

- There is no clear academic or time structure.

It is important to note that the above is for guidance and by way of example only and is not an exhaustive list. Each case is judged upon its own individual circumstances.

The types of information and evidence might include: a timetable; a curriculum plan; photographs; workbooks; progress reports; dated work overtime; conversations with the child / parent; home visits; etc.

The local authority needs to be satisfied that appropriate education is taking place and therefore it will be about building a full picture of the individual circumstances rather than rigid adherence to a check list.

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See [Elective Home Education \(wokingham.gov.uk\)](http://wokingham.gov.uk/elective-home-education)



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **A Guide to Elective Home Education (Educating Your Child**

### **Other Than at School)**

Why parents choose to home-educate.

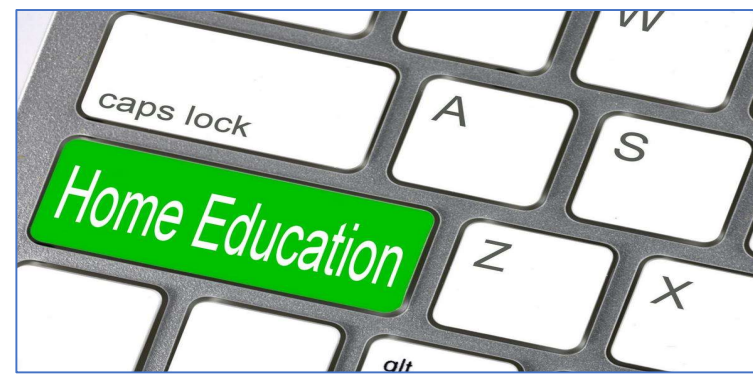
Considerations before you decide to home-educate.

The Law relating to elective home education

Contact with parents and children

Definition of suitable

Contacts and Website information



## What is EHE and why do parent choose to home-educate?

Elective home Education (EHE) is the term used by the Department for Education (DfE) to describe a parent's decision to provide education for their children other than at to school.

This guide is intended for use in relation to EHE only and should be read with the [DfE's guidance](#) and the Wokingham Elective Home Education Policy. Throughout this guide, 'parents' should be taken to include all those with parental responsibility, including guardians and carers as per s.7 of the Education Act 1996.

Parents may choose home education for a variety of reasons. Our primary interest lies in the suitability of parents' education provision and not in their reason for doing so. The following reasons for home educating are common, but by no means exhaustive:

- Ideological or philosophical views which you feel would be better promoted through education at home
- Religious or cultural beliefs
- Dissatisfaction with the school system
- Distance to a local school
- Bullying
- As a short-term intervention for a particular reason
- The child's unwillingness or inability to go to school
- Special educational needs not being met within the school system
- Health reasons, particularly mental health

However, the Local Authority is keen that where EHE results from an issue with the school provision, that assistance is provided to parents to resolve these if possible. Please contact your Education Welfare Service in this instance at [education.welfare@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:education.welfare@wokingham.gov.uk)

## Definition of suitable:

Parents who are home educating their child(ren) are expected to provide evidence of a suitable education that would, on the balance of probabilities, convince a reasonable person that a suitable education is being provided for the age and ability of the child.

In considering the parent's provision of education the local authority may reasonably expect the provision to include the following characteristics:

- **Broad:** it should introduce the pupils to a wide range of knowledge, understanding and skills.
- **Balanced:** each part should be allotted sufficient time but not such that it pushes out other essential areas of learning.
- **Relevant:** subjects should be taught so as to bring out their application to the pupil's own experience and to adult life and to give due emphasis to practical aspects.
- **Differentiated:** what is taught, and how it is taught, needs to be matched to the child's age, abilities and aptitude, taking into account any special education need.

A good curriculum also includes other aspects at an appropriate level such as personal, social and health education, outdoor and environmental education, citizenship, careers, food technology and information and communication technology. Opportunities to mix and relate with other children and adults are considered to be important to a child's personal and social development.

There may be a variety of reasons why the information / evidence provided has not been deemed suitable by the local authority. This may include:

- The education provision described lacks detail and it is difficult to ascertain what is being taught / what subjects are being studied.
- There is no or very limited examples of work submitted.
- There is no or very limited information regarding resources used internally and externally.
- There is no or very limited detail of how the child's progress is being monitored or examples of work to demonstrate relevant progression.

**However**, many home-educating families do some of these, at least, by choice. Furthermore, it is likely to be much easier for a parent to show that the education provided is suitable if attention has been paid to the breadth of the curriculum and its content, and the concepts of progress and assessment in relation to your child's ability.

