

# Elective Home Education (EHE)

## Guidance notes for Parents and Carers



## Introduction

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This guidance has been written to help parents/carers who are considering, or who are already, educating their child or children at home.

The EHE Policy provides further information, and it is available at the Local Offer page for Elective Home Education, or can be sent to families if requested.

The Local Offer can be found at:  
[www.westberks.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/localoffer)

The Elective Home Education page at the Local Offer can be found at:  
<http://fis.westberks.gov.uk/kb5/westberkshire/fsd/localoffer.page?familychannel=5-6&sortfield=title&sorttype=field>

## What is 'Elective Home Education'?

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There is no single form of providing education; children learn in many different ways, and at different times and speeds, and from different people. If you electively home educate what you teach, and the way you teach is up to you. You do not have to follow a particular curriculum, follow a timetable, or teach particular subjects. The Local Authority recognises that there are many approaches to this type of education and strives to build positive relationships with families who electively home educate.

### What do home educators provide?

- They make the learning process active, practical and participative.
- They take full advantage of all available resources, such as museums, libraries, parks, computers, educational DVDs and CDs.
- They have fun with the learning experience.
- They provide opportunities for physical development.
- They encourage their children to develop socially by possibly attending clubs.
- They encourage their children to read widely.
- They make learning enjoyable by using a variety of approaches.
- They give children opportunities for independent learning.
- They make sure their child has a suitable environment for learning.
- They make sure their child is safe.

### Are there any compulsory subjects?

There are no compulsory subjects for electively home educated children. However, you will need to provide opportunities for learning literacy and numeracy as these are key areas in a suitable education.

### How do I enter my child for tests and examinations if I want to?

You do not have to enter your child for tests or examinations. If you wish to do so it is your responsibility to investigate opportunities and options for your child. The Local Authority is able to offer a contribution towards GCSE examination costs for those children in Year 10 or 11. Payment is made to the examination centre. Please discuss this with the EHE Contact to find out more information.

# The Legal Requirement

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## Do children have to go to school?

Parents/carers hold the responsibility for ensuring their children receive an education. Education is compulsory and can be provided by choosing to send children to school, or by choosing to educate children at home.

## What is the parent's duty?

In law, it is the duty of the parents/carers of every child of compulsory school age\*:

*“...to cause the child to receive efficient, full time education suitable to his (or her) age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he (or she) may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise”.*

(Education Act 1996 Section 7).

## What is “efficient” and “suitable” education?

These words are not defined in law, but education can be regarded as “efficient” if it achieves what it sets out to achieve and “suitable” if it prepares the child for life in modern society and enables the child to achieve his or her full potential.

If you choose elective home education then you do not need to provide the same kind of lessons as are taught at school. It is up to you to provide an education that helps your child to learn and develop according to his or her age, ability and aptitude. You do not have to give formal lessons or match school standards, but you will need to provide an efficient and suitable education for your child.

## What is full time education?

There is no formal government definition of full time education for EHE. As a guide, and for your information, children attend school for between 22 – 25 hours over 38 weeks of the year. However, you do not have to observe school hours or follow a fixed timetable.

## What is the Local Authority's duty?

In law, it is the duty of the Local Authority to make arrangements to identify children not receiving an education:

*“A local education authority must make arrangements to enable them to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children in their area who are of compulsory school age but –*

- (a) Are not registered at a school, and*
- (b) Are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.”*

(Education Act 1996 s 436a (inserted by Education and Inspections Act 2006 s 4)

When the Local Authority becomes aware of a child being electively home educated a representative from the Local Authority will contact the family. Initial communication with families is made from the Education Welfare Service and initial contact involves an Education Welfare Officer and the EHE Contact. The EHE Contact will make further

contact with families on at least an annual basis. It is hoped that although parents/carers are not legally required to have regular contact with the Local Authority in relation to the home education provided for their child(ren), parents/carers would agree to this contact. This would ensure there is sufficient information to demonstrate that a child is in receipt of their entitlement to a suitable education.

## What you need to do if you decide to educate your child at home

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### If your child attends a mainstream school or academy:

If you intend to withdraw your child from a mainstream school or academy, you must write to the Headteacher asking for your child's name to be removed from the school's roll, you should consider telling the school that you intend to electively home educate your child.

On receipt of this notification the school or academy will confirm your intention with the Education Welfare Service. You may also send a copy of your letter to the Education Welfare Service yourself.

