deserves the best possible start in life, including home educated children.

The guidance for local authorities on elective home education makes it clear that although the primary responsibility for a child's education rests with parents, local authorities also have responsibilities. Local authorities can make an informal enquiry to make sure children being home educated are getting a suitable education. If this does not provide enough information, they have the powers to require the relevant information to be provided and if it then appears that a child is not receiving a suitable education, they can serve a school attendance order. I welcome the announcement that the Department for Education intends to consult on revised guidance on local authorities' home education powers, and will be launching that shortly.

I understand access to examination centres is a particular concern for many home educators. The Department for Education will continue to encourage maintained schools and further education colleges to provide facilities for young people who are home educated to sit their examinations. It will also encourage exam boards to continue to assist private candidates where they can by providing candidates with any information they hold on examination centres that are known to accept private candidates.

It is rightly a decision for individual headteachers to make as to whether to accept pupils part-time for flexi-schooling. Schools may enter into flexi-schooling arrangements provided they correctly mark children as absent in attendance registers when they are being educated at home.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP