



Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP
Secretary of State

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3 April 2019

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to update you on proposals that I announced yesterday to launch a new register of all children not educated in a state funded or registered independent school. The Government is consulting on proposals which will, for the first time, provide a clear picture of where children are if they are not in school. Estimates suggest almost 60,000 children are deemed to be educated at home – a figure that is thought to be rising sharply every year.

Over recent years, the term ‘home education’ has acquired a much broader meaning than it used to have and now refers to all children not in a registered school. This includes those children with dedicated parents who have often made huge sacrifices and are providing their children with a really good education at home. But it also includes those children who are not getting an education at all, or are being educated in illegal schools where they are vulnerable to dangerous influences.

Our plans to create a register of children who are of compulsory school age but are not being educated full-time in mainstream school will enable local authorities to track – and take action on behalf of – those children who are not receiving the education that they should. We are also publishing guidance for local authorities and for parents that clarifies their powers and responsibilities under current law, setting out the action councils can take if they have concerns a child is not receiving a suitable education

We are also consulting on proposals to provide greater support to those parents who choose to educate their children at home, through assistance like helping to pay for exam costs and more.

Today’s consultation follows a call for evidence carried out last year which attracted thousands of responses and collected views from across the sector. The proposals in the consultation published yesterday have the support of a number of key stakeholders including the Children’s Commissioner, Ofsted and the Local Government Association, who will have a key role to play in their delivery. I also thank Lord Clive Soley and Frank Field MP for their support and for the introduction of their private member’s bill which led to these issues being debated in the House of Lords. The consultation document is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/children-not-in-school> and is open until 24 June 2019.

The issues around children not in school and those being home educated are

of considerable public interest and it is very likely that some of your constituents will contact you about the proposals. If they do, I hope that you will encourage them to consider the wider picture I have outlined here, and the reasons that the Government has taken this important step.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Damian Hinds". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Damian Hinds
Secretary of State for Education