



Elective Home Education – Information for Parents

The following information is for parents who are considering or who have decided to home educate their child. Education is compulsory for all children from the start of the school term following their fifth birthday. Whilst education is compulsory, school is not. Parents can choose to provide their child with a suitable education at home and this is known as Elective Home Education (EHE). Elective Home Education requires great commitment of time and energy.

The responsibility for a child's education rests with their parents. 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 age, ability and aptitude, and
b) to any special educational needs he may have,

either by attendance at school or otherwise.'

The costs involved

Parents who home educate will assume financial responsibility for their child's education. Their child does not have to sit any examinations but if parents wish them to do so, then they must also fund the cost of the examinations. Other costs that they may incur could be for books, stationery, educational trips, tutors, courses, subscriptions to educational resources, opportunities for exercise and any other materials needed.

What needs to be taught and teaching methods

In schools, children follow the National Curriculum. Parents do not need to follow the National Curriculum when they are educating at home although some parents might find it useful to use as a framework for their own teaching. If parents intend for their child to go to school at some point in the future, it may be advantageous to cover similar work in order to make the transition into school smoother.

Hertfordshire County Council values varied and flexible types of educational activity and parents may choose to make informal provision that responds to the developing interests of their child and that fits in with their particular lifestyle. According to case law, the content of the provision must be suitable such that it *'equips a child for life within the community of which he is a member....as long as it does not foreclose the child's options in later years to adopt some other form of life if he wishes to do so'*.

Parents need to provide a full-time education but they do not need to follow a timetable or have fixed times during which education will take place. At home, education need not follow school hours or term times as contact time is often almost continuous and opportunities for learning can arise at any time.

The social aspect

Parents may wish to consider their child's social development as part of their education. There are many opportunities for socialisation for home educated children and this may be with people of any age. Children may have extended family members and family friends or may join other home educated children on visits to museums, galleries, theatres or other places of interest. In addition, a child could socialise with others through a particular sport or hobby by joining a club or taking part in events.

Who needs to teach

Parents do not need to have any qualifications in order to home educate. They may wish to teach themselves, employ a tutor, enrol their child for educational sessions or teach in groups with other home educated children. If parents do decide to employ a tutor, it is advisable to check their qualifications and ask to see their Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) check. The DBS will inform parents if the tutor has any previous record of offences which might make them unsuitable for work with children.

Children with special needs

Parents are required to provide an education suitable to any special educational needs that their child may have. At any time, home educating parents can request the Local Authority (LA) carry out a statutory assessment or reassessment of their child's needs and the LA will consider the request within the same timescales as if the request was made through a school. Parents may home educate a child who already has a Special Educational Needs (SEN) statement or Education, Health and Care (EHC) and parents do not need to arrange the provision specified in the statement or plan. However, they are under an obligation to make other 'suitable arrangements' which meet the needs of their child. The LA will continue to hold an Annual Review of the statement or plan and parents are invited to attend. Whilst parents do not have to attend the meeting, it would assist the LA in ensuring that the statement or plan continues to be right for the child. At any time, parents can request the LA to cease maintaining the statement or plan and the LA will give this request due consideration.

Who parents need to inform if their child has never been to school or is registered at a mainstream school

If a child has never been to school, parents do not need to tell the LA that they are home educating but it would be helpful to the LA for them to do so. If a child is registered at a mainstream school, parents are required to write to the Head to request that the child is removed from the admissions register and to

state that the child will be educated otherwise than at school. The school will remove the child's name from the roll and inform the LA that the child will be home educated.

Who parents need to inform if their child is registered at a special school

If a child is registered at a special school and parents wish to home educate, they are required to write to the school stating that they wish to educate their child otherwise than at school. The school will inform the LA of the parents' wishes but will not remove the child's name from the register until agreement is received from the LA*.

