

ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS IN THE WAKEFIELD AREA

This information offers advice and guidance to parents considering or exercising their right to educate their child at home rather than at school.

Information can be found on the Wakefield Council website at www.wakefield.gov.uk or by contacting the Education Welfare Service on 01924 307541 or 307423.

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What is Home Education?

Home-educated children and young people are those who, for a range of reasons, are being educated at home and in the community by parents, guardians, carers or tutors, and are **NOT** registered full time at mainstream schools or other educational establishments.

It is **NOT** home tuition provided by the Local Authority or where a Local Authority provides education in an alternative placement. The **parent** is responsible for deciding what the child learns and for funding any resources required.

Parents are encouraged to make an informed decision before opting for EHE and the decision should not be taken lightly or as a reaction to school disputes.

Parents need to consider the major commitment of time, money and energy involved and consider how they will provide education at home and whether it will allow their child to reach his or her potential. Parents will also need to create opportunities for social interaction for their child/ren

Government guidance recommends, as parents you should consider:

- a. why are you thinking of educating your child at home?
- b. what does your child think about the idea?
- c. do you have the time, resources and ability to teach your child properly?
- d. is your home suitable for undertaking teaching and learning, in terms of noise, space and general environment?
- e. What support do you as parents have from others? What would happen if you were unable, perhaps through illness, to provide teaching for your child for a period of time?
- f. can you provide social experiences, access to cultural and aesthetic experiences and physical exercise, to help your child develop?
- g. Do you envisage educating your child at home for the whole of their time of compulsory school age, or only temporarily? What are your long term intentions for the education of your child?

What is the law around home education?

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable

a) to his/her age, ability and aptitude, and

b) any special education needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their child is receiving a 'suitable' and 'efficient' education.

All children are required by law to start full time education at the beginning of the term after their fifth birthday, until the last Friday in the month of June in the academic year they are sixteen.

Most parents choose to request a school carries out this responsibility but some may consider educating their child themselves at some point during their education

What are the Local Authority's (LA) responsibilities?

It is the LA's duty to ensure children of school age are receiving a suitable education as defined by law, that is that it must be 'suitable' and 'efficient' in line with Section 7 of the Education Act 1996.

In order to fulfil this duty Wakefield LA will make informal enquiries regarding the education of all the home educated children it is aware of. The LA looks to work with home educating families to support them in the best way possible to ensure that all young people achieve and progress.

The LA has a duty to ensure that each child is safe from harm, therefore the EHE officer will be looking to ensure that home education is a safe option for the child(ren).

Full guidelines around elective home education for local authorities were published in 2019 by the DfE and can be found by searching for 'Elective Home Education Guidelines' on:

www.education.gov.uk or at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/elective-home-education>

What is the process for withdrawing my child(ren) from school?

If you decide to withdraw your child from school to educate them yourself, you should **inform the Head teacher in writing** that you are withdrawing them from school and that you will be providing the education yourself. If you do not inform the Head teacher you may be at risk of prosecution under S444 of the Education Act due to non-attendance.

Special arrangements apply if your child has an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) and attends a special school. This is because the EHCP is a legal document which specifies the arrangements for your child. If your child attends a special school you will need the permission of the LA to withdraw them for home education.

The LA would recommend that you consider this move carefully before writing a letter to the school. If you are withdrawing your child(ren) because of an issue within the school, the LA would encourage you to contact the school first to discuss options and the effect on your child(ren)'s education. Members of the EHE team are available to offer support and guidance to parents at any stage and the LA would encourage you to talk through your decision with the team prior to making it.

Remember that pressure should never be put on you as parents by a school to remove your child from a school to avoid formal exclusion, or because your child is

having difficulty with learning or behaviour. This practice - sometimes called 'off-rolling' - is unacceptable, and if pressure of this sort is put on you by any state-funded school you should inform the local authority.

The Head teacher will forward your letter to the LA and will inform the Education Welfare Service.

If you decide to educate your child(ren) from the start of their education it is recommended you register with the LA

Supporting parents as they home educate

The LA is committed to supporting parents who choose to home educate through a number of routes

Once the LA has been informed you will be contacted to request that you complete the administration form with an outline of your plan for educating your child at home

The LA will make contact usually within 3 months of you starting to home educate unless there are other concerns. This will usually be through an informal meeting either at the family home or another suitable venue and is designed to provide you with support and advice as you develop your approach to education. On occasions where parents decline to meet with the LA, information will be requested through a written report.

