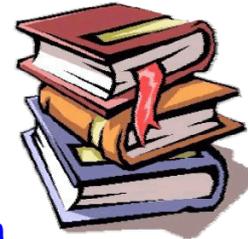
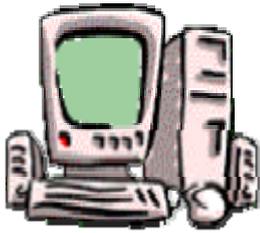


# Elective Home Education

## Information Leaflet





## Elective Home Education Information Leaflet

All parents have a duty to ensure that their children receive an efficient, full time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise ([under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)). However, the law allows parents to educate their children at home instead of sending them to school, if they fulfil certain conditions. Parents will find the following guidelines useful when considering educating their children at home.

When a parent decides to withdraw their child from school to home educate, it is important that they notify the school where the child is registered. The school will then remove the child from their register and inform the local education authority (LEA). Although parents are not legally required to inform their LEA, we suggest that they do so to ensure that the LEA is aware of the change. Additionally, it is recommended that parents also inform their LEA of any significant changes in their circumstances relevant to the effective education of their child e.g. a change of address.

### LEAs' responsibilities

The LEA will need to be satisfied that a child is receiving suitable education at home, and will probably ask to meet with the family in order to talk to the parent and to look at examples of work and learning. LEAs have no automatic right of access to a parent's home. However, parents may, if they wish to, permit access to their home, or offer an alternative venue for a meeting. At the initial meeting, the nature and frequency of future contact should be agreed.

Where it appears to an LEA that a child of compulsory school age is not receiving efficient or suitable full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, the LEA is under a duty to serve a notice on the parent requiring them to satisfy the authority that their child is receiving suitable education "otherwise than at school". If the parent's reply is unsatisfactory, or if they fail to reply, the LEA may issue a School Attendance Order ([under section 437\(1\) of the Education Act 1996](#)). LEAs may also apply to the Court for a child assessment under the [Children Act 1989](#), if they have reasonable cause to do so.

## Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Children and young people with statements of special educational needs can be home educated. When a child has a statement of special educational needs which names a special school, the child's name may **not** be removed from the register of that school without the consent of the education authority.

## De-registration from school

If the child is currently or has previously been educated at a maintained school and parents wish to withdraw them to home educate, it is essential that the parents inform the school in writing so that the child's name can be removed from the register. A Unique Pupil Number (UPN) will have been allocated for the child and it is important therefore for the school and LEA to be aware of any changes in case the child returns to schooling in future.

If the child has never attended school they will not have been allocated a UPN and although there is no statutory requirement for home-educating parents to register their child with LEAs, they are strongly encouraged to do so where possible as this will enable the LEA to carry out their duties and responsibilities in a straightforward and helpful way.

## Costs of home educating

Parents are strongly encouraged to plan ahead and think carefully about the costs associated with educating children at home (especially in the longer term when they may wish to take public examinations).

There are no funds directly available from this Department for parents who decide to home-educate their children. Neither do LEAs have a legal duty to provide financial support to parents who choose to home educate their children. However, some LEAs do provide free National Curriculum materials and other support to parents, but the level and extent of such support is decided locally, based on the LEA's own policies and the needs of the child.

The internal assessment component of many standard qualification courses such as Standard Grades, National Qualifications and GCSEs can restrict the choice available to home educated students. On the other hand, the examining board Edexcel has made their International GCSEs (with coursework-free option) available to home-educated children from Summer 2004 and there may be other options available through the local Connexions service and local colleges.

## Frequently Asked Questions about Elective Home Education

**Is it legal?** Yes. Home-Education is legal in all parts of the UK. You do not need to be a teacher or have any other special qualifications.

**How do I start?** If your child has never been to school, there is no action for you to take prior to starting home education. However, if your child is in school you must formally de-register by writing to the head teacher and say that you intend to teach your child at home.

**What happens when I withdraw my child from school?** The LEA will almost certainly want to discuss the educational provision you have planned. Many LEAs provide advice and helpful support for families who wish to home educate. If you refuse to respond to their informal questions LEAs are permitted under case law to assume that you are failing to provide any education and ultimately issue a School Attendance Order (which will force you to return your child to school). You may challenge the Order in court by providing evidence that proper educational provision is being made.

**Can I home educate a child with a Special Needs Statement?** Yes. There is no law prohibiting the home education of statemented children provided they are not attending a special school, in which case you will need the consent of the LEA. However, you need to be able to show that you can provide for these special needs should the LEA enquire.

**What if my child is in a special school?** If your child has special needs and attends a special school, you need permission from the local education authority to de-register and ensure you can otherwise cater for his or her special needs.

