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## A Guide to Elective Home Education

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### Summary

If you are considering educating your child at home, this factsheet may address some questions you have, and help you in making your decision.

#### Do children have to go to school?

The 1996 Education Act states that, *'it is the duty of parents to secure an appropriate full time education for their children of compulsory school age'*. Parents can carry out this duty by ensuring



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their child attends school *or* parents may decide to take on the duty to educate their child/children themselves and educate them at home – this is called Elective Home Education.

### **Raising the Participation Age**

The Government has increased the age to which all young people in England must continue in education or training, requiring them to continue until their 18th birthday. This does not necessarily mean staying in school; young people have a choice about how they continue in education or training post-16, which could be through:

- full-time education, such as school, college or with a training provider
- full-time work or volunteering combined with part-time education or training
- an apprenticeship

### **What am I responsible for?**

You will be responsible for arranging all direct teaching and materials and for organising any work experience placements. If your child wants to take exams you would also have to pay for any examination registration fee and assessment of coursework by an accredited person.

### **How is the Local Authority involved in education at home?**

If you decide to educate your child at home, you will be offered help and advice from the Home Education Liaison Officer who will offer visits at times that are mutually agreed.

The Elective Home Education Team will make an initial enquiry of the parent/carer to satisfy that a suitable education is taking place and that the family are offering access and opportunities to education and being sensitive to the child's needs.

The Education Act places the obligation on the LA to intervene if it appears that a child is not receiving an efficient education, which takes into account age, ability, aptitude and any special needs that the child may have.

Please note that if your child has not been on a school roll there is no obligation for the Local Authority to be made aware of your decision to Electively Home Educate.

### **Do I have to fit in with the school terms and times?**

No. Elective Home Education can be more flexible and less rigid than at school. It depends on how you decide to organise your child's education. The Home Education Liaison Officer can discuss this with you or you can refer to the Department for Education [Elective Home Education Guidelines](#).

### **How do I get started?**

If your child currently attends a school you will need to write to the Head of the school to inform them of your intention to home educate and ask them to remove your child from the school roll. The school will then inform the Local Authority's Home Education Team who will make contact with you. If your child has an Education, Health Care Plan and has been placed in a Special School you will



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need to ask approval from the Special Educational Needs Team at the Local Authority *prior* to removing them from school.

### Can my child attend school part-time?

In Herefordshire and Worcestershire children generally attend school full-time, except if there is a planned programme of re-integration. If you choose to educate your child(ren) at home their names will be removed from the school register. However, a parent may request that a Head Teacher admit his/her child for part-time, flexi-schooling. This arrangement is at the discretion of the Head Teacher and Governors of the school. The child will be required to follow the National Curriculum whilst at school but not whilst he or she is being home educated.

### What if I decide to educate at home and then change my mind?

Your child can return to school at any time, however, it is important to be aware that once your child's name has been removed from the school's roll the school are **not** obliged to keep a place open for your child and therefore there may not be a place available at their original school.

### Who can help if I choose to home educate?

You can contact local and national support organisations. There are some contact details at the end of this factsheet.

### How can I teach my child if I am not a trained teacher?

You do not need to have formal qualifications or be a teacher, to educate your child at home and you do not need to 'know everything'.

### What will I be expected to teach and how should I teach it?

Some home educators have a timetable showing the normal planned activities over a period of time such as you would find in a school. Other parents choose to follow a form of 'discovery' education where the interests of the child are followed. Others use a mixture of these methods. The LA's interest is in establishing that a suitable education is taking place, rather than endorsing any particular method.

### Do I have to follow the National Curriculum?

No. When a child is electively home educated it is the decision of the parent as to what to teach and how the child learns. However, you may wish to be aware of the content of the [National Curriculum](#) as it does provide a framework, especially if you intend to return your child to state education or to pursue more formal qualifications, such as GCSEs.



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## What if my child has special educational needs?

### With an EHC plan

If a school or type of school is named in section I of your child's EHC plan and you choose to electively home educate, the local authority no longer has a legal duty to secure any special educational provision set out in the EHC plan, because you are deemed to be making your own suitable alternative arrangements. The SEND code of practice states that the local authority must still review the plan annually to assure itself that the provision set out in it continues to be appropriate and that your child's SEN continue to be met.