The EHE officer will seek evidence that you have a serious intent to provide a suitable full time education for your child. You will be asked to provide information on how you are going to plan and deliver an educational programme. It is up to you to decide how you structure this programme.

Ongoing support

If the EHE officer is satisfied with the evidence and discussion, the LA will contact you on an annual basis to request a report or offer a visit to satisfy itself of the current suitability of the education provided.

Where there are concerns

We recognise that the majority of home educators do a good job of providing education to their child(ren), however if the EHE officer is not satisfied any concerns will be outlined to you in a letter. The letter will also set a date, for a further contact to be made

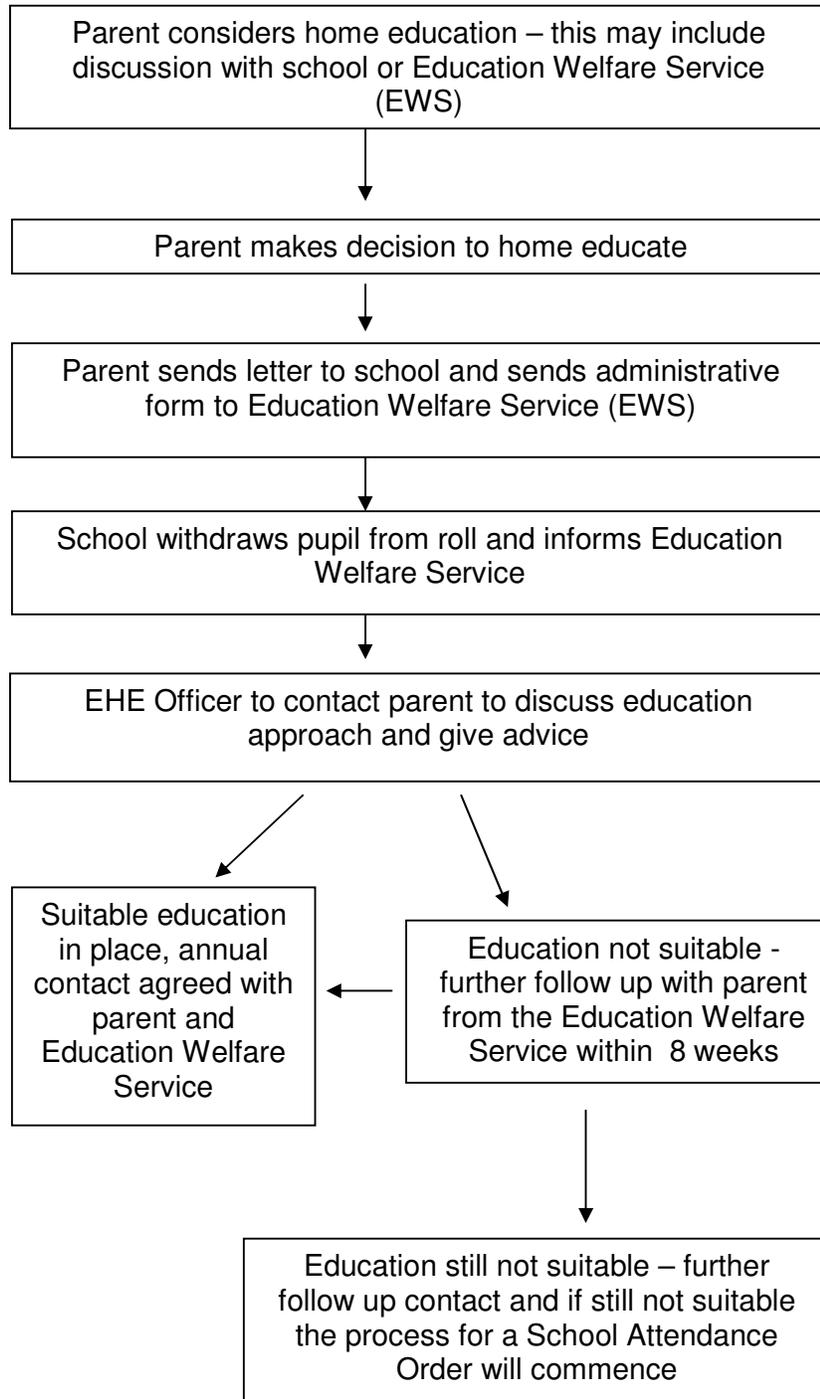
If it appears to the LA that parents are not providing a suitable education then they may serve a notice on parents requiring them to satisfy the LA that the child is receiving such education. This includes circumstances where parents do not provide any information about the education they are providing.