#### **Education Welfare Service,**

West Berkshire Council,  
Children's Services,  
East Locality Team,  
Council Offices,  
Turnham's Green,  
Pincents Lane,  
Reading, RG31 4UH

If your child has a statement or Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) and attends a mainstream school or academy the Local Authority can specify 'elective home education' as the placement. The Local Authority's preferred process for this to happen is for the submission of details of the parent's proposed educational provision to be sent to the Local Authority following an Annual Review.

### If your child attends a Special School:

If a child attends a Special School then his/her name cannot be removed from roll until the Local Authority gives permission.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 Regulation 8(2) states:

*"a child who has, under arrangements made by a local education authority, become a registered pupil at a special school shall not be removed from the admission register of that school without the consent of that authority, or if that authority refuse to give consent, without a direction of the Secretary of State."*

The statement or Education Health and Care Plan would need to be reviewed following an Annual Review. This review would need to detail evidence of the parent's proposed educational provision, and this proposal would need to be agreed by the Local Authority, this is usually through the SEN Panel.

## If your child has never been to school:

You are not legally required to notify the Local Authority – though it would be helpful if you do. This can be done by writing to the Education Welfare Service at the address above, stating that you intend to educate your child at home and include your child's name, date of birth and your name and contact details.

## What if I just keep my child out of school?

The Local Authority seeks to satisfy itself that all children and young people in the area are in receipt of a suitable and efficient education. If you cannot provide information to show that your child is being educated efficiently and suitably, then the Local Authority can conclude that your child is not being effectively educated. We may then take steps to ensure your child attends school to receive his/her education, this may include formal steps involving a School Attendance Order.

## Do I have to let the LA representative visit my home?

You do not have to meet the Local Authority representative (EHE Contact) in your home. You can agree to meet elsewhere, or can provide information about the education you are providing by sending written information into the Local Authority. However, the Local Authority's preferred practice for sharing this information is for parents and the child/young person to:

- Meet with the EHE Contact at their home or at another venue
- Provide information or evidence of the education being suitable, at least annually
- Share information or evidence of the education, demonstrating its suitability and its effectiveness
- Meet with the child to discuss their educational provision, wellbeing and any concerns they may have.

Additional information may also be provided by parents, such as:

- Information or report setting out their educational plans
- Information or report from a reputable third party
- Representative samples of their child's work.

## Do I have to let the LA representative meet my child?

The LA representative (EHE Contact) does not have to meet your child, but the Local Authority's preferred practice includes meeting you and your child.

If the EHE Contact does not see your child (either at a visit or because you send written information in to the Local Authority about your child's education) the EHE Contact will inform Social Care that your child has not been seen by a member of the EHE team. The reason for doing this is not because there is a concern about the child being electively home educated, but because the Local Authority has a duty under s.175 (1) of the Education Act, 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within its area. In these circumstances Social Care are likely to contact you.

For further information, please see the Council's current EHE policy and practice 2015/18 on the Elective Home Education page of the Local Offer:

<http://fis.westberks.gov.uk/kb5/westberkshire/fsd/localoffer.page?familychannel=5-6&sortfield=title&sorttype=field>

# The role of the EHE Contact

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## What will the EHE Contact do?

The EHE Contact will meet with you to discuss the education you are providing and its “efficiency” and “suitability”.

The EHE Contact will talk to you, and preferably your child, about their learning.

Some questions that may be asked are:

- What activities and experiences are you providing for your child?
- How do you provide for your child’s physical development?
- How do you arrange for your child to mix socially with others?
- Do you include practical activities, written work as well as ICT?
- How will you show progress?
- Are you aware on how best to safeguard your child?
- What are your child’s interests?
- What are your long-term plans/goals?
- How will you ensure that you provide life skills in order for your child to pursue independence, employment, education or training?

## What kind of information should I provide?

The Local Authority would expect the educational provision for an electively home educated child/young person to include the following characteristics:

- consistent involvement of parents or other significant carers
- recognition of the individual’s needs, attitudes and aspirations
- appropriate safeguarding of the child/young person
- opportunities for the child/young person to be stimulated by their learning experiences
- access to resources/materials required to provide home education – such as paper and pens, books and libraries, arts and crafts materials, physical activity, ICT
- the opportunity for appropriate interaction with other children/young people and adults

## What happens if the EHE Contact is not satisfied?

The EHE Contact will tell you, and inform you of the areas that are not satisfactory. This will be confirmed in writing and you will be given a reasonable period of time to provide further information. If, after follow up visits and discussion with you, you are unable to provide information to show your child is receiving an effective education, the Local Authority will require your child to attend a school, and the EHE Contact will refer you to Education Welfare Service. These measures are considered to be a last resort after other avenues have been exhausted.

