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See also <http://edyourself.org/DfELAFIOMay2014.pdf>

To [redacted]  
July 18 2013  
From Stephen Bishop DfE

Dear [redacted]

I tried to phone you today, but understand you are out of the office until late afternoon. I will try and phone you again at about 4.45. I would like to talk to you about the current state of this case, which you have been dealing with. The child's mother [redacted] has written to [redacted] and she had previously discussed the case with [redacted] at a constituency surgery event. I am drafting a reply [redacted] but before finalising this I should like to discuss the current position.

Thank you

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To Norfolk LA  
From Stephen Bishop DfE

I spoke to you this afternoon about this case, which I discussed extensively with [redacted] yesterday. [Redacted] has written to [redacted] She has also discussed this with her at a constituency surgery.

I am drafting a reply [redacted] The mother has sent us extensive copies of the correspondence between herself and the authority, including the invitation to a fast track meeting which was to have been held today. The one point which [redacted] was unable to clarify for me was whether a school attendance order has actually been served on [redacted] there is no sign of one in the correspondence we have been copied but I wanted to check this so that our reply could address the up to date situation. If you could let me know this as soon as you can, I'd be grateful.

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To [redacted]  
July 26 2013  
From Stephen Bishop DfE

[redacted]  
Thanks for this confirmation which will enable us to do a reply.

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to Norfolk LA  
August 8 2013  
From Stephen Bishop, DfE

We have previously exchanged emails about this case, and you confirmed that a school attendance order had not been served on [redacted] who is [redacted]. As you know [redacted] wrote to her MP [redacted] supplied a good deal of correspondence from herself and the authority and the local school, including a note of the 19 July 'fast-track' meeting, which she did not sign.

[Redacted] has now written to [redacted] confirming that the home education being provided does not need to be registered or approved by the authority, but explaining that the Council has to identify pupils who are not receiving a suitable full-time education.

It appears that the Council is in a problematic situation given the wish of [redacted] father for her to be educated at school, whereas [redacted] wishes to exercise her right to educate [redacted] at home, as she has done for some years. The note of the fast track meeting says that an ESO is not recommended and it would be better for the parents to co-operate. I should be grateful if you could let us know what plans the authority has to take forward this case, given that it seems that (a) the parents hold opposed views and (b) no attempt has been made since the aborted January 29 meeting, to assess the quality of the home education provision which [redacted] is making for [redacted]

I am copying this letter to your colleague [redacted]

Yours sincerely  
Stephen Bishop  
Independent Education and Boarding Team  
[redacted]

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To [redacted]  
September 15 2013  
From Stephen Bishop DfE

Thank you. I am currently on leave but will look in detail at this when I return on 23 September. In the meantime I am pleased that further progress seems to have been made.

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To [redacted]  
April 29 2014  
From [redacted]  
cc Stephen Bishop DfE

[redacted]

We have been approached by [redacted] The Tri-Borough Service has requested a home visit to ascertain home school provision for her child.

As you will be aware from DfE's guidelines on Elective Home Education, there is no legal provision for a home visit for this purpose unless there is a safeguarding concern. At this stage we only have the comments provided by [redacted] please could you provide the reasons why you have requested such a visit, so that we can consider whether the authority is acting reasonably.

Regards  
[redacted]  
[redacted]

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To [redacted]  
May 8 2014  
From Stephen Bishop DfE  
cc [redacted] Stephen Bishop DfE

Yes, it is below. However I am at meetings in London today.

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To [redacted]  
May 8 2014  
From Stephen Bishop DfE  
cc [redacted]

[Redacted]

There's a difficult balance here, in that some settling in time is obviously sensible if premature judgements are not to be made but there's a danger that parents may simply be trying to put off doing anything or at least proving that they are doing anything. There's no legal requirement on this except that - on the letter of the law - parents should be providing a suitable full-time education without interruption after schooling ceases and home education begins. The Department is not going to say "three months bad, six months good" or indeed vice versa - especially as what is known about specific families may indicate that there are different answers in different cases. The authority really has to decide what's its policy is, preferably make that clear, and stick to it.

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To [redacted]  
May 23 2014  
From Stephen Bishop DfE  
cc [redacted name + leicester.gov.uk]  
Subject: 2007 EHE Guidelines

[Redacted]

Yes, this date is fine. I and possibly another DfE person will come. Thanks for the travel notes; probably car will be easiest as we are based in Darlington. Perhaps you could let me know somewhen what time you would like us to turn up as possibly you will have other business you want to discuss without our being there?

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To [redacted]  
May 23 2014  
From Stephen Bishop DfE  
cc [redacted name + leicester.gov.uk]

[Redacted]

Thanks - we will get in touch at the beginning of November to confirm names. 11am will be good.