

# **Elective Home Education**

**(EHE)**

**Guidance for Parents and Carers**

# Contents

	Page
Introduction	3
Guidance on the Law	4
Practical Steps	7
Curriculum Content and Methods	8
London Borough of Bexley Contacts	11
Other Useful Contacts and Resources	11

# Introduction

In this country, parents have a legal duty to ensure their children receive an appropriate full-time education. Although a majority of parents choose to send their children to school, an increasing number are exercising their responsibilities directly by providing an education based at home and in the community. Whichever course you take, it is a good idea to talk with your children and take their wishes and feelings about their education into account.

Before you make a final decision, Bexley's Elective Home Education Officer will be happy to visit to discuss 'Elective Home Education' with you in detail.

You do not need to have formal qualifications, or be a teacher to educate your child at home. However, qualities such as patience, enthusiasm and flexibility are invaluable. You do not need to 'know everything' – an important skill, as well as developing a sound knowledge base, is for all concerned to learn how to learn and think, and how to find out information. Your whole family can become more resourceful and learn many new things alongside each other.

You need to consider the social development of your child, which would be enhanced through sharing activities with other children. Having the time and freedom to join a variety of different clubs and special interest societies etc., can prove very enriching, as can sharing skills and mixing with people of all ages.

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, then the Local Authority (LA) may be able to help. Home Education is not a way of solving your child's non-attendance at school unless you and your child are committed and enthusiastic about it. Education officers will be glad to talk with you about your child's re/admission to school should this become the preferred option at a later date.

London Borough of Bexley  
Elective Home Education Officer  
Education and Specialist Children's Services  
Civic Offices  
Watling Street  
Bexleyheath  
DA6 7AT  
0203 045 4077

# Guidance on the Law

## EDUCATION AT HOME BY PARENTS

### **What does the education act actually say?**

*Section 7 of the Education Act 1996* states it is the duty of the parent of every child of compulsory school age: “to cause the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his/her age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs he or she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”

For most children this will involve attendance at the local school, but for many and various reasons a number of parents will want to take on the responsibility of educating their children outside the maintained system – some may use independent schools, others will choose to provide a home and community-based education.

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

The law does not define the terms ‘suitable’ and ‘full-time’; it is for parents to fulfill their duties according to a reasonable interpretation. However, case law, *Harrison & Harrison v Stevenson, Worcester Crown Court in 1981*, established a ‘suitable education’ as one that would:

“prepare children for life in a modern civilized society,  
and enable them to achieve their full potential.”

### **Do I have to provide the same education as school?**

The hours spent on teaching in schools is often not relevant to home education, where there is more access to one to one and smaller group learning. Also learning at home need not operate around a tightly structured timetable, but can take place in various forms during all waking hours. Certain parts of the child’s education, such as Mathematics and English, may be structured to regular times of the day but this is only one aspect of the broader picture. Although home education need not take the same form as the education provided at school it is, however, the responsibility of parents to facilitate their child’s learning in a way whereby they are developing according to their age, ability and aptitude

## THE LOCAL AUTHORITY'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Local Authorities have a duty, under *s.437 of the Education Act 1996*, to take action if it appears that a child is not receiving a suitable education. Case law has established that in order to fulfill this duty, education officers are entitled to make enquiries of parents who are educating their children at home, in order to establish that a suitable education is being provided.

### **Bexley LA will**

- ask the Head Teacher for an up-to-date academic report if your child has been attending school
- request details from you on the proposed education programme
- endeavour to visit you within three weeks of you declaring Elective Home Education to discuss progress in putting place a programme.

### **What will an Adviser be looking for?**

The Adviser will understand that you need sufficient time to set your arrangements in motion and that home educating families may be taking a range of approaches in order to meet the individual needs of children but, they will be seeking evidence of a serious intent by you to educate your child. This might be gained by talking with you and your child about the approach being taken to learning, by looking at samples of your child's work, or by your writing a report, perhaps enclosing samples of work – which may be endorsed by a third party if necessary. Your child will not however be formally assessed and the age-related assessment criteria that are linked with the National Curriculum will not apply.

If the Adviser has serious concerns about the education you are providing for your child, you will be told why in a written report. You will be given a reasonable length of time to rectify this before further contact is made. If the Adviser remains dissatisfied with the education you are providing it would be open to the LA to make a **School Attendance Order** requiring your child to attend a named school. This action would only be taken as a last resort and would follow careful consideration and detailed discussions with you. Parents, in turn, may choose to challenge the view of the Local Authority, and if agreement cannot be reached, a final decision may be required from a court of law to resolve the matter.

## EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE PLANS/SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

### *What if my child has special needs?*

A parents' right to educate their child(ren) at home applies equally where a child has educational needs (SEN). Some children with special educational needs have a Statement of Special Educational Needs\* but others are not. Under defined circumstances, the Local Authority has a duty to make an assessment of a child's educational needs and, where appropriate, prepare a statement setting out how these needs will be met. Where a child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs and is home educated, it remains the Local Authority's duty to ensure that the child's needs are met. The statement remains in force and the Local Authority must ensure that parents can make suitable provision including provision for the child's identified special educational needs.

\*In cases of children with a statement of 'Special Educational Needs' it would be advisable to discuss the intention to home educate your child with your SEN adviser. Where a child with a statement of special educational needs is educated at a 'special school' consent to deregister them must be sought from the SEN Department of the Local Authority.

If the Local Authority is satisfied that the parents have arranged suitable provision for their child's special educational needs, it remains under a duty to maintain the statement and review it annually.

## ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION AND THE RAISING OF THE PARTICIPATION AGE

From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 all 16/17 year olds (equal to Y12 in school) are required to be in education, an apprenticeship or full time work with a training or education component.

Parents can continue to educate their children at home and the DfE guidance states:

*"For young people who are being home educated, no hourly requirement of education applies: the amount and content of that education is at the discretion of the home educator."* (DfE Participation of Young People Statutory Guidance - Advice. Annex 1 – Defining Participation, para. 8)

**The guidance above also states that "no on-going monitoring of the education is required" so we will not be sending out any requests for reports and Bexley's EHE Liaison Officer will not be seeking to meet with parents. However, if parents do have any queries about home education post 16 they should contact 0203 045 4077.**

# Practical Steps

## *How do I go about teaching my child at home*

1. If your child is below the age at which education becomes compulsory, you are moving into the area, you are currently home educating or have arranged some other form of private education, you do not need to do anything, as there is no legal obligation to inform the Local Authority that you have decided to home educate. However it would help us to keep accurate records if you wrote to the Elective Home Education Officer with your details.

2. If your child attends a school, or has a place agreed, please write to the Head Teacher to inform him/her of your decision. Under The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulation 1995 9(1)(c) the Head Teacher will then remove your child's name from the school's admission register, and within ten school days, inform the Local Authority. Parents may wish to make independent contact with the Local Authority in addition to this.

3. As a way of keeping some record of your child's learning for your own benefit, as well as for any future discussions with an Adviser, it may be useful to keep an informal education diary or for the child to build up a portfolio to record some of the club activities, conversations, certificates of achievements, books being read, photographs, leaflets and samples from trips, drawings of experiments, TV and radio programmes being followed, information about writing competitions and pen pals, participation in community events, building projects, and so on.

4. You may also wish to consider joining a home education group e.g.: 'Education Otherwise' or 'Ed Yourself' for information and guidance. 'Education Otherwise' is a self-help organisation that can offer support, advice and information to families practising or contemplating home based education as an alternative to schooling. As well as providing information concerning parental and Local Authority rights and responsibilities, Education Otherwise, which has been closely involved in formulating these guidelines, also works hard to facilitate positive relationships between Local Authorities and home educating families. A positive aspect of being part of an organisation such as Education Otherwise is that there is an extensive network of members who are prepared to contribute their expertise to new families. These real-life experts also have much experience in helping with any emotional, physical, psychological and social needs of children who may have become troubled in their previous attendance at school.

Many other self-help groups exist, some centered on faith communities. Enquiries in your neighbourhood may well reveal similar families with whom you can share experience and good ideas.

# Curriculum Content and Methods

## *What is the National Curriculum and how does it apply to me?*

For a child to learn effectively both the content of what they are taught and the method of teaching are important.

### CONTENT

Maintained state schools teach the National Curriculum. Children educated at home are not subject to this and, although there are no compulsory subjects they should have access to a curriculum that is broad, relevant, suitable for their individual needs, and which achieves a balance of content over a period of time. However if at a later stage you may decide to re-enter your child into the state school system re-integration may be easier if the National Curriculum requirements are followed.

A good education will ensure children gain in confidence and develop skills and knowledge that will enable them to live in, and adapt to, a rapidly changing world.

a) A broad education introduces a child to the skills and knowledge of a range of subjects and types of subjects, as well as attitudes and beliefs, ensuring an opening rather than a closing of the mind.

b) Learning should be provided in a way that is relevant to the child's own experience, and permits them to relate to the experience of others. For example solving real-life problems such as building shelves for the bedroom, or planning the costs, itinerary and transport for a trip can help the understanding of many subjects.