*Regulation 8(2) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 states: *'The name of a child who has under arrangements made by the 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 role of the Elective Home Education Advisers

Hertfordshire County Council's EHE Advisers are qualified teachers, experienced in working with families who are home educating. Their aim is to work collaboratively with parents to support them in the arrangements they are making to ensure their child receives a suitable education. They provide, on behalf of the local authority, a professional opinion as to the suitability or otherwise of the education being provided and this is shared with parents. The EHE Advisers have Enhanced DBS clearance. Training is provided regularly including: safeguarding, data protection and equality and diversity. EHE Advisers keep up to date with legislation and guidance on elective home education and related subjects and are members of the Association of Elective Home Education Professionals.

Once the local authority becomes aware that a parent is home educating an EHE Adviser will contact the family. If it appears from the information given by the parent that a suitable education is in place, the Adviser will confirm this by letter to the parent. If there is not enough information to confirm a suitable education is in place, the Adviser will either call the parent to ask for further details, or offer a meeting with them. The EHE Adviser may discuss with parents their values, intentions, philosophy and intended outcomes for their child. In addition, they will ask about the provision being made and would be pleased to see examples of work which the child has undertaken. Advice and support may be offered on teaching methods, content, resources, qualifications, assessment, and social opportunities. These discussions may take place during a home visit or if preferred a meeting at a mutually convenient location. Parents who choose not to meet with an EHE Adviser may choose to supply information in another way e.g. by sending a report on the provision being made which may include examples of work, or through a telephone conversation.

If it appears to the EHE Adviser that the education is suitable, the EHE Adviser will send a report to parents, confirming the educational provision being made and recording any advice given.

When the home education is considered to be suitable the EHE Adviser will contact families at each National Curriculum Key Stage. Parents will be also be contacted annually to confirm they are continuing to home educate their child or to provide details of the school or college that their child is currently attending and given the opportunity to ask for any help or advice from the Advisers. Pupils with an Education Health and Care Plans (EHC Plan) or statements of Special Educational Needs will be offered annual meetings to coincide with the annual Statement/EHC plan review.

Parents will continue to have the option of meeting or speaking over the telephone with an EHE Adviser at any time if they would like advice about specific areas of concern or interest.

Should the local authority receive information from another professional or from a third party which suggests that the parents may not be or no longer be providing a suitable education, the Elective Home Education Team will make further enquiries about the education being provided.

If it appears that a suitable education is not being provided, the Advisers will give advice in their reports and offer a meeting to try and help the parents to improve the provision within a reasonable timescale. If it appears that the provision is not suitable, the LA has a duty (under section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996) to intervene and the Children Missing Education Officer may become involved. Parents will need to demonstrate that they have suitable education in place. If they do not the LA may issue a School Attendance Order naming a school at which the parents are required to register their child. It should be noted that, in such cases or if parents have decided they no longer wish to home educate, the child will not be guaranteed admission into a school of their choice or back into the school previously attended. Once the child is attending school, it would be helpful for parents to inform the EHE team.

Child employment

Children aged 13-16 can undertake light work as paid or unpaid employment. The type of work which is permitted can be found in Hertfordshire County Council's byelaws. The employer will need to apply for a Work Permit to Hertfordshire County Council and this will need to be agreed and signed by the parent. The employer will be required to carry out a risk assessment and has the responsibility for arranging any insurance cover needed and for ensuring Health and Safety requirements are in place. Further information is available on Hertfordshire County Council's website under 'Employing school-aged children'.

www.hertsdirect.org/services/edlearn/schlfe/employ/

Work placements and work based learning

Parents can arrange for their child aged 13-16 to carry out a work placement for short duration (normally 1-2 weeks) or work based learning for longer periods of time. Undertaking practical tasks in a work environment can provide a valuable and suitable learning opportunity for some children. The type of work which is permitted can be found in Hertfordshire County Council's byelaws. Parents are fully responsible for ensuring there is appropriate insurance cover and that Health and Safety requirements are in place. Parents who wish their child to undertake a work placement or work based learning activities are advised to contact their EHE Adviser to discuss in further detail.