If you feel that your child's provision or current educational placement is not working out for them, it may be better to try to amend the EHC plan to set out different special educational provision and/or name a different setting rather than attempting to take on home education without support.

If school or college is not appropriate for your child or young person, the LA can arrange for your child's special educational provision to be delivered somewhere other than in a school, college or early years setting. This is often known as 'education otherwise than at school' (EOTAS). The LA would then be responsible for continuing to secure and fund that provision.

However, if you still feel that home education (rather than education otherwise) is right for your child, you need to write to the school stating that you intend to make arrangements for your child's education at home. If your child attends a special school, you will need to write to the LA (not the school) to get its agreement to take your child off the school roll. If your child is at any other type of school, you do not need the permission of the school or the LA.

If the local authority agrees that home education is the right provision for your child or young person with an EHC plan, the SEND code of practice states that "the plan should make clear that the child or young person will be educated at home. If it does then the local authority, under Section 42(2) of the Children and Families Act 2014, must arrange the special educational provision set out in the plan, working with the parents." (section 10 paragraph 10.31)

### Without an EHC plan

If your child has SEN but does not have an Education Health and Care (EHC) plan and you choose to electively home educate, the local authority does not have a legal duty to arrange special educational provision. However, the SEND code of practice states that "Local authorities should fund the SEN needs of home-educated children where it is appropriate to do so" (Section 10 Paragraph 10.30)

If you feel that your child's current educational placement is not working out for them or is in danger of breaking down, it might be worth speaking to the school or setting about SEND support. For more information see our factsheet '[SEN Support in mainstream schools](#)' Or you could ask the local authority for an EHC needs assessment. This is a chance to identify all your child or young person's needs and the support that they may need to learn. It might be, that with the right support, your child or young person could continue their education within their current setting. To find out more see our factsheet '[Education Health and Care needs assessment for children in early years settings or at school](#)'



However, if you feel that home education is the right option for your child you need to write to the school stating that you intend to make arrangements for your child's education at home. You do not need the permission of the school or the local authority to home educate.

### **What if I'm still not sure whether to home educate?**

To help you make your decision you may find it helpful to talk to someone who has experience of home education before finally making a decision. Try contacting the local support organisations to speak to parents/carers who are, or have been, home educating in your area.

If the decision to home educate has arisen because of a disagreement with a teacher or school, and the issue has not been resolved following discussion with the Head Teacher or Governors, the SEND Information, Advice & Support Service (SENDIASS) may be able to discuss options available to you to help resolve the issue. Call Worcestershire on 01905 768153 or email [sendiass@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:sendiass@worcestershire.gov.uk). Call Herefordshire on 01432 260955 or email [sendias@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sendias@herefordshire.gov.uk)

### **For other sources of information, help and advice please contact Worcestershire:**

#### **Elective Home Education**

Worcestershire Children First  
Education Services, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester, WR5 2NP  
01905 846060

[ElectiveHomeEducation@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:ElectiveHomeEducation@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk)

[https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20062/schools/253/home\\_education](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20062/schools/253/home_education)

#### **Education Welfare Service**

01905 844666  
[EdWelfareCME@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:EdWelfareCME@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk)

<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/WCFEducationServices/info/30/education-welfare-service/57/education-welfare-service-1>

#### **Worcestershire Home Educators Network**

[info@worcestershire-home-educators.co.uk](mailto:info@worcestershire-home-educators.co.uk)  
[www.worcestershire-home-educators.co.uk](http://www.worcestershire-home-educators.co.uk)

### **Herefordshire:**

**Hereford Elective Home Education Officer:** 01432 383194

Worcestershire:  
Tel: 01905 768153  
Email: [sendiass@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:sendiass@worcestershire.gov.uk)  
[www.hwsendiass.co.uk](http://www.hwsendiass.co.uk)

Herefordshire:  
Tel: 01432 260955  
Email: [sendias@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sendias@herefordshire.gov.uk)



Information, Advice  
and Support Service  
**Herefordshire &  
Worcestershire**

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**Useful contacts:**

**Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)**

[www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)

**Department for Education**

0370 000 2288

[www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

**Raising the Participation Age**

[www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/participation/rpa](http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/participation/rpa)

**Education Otherwise Association Ltd**

0300 124 5690

<https://www.educationotherwise.org/>

**Home Education Advisory Service (HEAS)**

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

**The National Curriculum**

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

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