

Additional Needs Consultation (Wales) Response Summary October 19th 2012

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<http://edyourself.org/ANwales2012consultresponsesummary.pdf>

There could be significant implications for children who are in elective home education. On the one hand, the proposed changes could make it even more difficult for home educated children to access services once they are out of "the system." Early clarification from the Minister on the position regarding access to services for children in elective home education would be most welcome.

From another perspective, it is also possible that home educated children could be unfairly caught up in the proposed new definition of additional needs encompassing "school phobics" and "school refusers". It must be acknowledged that there are many reasons for children to reject school and that this option should not be automatically pathologised. In some cases home education may begin as a rejection of school or as a response to intractable problems with the school, but we have seen many cases where home education then becomes a positive choice for families.

Early clarification from the Minister on the definition of school phobia and school refusal in relation to children taken out of school for home education would be most welcome, particularly in light of the current proposals to change the law on home education in Wales.

In relation to controversial proposals from the Welsh Government for compulsory registration and monitoring of home educated children, it has been stated that where a home educated child has special/additional needs, the local authority should establish the suitability of education provision in conjunction with a qualified and appropriate expert in the relevant field. The expert assessment will be a determining factor in whether the child is allowed to be home educated, and therefore the legislative proposals for elective home education and for additional needs are interdependent and should not be considered in isolation.

Numbers of home educated children with a statement of SEN were requested via FOI at the end of September 2012 and are being published here

<http://edyourself.org/articles/FOIwales2012.php#responses>