

**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON  
20 AUGUST 2008**

**SUBJECT: POLICY ON HOME EDUCATION**

**BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Committee's approval for a revision to the Authority Policy on Home Education.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section D (1) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to exercising the functions of the Council as Education Authority.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **It is recommended that Committee approves the revised Home Education Policy (Appendix 2).**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The current policy on Education at Home was approved by Educational Services Committee on 11 August 2004 (paragraph 18 of the minute refers).
- 3.2 Following extensive consultations with Local Authorities and groups representing home educating families the Scottish Government published revised guidance on home education in January 2008.
- 3.3 The revised policy (Appendix 2) reflects the new Scottish Government guidance.
- 3.4 The main changes between the 2004 and 2008 policies are summarised in **Appendix 1**.

**4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

**(a) Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan**

This report relates to of Dimension 6 of the current Educational Services Improvement Plan, namely '*Work together with parents and the wider community to improve learning*'.

**(b) Policy and Legal**

The revised policy will encompass relevant parts of the following legislation:  
Education (Scotland) Act 1980  
Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act (2000)

European Convention on Human Rights  
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

**(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)**

There are no financial, risk, staffing or property implications arising from this report.

**(d) Consultations**

1. Senior Officers within Educational Services have been consulted and support the recommendation.
2. Karen Wiles (Principal Solicitor) has been consulted and has indicated that the policy meets relevant legislative requirements.
3. Members of North Scotland Home Educators have been consulted and support the recommendation.
4. Schoolhouse (a national organisation representing home educators) has been consulted and support the recommendation.

**5. CONCLUSION**

**5.1 The recommendation in this report seeks Committee's approval of the revised Policy on Home Education.**

Author of Report: Paul Watson, Quality Improvement Officer  
Background Papers:  
Ref: DMD/JR/Reports/Children and Young People's Services  
Committee/20 August 2008/Policy on Home Education

## Appendix 1

### Summary of the main changes in the revised (2008) policy

#### General Points

- The revised policy now follows the standard Educational Services policy template and is presented in a more 'user friendly' format.
- The revised policy will not result in any operational changes for Officers as the new Scottish Government guidelines generally reflect what had been existing practice in Moray and a number of other local authorities.

Sections 1, 2 and 3 These have been added to set the policy in context.

Paragraph 4.1 – The reasons why parents choose to educate at home (2004 policy) have been removed as they were not relevant to operational procedures.

Paragraph 4.2 – A sentence has been added stating that the authority has a preference that home educating families who do not require consent notify the authority, while recognising that there is no statutory duty on parents to do so.

Paragraph 4.5 – Clarifies the position of travelling families in relation to home education.

Paragraph 4.6 – Acknowledges that any requests for flexi-schooling will be considered in relation to individual circumstances and operational arrangements.

Paragraph 4.7 – The bullet point '*appropriate opportunities to develop the child's literacy and numeracy skills*' has been rewritten as '*opportunities to support the child's literacies and their numerical skills*' essentially to recognise the wider definitions of literacies.

Paragraph 5.2 – Added to clarify that a statistical report on Home Education will be submitted annually to the Children and Young People's Services Committee.

Paragraphs 5.3, 5.4 – Updated policy content in relation to children with additional support needs to take account of The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004. These paragraphs replace the entire section 5 of the 2004 policy.

Section 6 – This section now states that while the authority has no statutory duty to provide financial or other support for home educating families, including examination fees, the authority may consider individual circumstances, particularly when there

are minimal resource implications. This section also acknowledges that home educated children may be eligible for Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs).

Section 8 – This section replaces section 4 of the 2004 policy and provides clearer information for parents and operational procedures for officers.