The EHE officer may consult with partner agencies such as Social Services, School Admissions and Legal Services.

If parents fail to satisfy the LA that the child is receiving a suitable education, the LA may serve a School Attendance Order under Section 437(3) of the Education Act 1996. This requires that your child attends a named school and you are responsible for ensuring their regular attendance. In general this would only be taken as a last resort and a more usual approach would be to work with you to support you as you educate your child(ren).

Flowchart for decision and support process

The chart below is designed to clarify the information given in regards to the support process for EHE families.



Delivering a suitable education

Home educators **do not** need to follow the National Curriculum but in planning any educational programme it would be good practice to take notice of what the National curriculum outlines. Any judgement of what is a suitable education would also consider whether the range of experiences offered to the child(ren) were broad and balanced.

There is no definition of 'suitable' education in statute law, although it must be suitable to the age, ability and aptitudes of the child, and any special educational needs. This means that it must be age-appropriate, enable the child to make progress according to his or her particular level of ability, and should take account of any specific aptitudes (for example if a child is very good at mathematics, it might focus more on that than some other subjects).

More generally, you should bear in mind that:

- a. even if there is no specific link with the National Curriculum or other external curricula, there should be an appropriate minimum standard which is aimed at, and the education should aim at enabling the child, when grown-up, to function as an independent citizen in the UK - and furthermore, beyond the community in which he or she was brought up, if that is the choice made in later life by the child;
- b. education may not be 'suitable' even if it is satisfactory in terms of content and teaching, if it is delivered in circumstances which make it very difficult to work (for example in very noisy premises).
- c. education may also not be deemed suitable if it leads to excessive isolation from the child's peers, and thus impedes social development.

How can you undertake and plan a suitable education for your child(ren)?

In recent years, the LA has offered suggestions in response to parental requests. You may find the following points useful:

- Discuss with the child(ren) what education at home will mean to them and yourselves.
- Ask the school that your child(ren) has been attending for a copy of your child(ren's) educational reports and attainment levels to date and any work done.
- Try to obtain educational materials which are appropriate to your child(ren's) age, ability and interests. (Bookshops and local Libraries can prove helpful as can the internet).

- Try and organise an overall plan either on a monthly or termly basis and record in a diary what is proposed and then achieved. This diary could form part of the evidence shown to the LA Officer but will also help you to ensure that you have covered and reviewed areas of learning that you intend to cover.
- Try to provide a range of activities using different approaches to maintain the child(ren's) interest and provide them with different skills and the opportunity to succeed.
- Try to provide educational visits to link in with particular topics.
- Try to encourage the child(ren) to have contact with other children through clubs, associations or family. Local EHE groups that may be appropriate and may provide support
- Try to ensure that you develop regular exercise activities to ensure a healthy lifestyle. This could be through sporting activities or exercise.
- Try to keep a record of the education that your child completes in order to allow you to see progression rates and areas for development.
- Consider what you want to achieve from home education and how you are going to help your child(ren) to do that. If that includes qualifications consider which are most appropriate and work with the LA to establish how to access qualifications.

Sources of advice and guidance

Parents who elect to home educate their children are reminded that they assume all financial responsibility for their children's education including costs of any exam entries.

Qualifications

Taking qualifications is not a compulsory part of education, but for many young people it is a big part of it. Qualifications can be taken at any stage, and it is up to families of home educated children to arrange these as appropriate. There are a range of routes to follow including GCSE's and GCSE's, vocational or work related qualifications.

A number of providers offer support for home educating families to access different qualifications either online or paper based from home. You can also independently arrange to take qualifications as an external candidate, but please be aware that schools and colleges are under no obligation to take external candidates.

In recent years it has been possible for Home Educated young people to attend college during Year 11 and work towards recognised qualifications.

Private Tutors

Parents who employ private tutors are still responsible for their child's education and must satisfy themselves that anyone they engage is suitable to have access to children by checking references and that they have a recent Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Work experience

Children educated at home have no entitlement to participate in work experience under arrangements made by the LA. Where home-educated children do participate in work experience the parent should ask the employer to what extent the child is covered by health and safety and insurance provision.

