

Press release: New register to help all children get the education they deserve

Landmark proposals for a register of all children not being educated in school, including those being taught at home, have been set out by Education Secretary Damian Hinds today (Tuesday 2 April).

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 by around a quarter every year.

A register of children not in school will transform a local council's capacity to identify and intervene where the standard of a child's education isn't good enough or, in the rare instances, where they are at risk of harm. It will also help the authorities spot young people who may be receiving a solely religious education, attending an unregistered school or not receiving an education at all.

The Department is also proposing new measures to support parents who choose to educate their children at home, in the form of a legal duty for local authorities to provide assistance like helping to pay for exam costs and more.

Education Secretary Damian Hinds said:

The term 'home education' has now acquired a much broader meaning than it used to. It is now a catch-all phrase, used to refer to all children not in a registered school. So whilst this does include those actually getting a really good education at home, it also includes children who are not getting an education at all, or being educated in illegal schools where they are vulnerable to dangerous influences – the truth is, we just don't know.

As a Government, we have a duty to protect our young people and do our utmost to make sure they are prepared for life in modern Britain. That's why this register of children not in school is so important – not to crack down on those dedicated parents doing an admirable job of educating their children in their own homes, but to prevent vulnerable young people from vanishing under the radar.

Under the plans, it will be parents' responsibility to register their child if they are not being taught in a state-funded or registered independent school.

The Government is also consulting on proposals that would require local

authorities to provide support such as teaching resources or financial contributions to exam fees – at parents' request.

Damian Hinds continued:

Parents who choose to teach their children at home have often made huge sacrifices – even giving up their careers – so that they can do what is best for their families. I want to make those parents' lives easier and help them provide the best education for their children.

I also want to hear from home educating parents so we can understand what support they would benefit from and how we can help them and their children flourish.

The Government is also publishing today 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. This includes school attendance orders – a legal power that already exists, compelling parents to send their child to a registered school.

For parents, the guidance sets out considerations they should make when deciding whether home education is the right choice for them and their child.

Today's consultation follows a call for evidence carried out last year which collected views from across the sector. The consultation will be open for 12 weeks until Monday 24 June.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman, said:

These proposals offer an important opportunity to make sure that all children not attending school are safe, and receiving an education that prepares them for adult life.

Ofsted has long had concerns about the increasing numbers of school-age children not attending a registered school, many of whom may not be receiving a high quality education or being kept safe. We are especially concerned about children 'off-rolled' from schools, and those in illegal schools. The new register will make it easier to detect and tackle these serious problems.

Children's Commissioner, Anne Longfield, said:

The number of children who are not being educated in school has rocketed over recent years. For some families, educating at home will be a positive choice but many more children are falling out of school and their parents struggling on their own.

It is vitally important that we know that all children are safe and that they are receiving the education they deserve to help them to succeed in life. The introduction of a register for children not in school is very welcome and something I have been calling for. I am pleased these proposals also include support for families.

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The Government has set out plans for a register of children not in school, enabling councils to act effectively if they have concerns for a child's education.

News story: Triple bill of better compensation, new trains and faster services on Greater Anglia

- Delay Repay 15 (DR15) launched today on the network
- new faster services between Norwich, Ipswich and London only a month away
- brand new state-of-the-art trains also set to roll out, delivering more modern services for passengers

Greater Anglia passengers will soon benefit from faster connections on brand new trains – with improved compensation in the event of disruption – Rail Minister Andrew Jones has announced yesterday (1 April 2019).

Visiting Norwich, Ipswich and Witham, the minister met with Greater Anglia managing director Jamie Burles, staff and passenger representatives to mark the official launch of the new DR15 compensation deal and to start the countdown to new faster services running between Norwich and London next month.

He also tried his hand at the training simulator drivers are using in preparation for the roll-out of the brand new £1.4 billion fleet of trains on

the network this year. The longer electric and bi-mode trains will run across the network, providing passengers with more seats, air conditioning, USB and plug sockets, improved information screens, spaces for cycles and accessible toilets.

Rail Minister Andrew Jones said:

Our top priority is ensuring passengers get the reliable and punctual services they expect, but if things do go wrong, it's only right that they are compensated fairly and quickly. This is why the launch of DR15 is excellent news for passengers.

With faster services and brand new trains coming soon, we are working hard to deliver significantly better journeys for passengers on Greater Anglia.

In May (2019), 4 new fast services between Norwich and London will be launched – meaning passengers can get to and from the capital in 90 minutes from Norwich and 60 minutes from Ipswich.

Press release: Sewage pollution leads to £200,000 restorative charity donation

The Environment Agency has secured £200,000 donation through an Enforcement Undertaking following a pollution incident near Doncaster.

Yorkshire Water Services Ltd have paid £200,000 to the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust as part of an Enforcement Undertaking (EU). The EU was offered to the Environment Agency after the company admitted causing sewage to enter the Pissy Beds Drain, a tributary that eventually leads into the River Trent in September 2015.

Benefit to environment

EUs are a restorative enforcement sanction. Polluters can make an offer to the Environment Agency to pay for or carry out environmental improvements as an alternative to any other enforcement action. The Environment Agency then carefully considers whether the remedial efforts offered by the polluter are acceptable, taking into consideration all the circumstances surrounding the commission of the offence.

On 22 September 2015 the Environment Agency was made aware of a burst at a

main surface water sewer, but further investigations showed that a transfer of foul sewage between pumping stations led to raw sewage entering the Pissy Beds Drain near Hatfield Colliery.

The Pissy Beds drain flows to Brierholme Carr Drain, then to South Soak Drain which leads to the River Trent. Elevated ammonia and low dissolved oxygen levels were detected due to sewage entering the watercourse. This had the potential to harm fish and the invertebrate life. Once made aware of the incident, The Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water Services' response meant that the pollution was contained while the burst was located, stopped and fixed, preventing further environmental harm.

Yorkshire Water Services cleaned the watercourse and have repaired the rising main that burst at a cost of £235,000. The company also paid the Environment Agency's costs in full. The company have also carried out an end to end review of their telemetry system to ensure that early warnings are received and acted on, additional alarms have been put in place. Staff have been briefed on the learning from the incident.

The EU offers were officially accepted by the Environment Agency in late February 2019 and payments to the charity have already been made. The donation of £200,000 to the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust will be used to fund Humberhead Levels Nature Improvement Area.

Louise Cresswell, the East Midlands Area Director at the Environment Agency, said:

Enforcement Undertakings allow polluters restore the harm caused to the environment and prevent repeat incidents.

They offer a quick resolution and help offenders who are prepared to take responsibility for their actions to voluntarily make things right. We will continue to seek prosecutions against those who cause severe pollution or who act recklessly.

Please report any environmental issues to the Environment Agency's 24 hour Incident Hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

Press release: Sewage pollution leads to £200,000 restorative charity donation

Yorkshire Water offered a charity donation to resolve an investigation into a

sewage pollution event at the Pissy Beds Drain near Hatfield Colliery