



SOUTHERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD

HOME EDUCATION

GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

INTRODUCTION

This guidance sets out how the Southern Education and Library Board will fulfill its statutory duty with regard to children who are withdrawn from school to be home educated.

THE LEGAL SITUATION

The responsibility of parents/guardians is clearly established in Section 45 (1) & (2) of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986:

- 'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at a school or otherwise'
- The provisions of Schedule 13 shall apply to the enforcement of the provisions of paragraph (1) and a parent who contravenes the provisions of that Schedule shall be guilty of an offence and liable to the penalties provided by paragraph 4 of that Schedule.

THE DUTY OF THE PARENT/GUARDIAN

- If you have a school-age child, you must ensure that he/she is educated
- You can delegate this duty to a school, or you can carry it out yourself
- In any case, the education provided must be effective and full-time
- It must be suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude

- If your child has special education needs, it must cater for them

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Southern Education and Library Board has no statutory duty to provide financial assistance or provide tuition for parents who choose to home educate.

THE NORTHERN IRELAND CURRICULUM

Pupils who attend schools within the board's area have a right to access the Northern Ireland Curriculum. The curriculum was made law in The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989.

If you are educating your child at home you do not need to follow the Northern Ireland Curriculum. However, you might want to consider following it for the following reasons:-

- ii) It provides a useful guide and if at a later date, your child returns to school, it will make re-integration into mainstream schooling that much easier
- iii) Public Examinations (eg GCSEs) are based on the programs of study in the Northern Ireland Curriculum

Copies of the NI curriculum are available from HMSO Bookshop.

PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

Should you wish to enter your child for public examinations, such as GCSE, you will need to contact an examination board directly.

FULL TIME EDUCATION

The board considers that the full time education of a child is determined by the length of time a pupil of similar age, ability and aptitude would receive in education as a registered pupil of a local school. Guidance about the hours of schooling are defined in the Education Secondary School (Grant Conditions) Regulations 1973 No 403 regulation 14 which states 3 hours where the majority of children in the class are under the age of 8 and 4.5 hours for any other pupils.

EDUCATION FOR LIFE

The aim of any educational programme should be to equip a young person for life. This means seeking to bring about a situation where the young person can take his or her place in society, and be economically independent.

As education is about more than imparting knowledge, parents should seek to provide a programme which enables the child develop a range of life skills:-

- communication skills
- observation and awareness skills
- problem solving skills
- creative and imaginative skills
- numerical skills
- physical skills
- personal and social skills

