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**Baroness Barran**

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the School System  
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Laura Farris MP  
By email: [laura.farris.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:laura.farris.mp@parliament.uk)

5 July 2022

Dear Laura,

Thank you for your email of 10 June, enclosing correspondence from your constituents, regarding elective home education and the Schools Bill.

Firstly, I want to reiterate that the government understands many parents who educate their children at home provide a high-quality education and do so in the best interests of their child. It is a demanding commitment for parents to undertake and I commend those who do it well. We want parents and local authorities (LAs) to be supported in ensuring that the education received at home is suitable. The proposed duty on parents to provide necessary information to LAs for inclusion on their registers is not intended to undermine privacy, criminalise parents, nor will it interfere with parents' right to educate their child in a way and with methods they think best, so long as the education being provided is suitable – which parents must already ensure is the case.

The department's elective home education guidance for LAs already details eight components that LAs should consider when determining whether a child is receiving a suitable education. This includes: enabling the child to participate fully in life in the UK; education not conflicting with fundamental British values; and isolation from a child's peers indicating possible unsuitability. Each individual assessment of whether education being provided is deemed 'suitable' must rest on a balance of relevant factors depending on the circumstances of each child.

Ultimately, the important issue is that the child receives a suitable education which is in the child's best interests as set out in the Children Act 1989. The most appropriate response to a failure to register, or to provide information to the LA for inclusion in the register, is for the LA to take steps to determine whether the child is being suitably educated and, if not, to make sure the child attends a suitable school. The use of existing school attendance order procedures, strengthened by the reforms in this Bill, will help LAs to achieve this aim and the best outcome for the child.

Thank you for writing on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Diana Barran".

**BARONESS BARRAN**

**PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE**