

<b>Lancashire County Council</b>	<b>Lancashire Audit Service Terms of Reference</b>	<b>A1</b>
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## Children & Young People Directorate

### Children Educated Otherwise than at School

**2009-10**

<b>Project Sponsor</b>		<b>Bob Stott – director for universal and prevention services</b>	
		<b>Maureen Davenport – Lancashire Education Inclusion Service – head of service</b>	
<b>Key Contact(s):</b>		<b>Angela Jerstice – Lancashire Education Inclusion Service – elective home education clerical officer</b>	
		<b>Susan Robinson – children/ young people missing from education county co-ordinator</b>	
<b>Audit team</b>	<b>Audit relationship manager</b>	<b>Ian Rushworth – principal auditor</b>	
	<b>Audit assignment manager</b>	<b>Ruth Fairbrother – senior auditor</b>	
	<b>Audit team leader</b>	<b>Julie Cottam – senior audit assistant</b>	
<b>Agreed Start Date</b>		<b>26 April 2010</b>	<b>Planned Days</b>
			<b>15 days</b>
<b>Expected Completion Date</b>		<b>21 May 2010</b>	

\*This is our estimated target date for the issue of the draft report. We will endeavour to meet this date but it may be subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. We will ensure that the project sponsor and key contacts are informed of any significant delays in meeting this target.

#### Report Distribution

<b>Draft</b>	<b>Maureen Davenport – Lancashire Education Inclusion Service – head of service</b>
<b>Final</b>	<b>Maureen Davenport – Lancashire Education Inclusion Service – head of service</b>
	<b>Bob Stott – director for universal and prevention services</b>
<b>Date Terms of Reference agreed</b>	<b>2 May 2010</b>

<b>Lancashire County Council</b>	<b>Lancashire Audit Service Terms of Reference</b>	<b>A2</b>
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**2009-10**

#### **OBJECTIVE**

To review the adequacy and effectiveness of the arrangements in place to record and monitor children missing in education or educated otherwise than at school, to ensure a child's welfare is not at risk.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Since the county council's Elective Home Education (EHE) team was established in 2001, the number of children being home educated has increased significantly to nearly 500 pupils. The Lancashire Education Inclusion Service (LEIS) needs to establish why the parents have chosen to be responsible for educating their child, and how they intend to deliver the child's education. There are a number of reasons why a parent chooses to home educate their child including medical, bullying, religious, exclusion, reactive/ proactive and travellers.

In addition to potential concerns regarding the child's education, the EHE team also need to ensure that all 'parents of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education' (in accordance with *Section 7 of the Education Act 1996*). When a child is removed from school to be home educated, the LEIS teachers from the EHE team are responsible for identifying those children and consulting with the Children Missing Education (CME) team.

In accordance with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) local authority guidelines, the responsibility for a child's education rests with their parents. These guidelines are intended for use in relation to elective home education only and to support local authorities in carrying out their statutory responsibilities, and to encourage good practice by clearly setting out the legislative position.

Following concerns raised in July 2008 by members of the CYP Overview and Scrutiny Committee, a review was conducted by the established task group who in turn reported back on suggested recommendations they wished to raise. A number of documents including statutory obligations were considered a part of the review including the Every Child Matters Framework, revised statutory guidance for local authorities in England to identify children not receiving a suitable education and internal guidelines.

A review was also conducted by Internal Audit as part of the 2008/2009 audit plan into traveller education. Although not specific to this aspect of the service, we will follow up all recommendations made in that report to ensure they have been adequately implemented.

<b>Lancashire County Council</b>	<b>Lancashire Audit Service Terms of Reference</b>	<b>A3</b>
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#### **RISKS**

There is a risk to the council that if statutory guidelines in relation to EHE are not implemented effectively, children are at risk at not receiving the appropriate level of education.

The following key risks which have been identified in respect of this review:

- The council do not identify those children not registered at mainstream schools (or other education providers);
- Council guidelines do not consider continuously changing statutory obligations;
- Inappropriate assessments do not adequately evaluate the family situation, and the child does not receive the appropriate level of education;
- There is no strategic lead for the service to ensure appropriate ownership; and
- The EHE does not comprehensively assess all those children missing from education.

#### **SCOPE**

The work on this area will be carried out during a visit to LEIS to ensure that the procedures are adhered to.

The audit work will be undertaken will:

- Discuss the arrangements in place within LEIS (EHE);
- Identify the systems controls and procedures in place to recognise those children not in education and how they are assessed; and
- Test these controls to determine their effectiveness.

At the end of our audit review we will provide a detailed report of our findings, and recommendations as appropriate.

The findings from the review will be discussed and agreed with the key contacts on conclusion of the visit.

The draft report will be shared with senior management within the service to ensure its factual accuracy to enable us jointly to consider appropriate recommendations and management responses.

<b>Prepared by</b>	<b>Ruth Fairbrother</b>	<b>Authorised by</b>	<b>Ian Rushworth</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>6 April 2010</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>12 April 2010</b>