

01 Purpose of this Briefing

A multi-agency spotlight audit on electively home educated children was carried out by the Leicester and Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnerships (LLR SCPs) between October 2025 and January 2026. This briefing links the learning identified locally to the national picture.

02 Background to Audit

This spotlight theme was agreed to provide follow up to a previous audit, undertaken in 2022-23, which informed the production of local guidance. This audit would assess progress in regard to the implementation of the local guidance and any gaps that remain. Additionally, one of the conclusions of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's Safeguarding children in Elective Home Education Panel Briefing was that *"local safeguarding partners take all necessary steps to assure themselves that policy, practice, and procedures in their area enables professionals to work effectively together, with children and their families, to safeguard and protect this group of children."* Also, the Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) on Sara Sharif has raised issues around elective home education. This audit was about measuring where we are across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

07 Resources to support practice

[Elective Home Education: An Approach to Safeguarding for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland](#)

[Elective Home Education procedure: awareness raising session video](#)

[NSPCC \(2025\) Tipping point: tackling the challenges in safeguarding children educated at home. London: NSPCC](#)

06 Local and national picture

According to the statutory guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), parents have the right to home educate their children. They must notify their child's current school of this decision. Best practice is, then, for the school to invite the parents for a meeting. It is the school's duty to notify the Inclusion Service that a child is being taken off a school's roll. Currently, there is no expectation for Children's Social Care to be notified if a child is home educated to check if the situation is safe. This is a gap nationally.

Many of the issues raised in this local audit reflect those raised in national publications.

The [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026](#) aims to strengthen measures around home educated children. Its publication is likely to require changes to local policies and procedures.



05 What are we worried about

There was a slight increase in the voice of the child being obtained, but the numbers are still quite low and this is sometimes captured via the parents, rather than directly from the child.

As with the previous audit, Inclusion Services have significant limitations with regards to their powers when dealing with families of children who are electively home educated, which adds to the barriers to professional oversight and support to this group of children.

03 Audit Scope

It was recognised that lots of electively home educated children have no safeguarding concerns, and their education is meeting their needs. We wanted to know about their visibility in line with previous local, and current national, learning. The audit framework, including the scope, methodology, and audit questions, focused on establishing if children were known to services or presenting vulnerabilities. The audit consisted of a total of 50 cases across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The scoping period was 11 months from 1st September 2024 to 31st July 2025. Cases were randomly selected from the Local Authority Electively Home Educated cohort.

04 What worked well

- Inclusion Services are being proactive where they have concerns and working as well as they can within the current guidance.
- Agencies are acting appropriately when electively home educated children become known to them.
- In a change from the earlier audit's findings, Leicestershire and Rutland Children's Social Care records do now routinely capture that the child is electively home educated, with flags being used to achieve this.
- There is a good process around Operation Encompass and electively home educated children.