**How does compulsory school age affect home educators?** As a parent, you must provide an education for your child during "compulsory school age" (age 5 to 16). The law says that this can be at home.

**Will I be checked or monitored in any way?** The local education authority (LEA) has a duty to ensure that you are providing efficient and suitable education for your child. Many parents whose children have never been to school or have moved home since leaving school are unknown to their LEA and therefore have no monitoring. However, the Department believes that positive relationships and mutual respect between local authorities and parents is the best way of ensuring that the best interests of the child are safeguarded.

**Will I have to arrange for SAT's testing?** SAT's testing is only a requirement at state schools and is therefore not relevant to home education. Your child will not be tested by the LEA.

**Do I have to teach the National Curriculum?** The National Curriculum only applies to state schools (as does provision like literacy and numeracy hours). As a home educator it is up to you and your child what, how and when you study.

**Can my child still take exams?** Yes, you can arrange for children to take exams as external candidates at various exam centres such as colleges of further education. You will need to contact colleges and make enquiries and talk to other home educators in your area. However, there are no grants available to cover the costs.

**What is “flexi-schooling”?** This is an arrangement between the parent and the school where the child is registered at school in the normal way but where the child attends the school only part time; the rest of the time the child is home-educated. "Flexi-schooling" is a legal option but you will need the agreement of the head teacher at the school concerned and, in most cases, the local education authority as well. Some of the advantages and disadvantages of "flexi-schooling" are referred to on the Home Education UK's website at [www.home-education.org.uk/flexi-school.htm](http://www.home-education.org.uk/flexi-school.htm).

### **Further Information**

The National Curriculum tests and assessment arrangements are developed and administered by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), on behalf of the Secretary of State. Information to support these arrangements is provided both electronically and in hard copy through QCA's website at [www.qca.org.uk](http://www.qca.org.uk) and their address QCA, 83 Piccadily, London W1J 8QA, telephone 0207 509 555.

You may also be interested in looking at GCSE at [www.dfes.gov.uk/qualifications/mainSection.cfm?sld=1](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/qualifications/mainSection.cfm?sld=1) This site provides information about qualifications for schools and colleges.

The [Connexions Service](http://www.connexions.gov.uk) ([www.connexions.gov.uk](http://www.connexions.gov.uk)) is for all children and young people aged 13-19 living in England, and its services and responsibilities cover children and young people who are being educated at home.

Curriculum online ([www.curriculumonline.gov.uk](http://www.curriculumonline.gov.uk)) gives pupils, parents and teachers access to thousands of resources and online activities relevant to Key Stage 1 & 2, Special Needs and Early Years.

Information on home education can also be found on the Parents Centre website at [www.parentcentre.gov.uk](http://www.parentcentre.gov.uk)

Some documents are also distributed by the Department's publications centre which can be accessed through links on The Stationery Office website at

[www.the-stationery-office.co.uk](http://www.the-stationery-office.co.uk) or by telephoning Prolog on 0845 602 2260. Some documents are priced so parents will need to check the costs with Prolog before ordering.

Parents with younger children may also find it helpful to access a website about "Digger and the Gang" [www.bbc.co.uk/education/schools/digger](http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/schools/digger). This website is for 5 – 11 year olds and aims to help children find out more about the ideas behind the National Curriculum, and how different parts of the National Curriculum work together to fit into the greater scheme of things.

Parents can also find other links on the BBC websites the addresses are [www.bbc.co.uk/learning/index.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/index.shtml) & [www.bbc.co.uk/schools/index.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/index.shtml)

### **Independent organisations that deal with issues surrounding Home Education**

[Education Otherwise](http://www.education-otherwise.org.uk) is a UK-based membership organisation which provides support and information for families whose children are being educated outside school, and for those who wish to uphold the freedom of families to take proper responsibility for the education of their children. Contact:

Education Otherwise  
PO Box 7420, London N9 9SG  
Tel: 01283 532 547

Website: [www.education-otherwise.org.uk](http://www.education-otherwise.org.uk)

[Home Education Advisory Service](http://www.heas.org.uk) is a national home education charity based in the United Kingdom. It is dedicated to the provision of advice and practical support for families who wish to educate their children at home in preference to sending them to school. Interest in home education is increasing and HEAS recognises that reliable information should be available for everyone. Contact:

Home Education Advisory Service, PO Box 98, Welwyn Garden City  
Hertfordshire, AL8 6AN  
Tel: 01707 371 854

Website: [www.heas.org.uk](http://www.heas.org.uk)

### **DfES Contacts**

DfES  
Elective Home Education  
GF D Mowden Hall  
Darlington  
County Durham  
DL3 9BG

Tel: 01325 391186 or 391150 or 391157