## How often will the LA make contact with me?

The EHE Contact will make contact with all families at least once a year.

## Making your decision

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In making your decision you might like to consider the following:

- Think carefully, it is a big responsibility and it will take a great deal of your time and energy to provide full time education at home.
- Think about why you are taking this decision. If your child has a problem at school or if you are dissatisfied with the school, you are advised to approach the headteacher to discuss your concerns
- Look at the costs involved, remember the Local Authority does not contribute to Elective Home Education funding in anyway, apart from a contribution towards GCSE examinations when your child is the age equivalent of the school years 10 or 11
- Discuss your intentions with your child before making a decision.
- Don't consider this as a final decision. You can request a school place at any time during your child's schooling.

## Useful contacts

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If you have any further queries, Please do not hesitate to contact:

### Local Authority Contacts

#### **Education Welfare Service**

West Berkshire Council  
Children's Services  
East Locality Team  
Council Offices  
Turnhams Green Park  
Pincent's Lane, Calcot  
Reading  
Berks  
RG31 4UH  
Telephone: 0118 9167770

#### **Lucy Poynter**

EHE Contact, 2nd Floor,  
West Street House  
West Street  
Newbury RG14 1BZ  
Telephone: 01635 503646

### EHE organisations:

#### **Education Otherwise.**

PO Box 7420  
London N9 9SG  
Tel helpline 0891 518303  
[www.education-otherwise.org](http://www.education-otherwise.org)

#### **Choice in Education**

P.O. Box 5  
Belvedere  
DA17 5ZU  
e-mail  
[choiceineducation@btinternet.com](mailto:choiceineducation@btinternet.com)

#### **Home Education Advisory Service**

P.O. Box 98  
Welwyn Garden City  
Hertfordshire  
AL8 6AN  
Telephone 01707 371854  
e-mail [admin@heas.org.uk](mailto:admin@heas.org.uk)  
[www.heas.org.uk](http://www.heas.org.uk)

## Other organisations and guidance that may be useful:

### **Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health**

Young Minds - [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

Childline - [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

### **Healthy Eating**

Change 4 life - [www.nhs.uk/change4life/](http://www.nhs.uk/change4life/)

Children's Food Trust - [www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk](http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk)

### **Physical Activity**

Change 4 life - [www.nhs.uk/change4life/](http://www.nhs.uk/change4life/)

Splat – West Berkshire Youth Activities programme - [www.bacyp.co.uk/activities](http://www.bacyp.co.uk/activities)

### **Other**

PSHE association - [www.pshe-association.org.uk](http://www.pshe-association.org.uk)

Digizen digital citizenship - [www.digizen.org](http://www.digizen.org)

UK Safer internet centre - [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

### **Support for young people**

[www.thesite.org](http://www.thesite.org)

[www.nhs.uk/livewell/sexandyoungpeople](http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/sexandyoungpeople)

British Heart Foundation - [www.cbhf.org.uk](http://www.cbhf.org.uk) 7 to 11 yr olds site and [www.yheart.net](http://www.yheart.net) for 13 to 19 year olds

### **Young People - volunteering opportunities**

[www.vinspired.com](http://www.vinspired.com)

[www.volunteerwestberks.org.uk](http://www.volunteerwestberks.org.uk)

### **Support for parents**

Parenting and family support – Family Lives - [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)

Royal College of Psychiatrists child and adolescent mental health, Surviving adolescence [www.recpsych.ac.uk/healthadvice/parentsandyouthinfo/](http://www.recpsych.ac.uk/healthadvice/parentsandyouthinfo/)

Your Teenager - [www.yourteenager.co.uk](http://www.yourteenager.co.uk)



We are committed to being accessible to everyone. If you require this document in an alternative format or translation, please call the Education Welfare Officer on Telephone 01635 42400.

**West Berkshire Council**

**Children's Services**

**East Locality Team**

Turnhams Green Park  
Pincent's Lane, Tilehurst  
Reading  
Berks. RG31 4UH

T 0118 9167770  
[www.westberks.gov.uk](http://www.westberks.gov.uk)

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