c) Any education must be suitable to the individual needs of the child. This means taking into account the child's age, aptitudes, ability, interests and any special needs he/she may have. It should also be sufficiently challenging so that there is evidence of progress, albeit within the child's natural developmental stages. As stated previously, a 'suitable' education can take many forms: the diversity of modern society, and the law itself, gives parents considerable freedom of choice in how they enable children to achieve their full potential.

d) A balanced education ensures there is sufficient opportunity for the child to know about, and be able to participate in, a range of subjects, experiences, creative leisure opportunities and access to the wider community. The National Curriculum subjects English\*, Mathematics\*, Science\*, Information Computer Technology (ICT), Design Technology (DT) Art, Music, Religious Studies, a modern foreign language and physical education are what children in school are studying. Note the three core subjects\*.

e) Your child can still work for any desired formal qualifications; there are a variety of ways to study for GCSE, GNVQ, NVQ and Modern Apprenticeships, such as home or employment-based studying, college or evening classes, open learning, or by correspondence. You can utilise the freedom to choose the most appropriate approach and spread courses over several years. Should you wish to enter your child for an external examination you will need to write to the Exam Boards at least 2 years in advance of the expected examination date. You should ask for their syllabus and check out how coursework can be assessed. You will also need to find an 'examination centre' (the venue where your child can sit the exam) and check with the center manager if he/she can accommodate your child on the examination date. In the first instance if your child was at a state school prior to home education you may wish to enquire of the Head Teacher whether they could accommodate your child at their examination centre. Information on exam boards can be found at the back of this document.

### **How do children learn?**

## **METHODS**

Children learn in many different ways, at different times and speeds, and from different people. Education does not always need to follow a timetable or consist of a set plan of lessons. This freedom can be particularly useful to children with special educational needs or those who have become de-motivated or anxious in their learning.

There are a number of ways of helping children to learn. Some will suit your child better than others, and it will enhance interest to use a variety of methods. For example, teaching on a subject-by-subject basis may be the most appropriate, especially where examination courses are being followed. A topic method, integrating the knowledge and skills of a number of subjects can offer another approach. Some families work almost entirely around the educational interests of their children, and indeed find siblings all work quite differently.

Thinking about and planning your child's education can be beneficial, even necessary at certain stages in their education – or with specific areas of study. However, utilise and enjoy the flexibility available in a home based education to explore your child's interest, and take advantage of the variable learning opportunities which may unexpectedly present themselves.

Whilst there is no legal requirement to date work or take an approach to studying that includes assessment by marking, it may be useful to do this in specific areas especially, for instance with certain aspects of maths. This will be a way of assessing progress.

## **AND FINALLY.....**

.....To educate a child requires access to a good supply of resources. Some of these may be available from the library or on the Internet, but it is likely you will need to buy books and materials. **Bexley Council does not provide funding for families who decide upon 'Elective Home Education'.**

.....It is recommended that parents who intend to employ the services of a tutor take the necessary steps to ensure the person has references, which can be substantiated, and that the person is suitable to have access to children. **Bexley Council cannot provide a list of recommended tutors nor provide funding for them.**

..... Students in Y10 or Y11 may participate in **Work Experience**. Employers are responsible for carrying out risk assessments in respect of young people on work experience as if they were members of staff. Work experience is unpaid.

.....Young people who wish to work on a part-time basis must apply for a **Work Permit**. For information and criteria on working limitations and legal requirements please contact **Bexley Education Welfare Service/Child Employment Officer**.

## LONDON BOROUGH OF BEXLEY CONTACTS

Organisation	Address	Telephone/website
EHE Team	London Borough of Bexley Civic Offices 2 Watling Street Bexleyheath DA6 7AT	0203 045 4077
Special Educational Needs (SEN) Department	As above	0208 303 7777 <a href="http://www.bexleylocaloffer.uk/">http://www.bexleylocaloffer.uk/</a>
Bexley Library Service	Offering book clubs, story times, internet connection and many more services.	<a href="http://www.bexley.gov.uk/libraries">http://www.bexley.gov.uk/libraries</a>
The Learning Centre	The Learning and Enterprise College 5 Brampton Road Bexleyheath DA7 4EZ	<a href="http://www.thelearningcentrebexley.ac.uk/">http://www.thelearningcentrebexley.ac.uk/</a>

Also look out for the Bexley Magazine <http://www.bexley.gov.uk/bexleymagazine>

### OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS & RESOURCES

The following **Contacts & Resources** listed in this booklet may be helpful. However, the London Borough of Bexley does not endorse any of those organisations listed. They are for guidance only.