Children in entertainment

Parents may wish for their child to be involved in paid work in the theatre, in a film or television, in modelling or sporting activities. The person responsible for the production or performance must make an application for a Performance Licence to Hertfordshire County Council. Once the applicant has received the Performance Licence, the child may commence work. Further information is available on Hertfordshire County Council's website under 'Children's Performance Licences'.

www.hertsdirect.org/services/edlearn/schlfe/employ/cpl/

Flexi-schooling

Parents who wish to enter into flexi-schooling arrangements need to receive prior agreement from the school. Headteachers are under no obligation to agree to or approve such arrangements. The child is registered at a school where they attend part-time and they also spend some time receiving education at home. They will be required to follow the National Curriculum whilst at school. Children will be marked as 'authorised absent' in the school attendance register during periods where they are receiving home education. The EHE Advisers do not meet with families whose children have flexi-schooling arrangements as schools are ultimately responsible for the attainment of every child registered on their roll.

Examinations

Parents will need to fund any examinations that they wish their child to sit. Parents have the flexibility to choose the examination board most suited to their child. Parents can get a copy of the chosen board's examination syllabus and they will need to find a centre which will allow the child to sit the examination. Some home educating parents find IGCSEs to be more appropriate than GCSEs since it is based predominantly on final examinations and there is less coursework that needs to be supervised at school. The major examination boards for GCSEs/IGCSEs are Edexcel, AQA and OCR. See 'Useful Contacts' section for more details.

College Placements

Some colleges offer funded places to electively home educated 14-16 year olds. Places need to be arranged by the parent. Courses on offer tend to be practical learning which develop skills needed for further education or employment. Parents are not expected to pay fees for this provision as it is funded by the Education Funding Agency (EDA). Further information is available on the GOV.UK website.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/enrolment-of-14-to-16-year-olds-in-full-time-further-education

Youth Connexions (Services for Young People)

Youth Connexions, Hertfordshire, forms part of Hertfordshire County Council's Services for Young People and is a service that aims to provide information and advice, guidance and support, and personal development opportunities for all 13-19 year olds (up to 25 years for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities).

Some of the key staff delivering services are Personal Advisers and Youth Workers who are professionally trained to provide the highest level of support. They work closely with partners to provide counselling, mentoring or access to other services. Youth Connexions also provides information, advice and guidance through One Stop Shops to young people leaving care up to 21 years old.

We share the names, addresses and contact details of young people who are electively home educated with Youth Connexions to ensure they receive the appropriate support from the service.

Youth Connexions' Centres and One Stop Shops are listed below. It is advisable to contact the individual centres for opening times before setting out on your journey.

Youth Connexions' Centres:

Bishop's Stortford 14 Northgate End Bishop's Stortford CM23 2EU	Harpenden 27 High Street Harpenden AL5 2RU
Hitchin 29 Bancroft Hitchin SG5 1JW	Hoddesdon The Ark Children's Centre St Catherine's School Haselwood Road Hoddesdon EN11 8HT
Letchworth Goldsmith Centre	Royston Royston Health Centre

Broadway Letchworth Garden City SG6 3GB	Melbourn Street Royston SG8 7BS
St Albans The Hub, Civic Centre St Peter's Street, St Albans AL1 3JE	St Albans Job Centre Plus Beauvur House Brickett Road St Albans AL1 3JU
Ware Marsh Lane Young People's Centre Marsh Lane Ware SG12 9QB	Welwyn Garden City Block A Oaklands College The Campus Colledge Way Welwyn Garden City AL8 6AH

One Stop Shops:

Borehamwood 01442 454845

Cheshunt 01992 635000

Hatfield 01707 266223

Hemel Hempstead 01442 454934

Stevenage 01438 749147

Watford 01923 482828

www.hertsdirect.org/services/youngpeople/youthconnexions

www.channelmogo.org (the portal for all young people in Hertfordshire)

www.youthconnexions-hertfordshire.org

Useful Contacts

Hertfordshire County Council

For Attendance and School Admissions Team, contact Children's Services via Customer Service Centre