VIEW OF THE CHILD

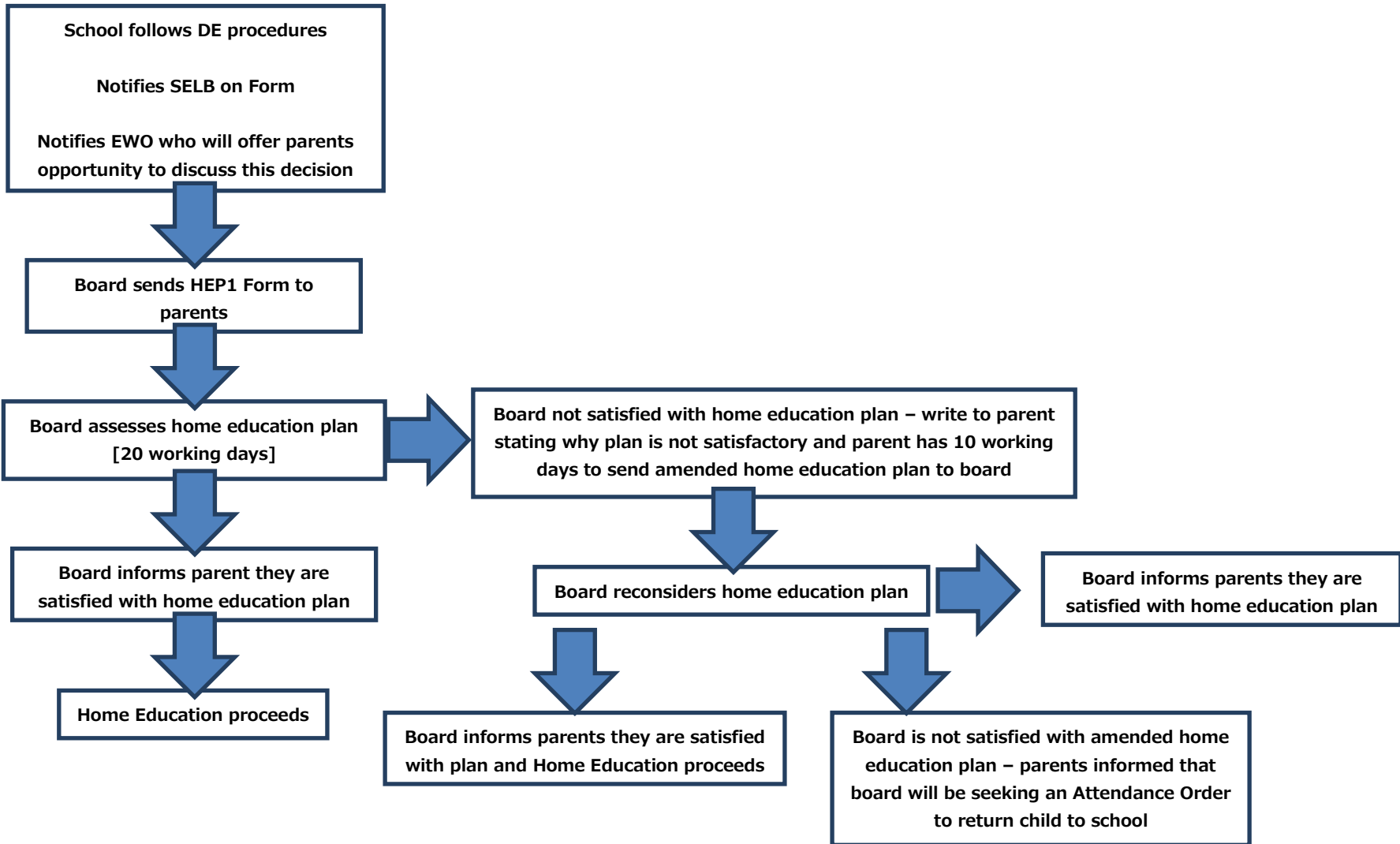
In keeping with The Children (NI) Order and the UN Convention on the Right's of the Child the board will attempt to seek the

opinion of the child in relation to moving from school to home education.

EVIDENCE OF SUITABLE EDUCATION

When a parent notifies the board of their intention to home educate, the board will undertake the following in order to fulfill their duty to ensure that the parent is providing an education appropriate to the child's age, aptitude and any special needs he/she may have:

- Request the parent to provide an education plan
- Assess if the education plan is appropriate for the child's age, aptitude and any special educational needs



Parents may also wish to provide evidence to the board in relation to their home education programme in a number of ways. Parents might for example:

- write a report;
- provide samples of work;
- invite a board officer to their home, with or without the child being present;

FURTHER BOARD INVOLVEMENT

In accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998) and the Freedom of Information Act (2000) the board will maintain a confidential electronic database of pupils receiving home education. The parents of an individual child may request hard copies of any information maintained on their child.

Information held by the Board may be shared with relevant board officers on a need to know basis.

Should any board officer be concerned about the well-being of a child, the board's child protection policy and procedures will be followed.

If the board considers that a home education programme should end and the child should return to school, this decision will be communicated to the parents in writing and the provisions of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986, Schedule 13 will apply.

IF YOU WISH YOUR CHILD TO RETURN TO SCHOOL

If you wish your child to return to school, you should make a direct application to any appropriate school. If your child has a statement of special educational needs, you must liaise with your statement officer in the SELB.

SAFEGUARDING

If you decide to employ tutors or allow your child to participate in activities organized by voluntary or community groups it is your responsibility to ensure that the adults organizing the activities are suitable to work with children. You can ask to see the organisation's child protection policy and check if all staff working with your child are Access NI checked.

USEFUL CONTACTS

SOUTHERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD

www.selb.org

Educational Welfare Service

Mr Adrian Nugent

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EWS Office,

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21, Meadowbrook Road, Lurgan

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HMSO

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