Paid employment

The law surrounding paid employment for young people of compulsory education age remains the same for those who are home educated as those in full time school. This means that paid employment cannot be done during the school day. Guidance on this is available by searching for 'school children and part-time work' on www.wakefield.gov.uk or at <https://www.gov.uk/child-employment>

Careers advice and post compulsory education

The Connexions Service can offer advice about careers to home educated children aged 13 and above and they can be contacted at

<https://connexionswakefield.co.uk/>.

Young people are now required to stay in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they are 18. The Connexions service can provide advice and guidance about the options available.

Medical support

Parents are still able to access support and advice offered by the school nursing service in regards to health needs, vaccinations, etc. For further information and contact details please contact the school nursing team directly.

Returning to school

If you wish your child to return to school at any time you can apply for a school place through the admissions service. They aim to ensure that all young people are placed back in school within 20 school days.

Further contact information

The Elective Home Education team can be contacted at:

Education Welfare Service
Second Floor, Block C, Normanton Town Hall
High Street
Normanton
WF6 2DZ
Tel: 01924 307451 or 01924 307423

Useful Contacts Numbers within Wakefield Council

Schools Admissions Service 01924 306025

Special Educational Needs Assessment and Review Team 01924 302465

School Nursing Team 01924 310130

WESAIL -support and advice for parents of children with additional needs
01924 379015

National and local Home Education support organisations:

Please note that Wakefield Council cannot be held responsible for the content on any of these sites and is not affiliated to any of the following organisations. This list does not constitute a definitive list of support organisations and others may be available to parents.

West Yorkshire Home Education Community

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/WYHEC/>

This group is a local group across West Yorkshire who support one another as they home educate. The Education Welfare Service can provide direct contact with a local representative if required. Please note that you have to register to join the group

Education Otherwise Association Ltd.

www.educationotherwise.org

Home Education Advisory Service

www.heas.org.uk

Home – ed info

<https://home-ed.info/>

The Home Service—a national Christian home education group.

www.thehomeservice.org

Christian Home School
www.homeschool.co.uk

Muddle Puddle—an independent site focusing on learning for 0-8 year olds.
www.muddlepuddle.co.uk

The Education Welfare Service can signpost families to further, more comprehensive, lists of useful websites and resources should they be required.

Some other suggestions we could include here are as follows –

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>

<https://www.topmarks.co.uk/>

www.edplace.com – Interactive worksheets based on National Curriculum, subscription required.

www.oxfordhomeschooling.co.uk – GCSE/IGCSE online courses, subscription required

www.interhigh.co.uk – GCSE/IGCSE online courses, subscription required

<https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/> A publisher of workbooks and revision guides

Elective Home Education – Administration Form
Wakefield Metropolitan District Council

Wakefield Council is committed to supporting parents who chose to educate their child outside of the school system. To help us to do this please detach and complete this form in detail and return to:

Education Welfare Service
 Second Floor, Block C, Normanton Town Hall
 High Street
 Normanton
 WF6 2DZ
 Or email to ehe@wakefield.gov.uk

The form will be held on file and information will be entered on a central database in order to support you as you educate.

Name(s) of Child: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Ethnicity: _____ First Language: _____

Parent/Guardian name(s) _____

Address: _____

Post code: _____ Tel No: _____

Mobile number: _____ email: _____

School attended: _____

Last day of attendance: _____

Does Your child have Special educational needs	Yes	No
Does your child have an EHCP	Yes	No

Please indicate the reason you have chosen to home educate

Anxiety or phobia of school		Issues around behaviour	
Bullying in school		Medical/SEN	
Dispute with school		No place in chosen school	
Emigration or move of area		Personal philosophy or choice	
Issues around attendance		Religious beliefs / cultural reason	

Name(s) of person(s) who will be educating the child. This may include tutors or other family members. Please describe their role in the education and indicate any relevant professional qualifications

Please give an indication of your aims and the outcomes you hope to achieve by the end of the year

Please give an indication of the aims and the outcomes you hope to achieve by the end of compulsory education

Please indicate any provision for your child to have regular social contact (social or sports groups they will attend)

Outline of the subjects and areas you are working on (please give an indication of the levels e.g. maths addition of hundreds tens and units with carrying)

The resources and materials you will use (include specific educational websites apps textbooks and workbooks)

Please indicate how you will assess and monitor education progress

Please let us know of any other relevant information you would like to bring to our attention and feel free to attach any additional sheets where necessary.

I understand that the Local Authority has a responsibility to ensure that my child is educated as required by law and that an Officer of the Authority will arrange to review the educational provision being made for my child.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

