

Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Enquiry Task and Finish Group Approach

Enquiry Title	<p>Out of school out of site, children not in School. Addressing the issues in the Ombudsman's Report of July 2022. - Focus report: Out of school, out of sight? July 2022 (localgov.co.uk)</p> <p><u>This enquiry is not about elective home education</u></p> <p>When a child (of compulsory school age) cannot go to school, the Upper Tier local authority must find out why. If there is a duty for it to act, it must make alternative arrangements to provide suitable education.</p> <p>The key learning point the Ombudsman wants to highlight is that Upper Tier Authorities have the duty to arrange alternative education, not the school a child attends. Councils need some way to identify when their duty has arisen. Councils will be held to account if things go wrong.</p>	Date of Enquiry	TBC
Corporate Plan Theme	Community Leadership Through Partnerships/Joined up public services for the benefit of our residents and businesses		
Invitees	<p>Representatives from Essex County Council's Education service with knowledge of this area.</p> <p>Those who undertake assessments</p> <p>Those who are contracted to provide alternative education provision.</p> <p>A sample of the parents of the children who fall into this category</p> <p>A representative from the Ombudsman's Office who can speak on this matter.</p>		
Information to be provided	<p>Essex County Council policies on its duty to children who cannot fully attend a school to access their education.</p> <p>Numbers of children in the County who cannot fully attend school.</p> <p>Arrangements for assessments of children who cannot fully attend a school to access their education.</p> <p>Alternative education provision providers and oversight of those arrangements.</p>		

	<p>Timescales for assessments and alternative provision, learning from complaints about the service.</p>
<p>Articulated value of undertaking the review</p>	<p>To respond to the Ombudsman’s Focus Report of July 2022 on this matter.</p> <p>To be reassured on the provision for children in Tendring who struggle to cope with full-time education. This can be because they have health problems.</p> <p>Helping to ensuring that local services do not exacerbate mental health issues for children in this category. The Ombudsman reports seeing increasing numbers of cases where children are unable to attend school because of anxiety. Often, these cases involve children with special educational needs which have yet to be fully understood. There may be little, or even conflicting, evidence about the child’s needs. Nevertheless, councils must assess the available evidence and decide for themselves whether they have a statutory duty to make other arrangements for the child’s education. They should take action without delay.</p>
<p>Task and Finish Group Membership</p>	<p><u>As approved by Officer Decision on 7 November 2022</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Miles • Councillor Knowles • Councillor Winfield <p>Further nominees to be determined by the Committee</p>