

## ARCHIVED NOTES FROM HOME EDUCATION APPG 2011

Fiona Nicholson <http://edyourself.org/WestminsterAPPG2011.pdf> via <http://edyourself.org/articles/WestminsterAPPG2011.php>

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APPG <http://edyourself.org/articles/allpartygrouphomeeducation.php>

Education Committee Report 2012

<http://edyourself.org/articles/edcomsupporthomeed.php>

College funding <http://edyourself.org/articles/WolfReport.php#14-16collegelatest>

(Direct Admission College)

Wolf Report <http://edyourself.org/articles/WolfReport.php>

SEN funding <http://edyourself.org/articles/funding.php> (High Needs Block)

Access to exams <http://edyourself.org/news/index.php#examsreport2012>

### New Guidance October 2011 **(NOW SUPERSEDED)**

Report All Party Parliamentary Group Home Education meeting September 2011 to discuss access to exams and college. The room was full and after the hour of the meeting people stayed talking for more than an hour afterwards. There were people from local authorities as well as home educators. Not many MPs attended, though there were several parliamentary researchers. Sadly, Minister Nick Gibb wasn't able to attend because he had an engagement elsewhere. However, Lisa Thom from DfE (see below) stayed for the duration, had conversations with lots of different people and took copious notes about the difficulties with the current guidance on how LAs could use funding for home educators. Lisa undertook to feed all points back to the Department.

**Update: Guidance was published on 30th September 2011 and incorporated points made at the meeting. Click [here](#) to read Guidance. FAQ were published on November 10th 2011. Click [here](#) to read FAQ.**

### New Council Protocol for 14-16s Home Education Access to College **(NOW SUPERSEDED)**

The Commissioning Director from Sheffield talked to the LA representatives about how Sheffield had drawn up a protocol for using Alternative Provision Funding to pay for further education courses for home educated 14-16s and the general response from LAs was "if you get the money, then we'll believe it's possible."

**Update: A number of Councils have now contacted Sheffield to learn more about the Funding Pilot.**

## Summary of Points Raised

There were differing views about whether it wouldn't just easier to put a child on the roll of a school or Pupil Referral Unit and then transfer the money to the college.

**Update: [Guidance](#) and [FAQ](#) resolved many of these issues. I also gave a presentation on Alternative Provision Funding to 20+ LAs at the Midlands Regional Conference in November 2011. **NOW SUPERSEDED****

There was also the issue that in some areas there are strict controls over who is "allowed" to go into the Alternative Provision category and there have to be medical notes or reports indicating that this is the last option after all other avenues have been exhausted.

**Update: Some Councils are discovering a greater flexibility in [the AP rules](#) which previously restricted provision on grounds of medical or behavioural need. **NOW SUPERSEDED****

There was a mixed understanding of what it mean to say that the LA was providing significant funding before it could claim the money back. Some LAs were clear to the DfE that they just didn't have money upfront to pay, so it wouldn't ever be the case that they could truthfully say they were already paying.

**Update: Some Councils who are now making use of AP Funding have had to take this higher up the Council since the Elective Home Education budget is not sufficient to pay fees upfront.**

In response to my point about finding exam centres and doing controlled assessments for GCSEs, some LAs said it wasn't a problem finding an exam centre in their area and said that they put lists together which they made sure were up to date, and someone also said that the exam boards like AQA provided a list of places where private candidates could sit the exam.

**Update: I conducted a survey of all LAs in England and found only 1 in 7 keep a list of schools. Click [here](#) to read Exam Access Survey Winter 2011. **NOW UPDATED END OF 2013****

Graham Stuart made an impassioned speech about access to exam centres and said there should be a duty placed on local authorities to ensure that there were places in their area where young people could sit exams as private candidates.

**Update: see [Exam Access Survey Winter 2011](#): 6 out of 7 LAs do not engage in active outreach with schools/exam centres.**

There were differences of opinion about whether colleges would be happy to take under 16s and whether it was possible to find GCSE courses at college even if places were paid. Others at the meeting said that [the Wolf Report](#) recommended opening up colleges to 14-16s and that the Government had accepted all the recommendations. Graham Stuart was clear that if there was enough demand for a course and there was funding for a place, then colleges would run the courses.

Concern was expressed that if it became possible or acceptable to fund college places or FE courses for children who weren't on a school roll then it wouldn't be fair to fund some and not others and therefore the floodgates would open. At the same time, fears were voiced that if LA support were put in place for exams and college, then accepting this support would become the norm and this would put home educators taking an alternative path at a disadvantage.

**Update: In June 2012 I researched the number of Councils which had used AP Funding for the academic year 2011-12 and those intending to use in 2012-13. See [Follow-up FOIs on Home Education Funding June 2012](#)**

A question was put about why colleges don't just get the money for under-16s if they are putting on courses for them in the same way as they do for 16+.

The issue was raised several times by LAs about whether a young person would still count as "home educated" if the LA was paying for 14-16 college and I believe the discussion was slightly at cross purposes. One council pointed out that children would be in the "not a school" category on the AP Census. Another LA reportedly said that it would treat these children as still being home educated, with the home education advisor taking responsibility for referring the young person to the FE provider, approving the LA's use of the money, and remaining as point of contact for families and FE provider. In other areas of policy, the Government has been keen not to prescribe a single way for all local authorities, and has instead championed local solutions to local issues.

**Update: Guidance and FAQ resolved many of these issues. I also gave a presentation on Alternative Provision Funding to 20+ LAs at the Midlands Regional Conference in November 2011.**

The overwhelming message from the meeting was that the Alternative Provision Funding Guidance was in urgent need of rewriting to make clear the circumstances in which local authorities could claim funding for children and young people in elective home education. As long as the guidance remains contradictory or vague, then this option will NOT be taken up by local authorities.

**Update: The Department for Education published [Frequently Asked Questions on Home Education and Alternative Provision Funding](#) on November 10th 2011.**