



London Borough of Haringey

**Elective Home Education Policy
and Procedures**

December 2017

Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	3
2. The law relating to home education	3
3. Getting started	4
4. Local authority responsibilities and procedures	4
5. Parental legal duties	6
6. Evidence of education	6
7. Special Educational Needs	8
8. Conclusion	8
9. Useful information	8
10. Helpful websites	9
11. Frequently asked questions	11
12. Appendix – questionnaire	14

1. Introduction

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 at home instead of sending them to school. It is not home tuition provided by the Local Authority (LA), or where the LA provides education otherwise than at a school.

All children have to be in full time education, but this doesn't have to be at school. Parents may make other arrangements and provide an education which is based 'otherwise than at school'; usually, although not exclusively, this is at home. Haringey Local Authority respects the rights of parents to home educate.

This guidance has been produced for parents who choose to home educate. Parents who choose to educate their children at home must be prepared to assume full financial responsibility, including bearing the cost of any public examinations. The Local Authority is not able to offer any financial support and there is no legal duty to do so.

Our work with families show that there are many instances we know of where very positive home education practice is being carried out by parents in their homes. In the interests of our children we welcome the opportunity to establish this, and also to ensure that in those small number of instances where no or inefficient education is taking place, we would like to work with families in the best interests of their child's education.

Where parents choose to home educate, Haringey Council welcomes the opportunity for parents and the LA to work together to establish and maintain a positive dialogue in the interests of the child to ensure (and gather evidence to substantiate) that a high quality education is being delivered to and received by the child/young person and that all children are safeguarded.

2. What the Law says

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act 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."*

Section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996 gives local authorities the responsibility of satisfying themselves that the education is 'efficient and suitable':

"If it appears to a local authority that a child of compulsory school age in their area is not receiving suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, they shall serve a notice in writing on the parent requiring him to satisfy them within the period specified in the notice that the child is receiving such education."

Failure to respond to a request for evidence that a child's education is full time, efficient and suitable, or if a response is received but no evidence is provided, Haringey Council will take the view that a full time, efficient and suitable education is **not** taking place, and will progress matters to serve notice as per Section 437(1).

The Local Authority has additional responsibilities in respect of pupils with statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN), as the Local Authority retains the duty to maintain and review a statement of educational needs or an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP).

Local authorities also have a duty under section 175(1) of the 2002 Education Act to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This section states:

“A local authority shall make arrangements for ensuring that their education functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.”

3. Getting started

If your child is on the roll of the school, you **must** write to the head teacher of the school and inform him/her that you are withdrawing your child in order to educate him/her ‘otherwise than at school’. This will allow the school to remove your child from roll; a school cannot legally remove a child from roll without this written notification. We would be grateful if you would let us know directly when you start home educating but this is not a legal requirement.

When a school receives information from a parent of their intention to home educate their child, it is the **responsibility of the school** to:

- Invite you to discuss any issues or concerns that could be resolved to enable your child to continue to be educated at school in a way which meets your expectations.
- If your final decision is to home educate, you must put this in writing so that the school can legally remove your child’s name from the school register. The school might not tell you when it has removed your child from roll.
- Inform the Local Authority immediately of removal of the child’s name from the register.
- Ensure that the pupil file is retained until requested by a receiving school.

Following on from the above, someone from the Local Authority will contact you to discuss your decision to home educate your child and to be assured it is what you want to do.

In the case of exclusion, schools **must** follow the statutory guidance. If a pupil has poor attendance, the school and Local Authority must seek to address the issues behind the absenteeism and use other remedies as appropriate that are available to them. Poor attendance is not legally defined, but is usually where a pupil’s attendance falls below 90%.

If you are experiencing any problems with your child’s school we strongly encourage you to contact the school and then us before asking for your child to be removed from the school roll. It is not always possible for a child to go back to the same school if home education does not work out for you and you may find that there are a very restricted range of school options available to you if you decide to return your child to a school, particularly if your child is in the later stages of secondary education.