Organisation	Address	Telephone/website
Education Otherwise	EDUCATION OTHERWISE PO BOX 325 Kings Lynn PE34 3XW	Helpline 0870 7300074 (calls charged at national rate) <a href="http://www.educationotherwise.net/">http://www.educationotherwise.net/</a>
Ed Yourself		<a href="http://edyourself.org/">http://edyourself.org/</a>
Home Education Advisory Service		<a href="https://www.heas.org.uk/">https://www.heas.org.uk/</a>
Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	1b Aberdeen Studios 22-24 Highbury Grove London N5 2DQ	0808 800 5793 <a href="http://www.ace-ed.org.uk">www.ace-ed.org.uk</a>
CGP Books		<a href="https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/">https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/</a>
BBC		<a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/subjects/childrens_learning.shtml">http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/subjects/childrens_learning.shtml</a>

This is obviously not an exhaustive list. For more please put "Home Education Resources" into Google or another search engine.

## Museums and Places of Interest

Chislehurst Caves  
Old Hill  
Chislehurst  
Kent  
0208 467 3264

Crofton Roman Villa  
Crofton Road  
Orpington, Kent  
0208 460 1442

Crossness Engines Trust  
Belvedere Road  
London SE2  
0208 311 3711

Cutty Sark  
King William Walk  
Greenwich Pier  
London SE10  
0208 858 3445

Dartford Borough Museum  
Market Street  
Dartford  
Kent  
01322 224739

Design Museum  
Shad Thames  
London SE1 2YD  
0870 833 9955

Druidstone Park  
& Woodland Artpark  
Honey Hill  
Blean  
Kent CT2 9JR  
01227 765168

Dulwich Picture Gallery  
Gallery Road  
Dulwich Village  
London SE21 7AD  
0208 693 5254

Eltham Palace  
Palace Court Yard  
London SE9  
0208 294 2548

Erith Museum  
Erith Library  
Walnut Tree Road  
Erith Kent  
01322 336582

Greenwich Royal Observatory  
Greenwich Park  
London SE10  
0208 312 6565

Hall Place House & Gardens  
Hall Place  
Bourne Road  
Bexley  
Kent  
01322 526574

Hever Castle  
Edenbridge  
Kent  
01732 865224

Hornimans Museum  
100 London Road  
Forest Hill  
London SE23 3Pq  
0208 699 1872

Houses of Parliament &  
Big Ben  
Palace of Westminster  
Westminster  
London SW1A 0AA  
0207 219 4272

Leeds Castle  
Maidstone  
Kent ME17 1PL  
0870 600 8880

Lesnes Abbey  
Abbey Wood  
Kent  
0208 308 4895

London Aquarium  
Information Department  
County Hall  
Westminster Bridge Road  
London SE1 7PB  
020 7967 8000

London Dungeon  
Tooley Street  
London  
SE1 2SZ  
0207 403 7221

London Zoo  
Outer Circle Road  
Regent's Park  
London NW1 4RY  
0207 449 6235

Lullingstone Roman Villa  
Castle Road  
Eynsford  
Kent  
01322 865995

Museum of Childhood  
Cambridge Heath Road,  
Bethnal Green  
London E2 9PA  
020 8980 2415

National Maritime Museum  
Park Row  
London SE10  
0208 858 4422

Natural History Museum  
Cromwell Road  
London SW7 5PB  
0207 942 5000

Orchard Theatre  
Home Gardens  
Dartford  
Kent  
01322 220000

Rochester Castle  
Castle Hill  
Rochester  
Kent ME1 1SW  
01634 402276

Royal Artillery Museum  
Rotunda Greenhill  
London SE18  
0208 316 5402

Science Museum  
Exhibition Road  
London SW7 2DD  
0207 942 4595

Shoreham Aircraft Museum  
Shoreham Village  
Sevenoaks  
Kent  
01959 524416

Tate Britain  
Millbank  
London SW1 4RG  
0207 887 8000

Tate Modern Gallery  
Bankside  
London SE1 9TG  
020 7887 8888

Thames Barrier Visitors  
Centre  
1 Unity Way  
London SE18  
0208 305 4188

The Brooking Collection  
(Museum of Architectural  
Features)  
University of Greenwich  
Dartford Campus  
Oakfield Lane  
Dartford, Kent  
0208 331 9897

The Greenwich Foundation  
for the Old Royal Naval  
College  
2 Cutty Sark Gardens  
London SE10 9LW

The Red House  
Red House Lane  
Bexleyheath  
DA6 8JF  
(To book a tour, please call  
the National Trust's regional  
box office on 01494 755588)

The Tower Bridge  
Experience,  
Tower Bridge,  
London,  
SE1 2UP  
0207 403 3761

Tower Of London  
London,  
EC3N 4AB  
0870 756 6060

V&A South Kensington  
Cromwell Road  
London SW7 2RL  
020 7942 2000

**This list is not exhaustive  
and information on other  
places of interest can be  
found at Tourist Boards,  
libraries and on the  
Internet.**