Mon-Fri 8am-8pm and Sat 9am-4pm

0300 123 4043

www.hertsdirect.org

Department for Education

Sanctuary Buildings

20 Great Smith Street

London SW1P 3BT

0370 000 2288

www.education.gov.uk

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

0870 909 0811

customerservices@db.s.gsi.gov.uk

Hertfordshire County Council takes no responsibility for the content of external websites. Some independent, voluntary organisations providing advice and support are:

Education Otherwise

PO Box 3761

Sheffield

SN2 9GT

08454786345

www.education-otherwise.net

Home Education Advisory Service

PO Box 98

Welwyn Garden City

AL8 6AN

01707 371854

www.heas.org.uk

There are two main support groups online for Hertfordshire home educators. Both groups are facilitated by experienced home educating parents. These groups are an invaluable place to find social and educational meet-ups, support for new home educators, and resource ideas.

www.facebook.com/groups/291069850949933 and

www.groups.yahoo.com/group/Hertshe/?yguid=222524483

Colleges offering courses for children aged 14-16:

Hertford Regional College

Ware Campus
Broxbourne Campus
01992 411400
www.hrc.ac.uk

North Hertfordshire College

Stevenage Centre
Hitchin Centre
01462 424242
www.nhc.ac.uk

Oaklands College

St Albans Campus
Borehamwood Training centre
Welwyn Garden City Campus
01727 737000
www.oaklands.ac.uk

West Herts College

Watford Campus
Kings Langley Campus
Dacorum Campus
01923 812000
www.westherts.ac.uk

The Elstree UTC

Borehamwood Campus
02083866220
www.utcolleges.org

The Online College – (part of The Sheffield College)

Children can complete GCSEs in English and Maths as a 1 year course and will be required to sit their exams in Sheffield.

0114 2602600
www.online.sheffcol.ac.uk

The South Hertfordshire Children's University is part of an international organisation for 5-14 year olds. The Children's University validates learning destinations such as clubs, museums, community centres, theatres and local places of interest. Each child receives a passport and every time they visit a museum or participate in an accredited activity, performance or event, they will get their passport stamped. At the end of the academic year, the children are invited to a Graduation Ceremony where they will be presented with an award. It's about having fun whilst learning and spending spare time well

www.southhertscu.co.uk

These centres welcome private candidates to take all IGCSE, GCSE and A Levels:

Maple Education
Aylesbury
HP17 8PL
01296 747500
www.mapleeducation.co.uk

Cambridge Centre for Sixth-Form Studies
Cambridge
CB2 1EL
01223 716890
www.ccss.co.uk

St Albans Tutors
St Albans
AL1 1LN
01727 842348
www.stalbanstutors.com

These websites may be useful:

BBC Knowledge and Learning
www.bbc.co.uk/education
www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize

Gov.uk - Education and Learning offers advice and guidance on all aspects of learning and education and explains the possible choices open to young people.

www.gov.uk/browse/education

Data Protection

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), Children's Services regards the lawful and correct treatment of personal information as very important to carrying out its operations successfully and to maintaining confidence between those with whom we deal and ourselves. We ensure that our organisation treats personal information lawfully and correctly.

HCC, Children's Services needs to collect and use certain types of information about people with whom it deals in order to operate and any details of the services we provide or information about you or your family will be stored and used in strict accordance with our registration under the Data Protection Act 1998.

In order to provide effective services for children and young people, information provided may be shared with other Children's Services teams within HCC, where there is a service requirement. Data may be shared with

third party organisations such the police or health services in accordance with our statutory obligations to protect and promote the safety of children.

If you would like to view the records we hold about your child please contact the data protection team at dataprotection@hertfordshire.gov.uk or telephone 01992588099.

What to do now

If you wish to pursue Elective Home Education for your child please complete the Notification of Elective Home Education form (EHE1b)

If you have received this information by post please return your completed form to the address at the top of the accompanying letter.

If you have taken this information from our website please print off and return the completed form to the address which covers your district council area (the relevant addresses are given on the form).