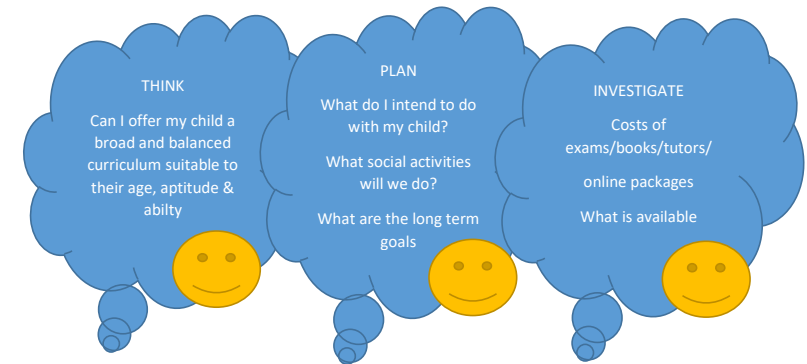
If it appears to us that a child is not receiving a suitable education we will write to parents to discuss their ongoing home education provision. This letter will offer a range of ways in which you can choose to tell us about your provision. We would prefer that an officer from our service meets with you in order to discuss your arrangements, however the letter does give alternative options.

Some parents may welcome the opportunity to discuss the provision that they are making for the child's education during a home visit but parents are not legally required to give us access to their home. We also can carry out these visits virtually.

You may choose to meet an officer at a mutually convenient and neutral location instead, with or without the child being present, or choose not to meet at all. Where a parent elects not to allow access to their home or their child, this will not of itself constitute a ground for concern about the education provision being made. Where we are not able to visit the home, we should be able to discuss and evaluate the educational provision by alternative means.

If you choose to meet an officer, you will be asked to provide evidence that you are providing a suitable education. If we do ask you for information, you are under no duty to comply although it would be sensible for you to do so given that the LA must be satisfied of suitable education. Following any review of your home education provision, you will receive a short notification from us. If we are satisfied that the education is suitable, you will be notified and advised that we will contact you again in a year's time. If we are not satisfied, you will be notified and given time to put plans in place and demonstrate the suitability of education. If we remain dissatisfied, we may take statutory action.

## Considerations before making the decision



## The law relating to elective home education.

The responsibility for a child's education rests with their parents. In England, education is compulsory, but school is not. Article 2 of Protocol 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights states that:

***"No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching is in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions."***

Parents have a right to educate their children at home. Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 provides 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 regular attendance at school or otherwise."***

The responsibility for a child's education rests with his or her parents. An "efficient" and "suitable" education is not defined in the Education Act 1996 but "efficient" has been broadly described in case law as an education that "achieves that which it sets out to achieve", and a "suitable" education is one that:

**“primarily equips a child for life within the community of which he is a member, rather than the way of life in the country as a whole, 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”.**

### **Contact with parents and children**

We acknowledge that learning takes place in a wide variety of environments and not only in the home. However, if it appears that a suitable education is not being provided, we will seek to gather any relevant information that may assist us in reaching a properly informed judgment. This will include seeking from the parents any further information that they wish to provide which explains how they are providing a suitable education. Parents will always be given the opportunity to address any specific concerns that the authority has. The child involved will also be given the opportunity, but is not required, to attend any meeting that may be arranged or invited to express his or her views in some other way. Please note that parents are under no duty to respond to our requests for information or a meeting, but it would be sensible for them to do so because until the local authority is satisfied that a home educating child is receiving a suitable full-time education, then the child being educated at home falls under the scope of the powers and duties in relation to children missing education.

There is no definition of ‘suitable’ education in statute law, although as stated in s.7 as quoted above, 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:

- 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;

- to be ‘suitable’, education at home should not directly conflict with the Fundamental British Values as defined in government guidance (link at end of document), although there is no requirement to teach these;
- we may use minimum expectations for literacy and numeracy in assessing suitability, whilst bearing in mind the age, ability and aptitude of the child and any special educational needs he or she may have;
- 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). This might also affect whether it is ‘efficient’ and indeed, whether it is ‘received’ at all for the purposes of s.7; and
- education may also not be deemed suitable if it leads to excessive isolation from the child’s peers, and thus impedes social development.

There are no legal requirements for you as parents educating a child at home to do any of the following:

- acquire specific qualifications for the task
- have premises equipped to any particular standard
- aim for the child to acquire any specific qualifications
- teach the National Curriculum
- provide a ‘broad and balanced’ curriculum
- make detailed lesson plans in advance
- give formal lessons
- mark work done by the child
- formally assess progress, or set development objectives
- reproduce school type peer group socialisation
- match school-based, age-specific standards