

1-I would like to request the information pertaining to what Training, experience and information the members of the Boards CASS team have in relation to Elective Home Education and the many forms it may take including but not limited to Structured, Semi-structured, child led and Autonomous learning and how often they receive 'top-up' training in Elective Home Education and it's various methods and who provides any training. If the training is done by another 'in-house' Department I would like to request the same of them.

All CASS officers are trained teachers with significant school experience and experience in the delivery of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. All officers who support EHE operate within the current BELB EHE policy and meet with a senior officer on a regular basis. Any information, queries or advice sought would be shared across all officers involved. The officers' experience has therefore been augmented through sharing their liaison with home educators. A requirement for 'top-up' training has not been identified.

2. I would like to request how the assessment takes place and what it involves and if there is any difference in procedure between that of work offered voluntary and that that is supplied after being served a School Attendance Notice.

The BELB would expect any programme deemed to be suitable to be appropriate to the age, aptitude and ability of the child. – (as per Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 -45 (1)) There is no formal monitoring of educational attainment within the remit of Elective Home Education. (EHE) However, as part of the support role of the relevant CASS officer, he or she will provide guidance as appropriate e.g. reference to NI Curriculum, advice on teaching strategies and next steps, guidance on cross curricular links, possible timetabling and access to teaching materials. There is no remit within EHE to manage and monitor the types or duration of teaching within curriculum areas. Within the support role, the relevant CASS officer may, on request, give advice on duration and syllabus, particularly where the longer term plan is for a return to formal education. However there is no remit to monitor this on a regular basis. It is unlikely that there would be a difference in procedure for work provided voluntarily and any after the serving of a School Attendance Notice.

3. Also I would like to request any guidelines and sources used by the CASS team to assess the adequacy of any Non-Curriculum based Elective Home Education Methods for an efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he may have. And how they balance any 'findings' against the UK case law and guidance definition of a suitable Education. *(The BELB has already acknowledged the Relevance of UK Case law and Guidance in a previous FOI)*

All CASS officers are experienced educationalists with a range of knowledge across the key stages. In all cases, the relevant CASS officer will liaise closely with the individual home educator to provide support as appropriate to meet the needs of the child, as per Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986. There are no formal guidelines to assess suitability, all decisions are based on individual circumstances. While no specific case law or guidance has been adopted in the process of designing a draft elective home education policy, CASS

officers have looked at a range of published information summarising areas relevant to elective home education.

It would not be practice to retain as a record, information an officer has read. As you are aware, the elective home education policy is a draft document which has gone out to public consultation and the responses are currently being evaluated.

I looked at the responses made by BELB to your *three previous Freedom of Information requests*, but have not found a reference to case law.

4. I would like any other information you may have involving CASS and their duties in regards to Elective Home Education you think may be useful.

All other relevant information is available in the existing EHE policy which is available on the BELB website.

http://www.belb.org.uk/Parents/sen_i_home_education.asp?sm=40