4. Local Authority responsibilities and procedures

When the Local Authority first becomes aware that parents have elected to home educate, initial contact will be made with the parent(s) in order to establish what provision is being made. We will

usually contact you in writing in the first instance and enclose a questionnaire that you will be asked to complete. It is essential to establish at an early stage what the parent(s)' objectives are (i.e. what they set out to achieve). Only in this context can the **efficiency** of the provision be assessed by the Local Authority. We may also ask you to provide us with your educational philosophy to allow us to do this.

The Local Authority must establish whether a family is genuinely providing education or whether it is simply avoiding engaging with the school system. In the latter case officers must consider both child protection and educational issues and respond accordingly within the legal frameworks available to them.

Your child's name will be added to our home education database and we will contact you to ask you for some information about the education you are providing. We accept that in the early stages, parents may not yet be in a position to respond fully to enquiries. In such cases a reasonable timescale for responding will be agreed with the parents.

You can respond to a request for information about your child's education provision by writing to us or by meeting the Elective Home Education Advisory Teacher and talking through how you plan to educate your child. Many people find a home visit helpful, but parents may wish to meet at a neutral venue and the Local Authority will be happy to accommodate either.

We will make arrangements to visit in order to undertake an educational assessment, but in some cases where we have been unable to make contact with parent(s), or in cases where arrangements to meet have not been fulfilled, we will undertake unannounced visits to ensure that an education is taking place.

The Local Authority's (LA) statutory role is confined to situations where we are not satisfied that the education is **full-time and suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude**. We do not consider that this means that the LA should do nothing until evidence of failure by the parent materialises, but it does mean that our approach should be proportionate. Although the Local Authority has no statutory duty to monitor the quality of home education on a routine basis, Haringey Council is committed to making informal enquiries with all parent(s) who home educate at least once a year and if the outcome is satisfactory, to not pursue this further during that year. However, if lack of response gives rise to a view or a concern then more frequent enquiry and escalation to a s.437(1) order will be undertaken (section 437(1) of the 1996 Education Act).

Haringey's Elective Home Education Advisory Teacher understands that all children learn in different ways and at varying rates. It is vital that parents and children choose a type of education that is right for them, and our Elective Home Education Advisory Teacher will understand and is supportive of the many differing approaches or 'ways of educating' which will be feasible and legally valid.

Where young people are entering elective home education during Key Stage 4, there is an expectation that clear plans will be in place for achieving recognised qualifications at age 16 and securing progression to post 16 learning (e.g. college) or employment in order to avoid becoming NEET ("not in education, employment or training") for young people who are educated otherwise than at school at this late stage in their education.

As recommended by the Government's Home Education Guidelines for Local Authorities (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/elective-home-education>), we would always seek to discuss any concerns with you before taking legal action.

If, after consideration of all material facts given to us, it appears that a suitable education is **not** being provided, the Local Authority will seek to gather any further relevant information that will assist reaching a properly informed judgement. 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 be given the opportunity to address any specific concerns that the Authority has. The child will 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, for example in writing.

In order to determine confirmation that parents **are** providing a suitable education, the Local Authority ensures that informal enquiries about educational provision are initiated in the first instance. However, it would be quite consistent with these guidelines to proceed to a formal notice under s.437 (1) of the Education Act 1996 *if* parents refuse to respond to informal enquiries. If parents then refuse to respond to the notice, School Attendance Order proceedings should follow. The Local Authority is clear that although parents' rights should be respected, the prime objective is the welfare of the child.

5. What are the parents' legal duties?

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states:

“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 courts have held that education is efficient if it achieves what it sets out to achieve and suitable if the education prepares the child for life in a modern civilised society as long as it does not foreclose other options in the future. All elective home education practitioners should be mindful of this when planning education provision in their home and for their child.

If a child is registered at a school as a result of a school attendance order the parents **must** get the order revoked by the Local Authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the child to receive suitable education otherwise than at school, before the child can be deleted from the school's register and educated at home.

If an electively home educated child is to take GCSEs, then parents should make preparations to enable this as early as possible. It is sensible to start planning when your daughter/son is in Year 9 (the school year in which they become aged 14).

It is essential to find out where your child can sit the examinations. This must be at an accredited centre. You should contact your local schools or further education colleges to see if they will accept external candidates. You will have to use the same syllabus/exam board as the school/college. You can also look on the internet for accredited examination centres under the chosen examination board.

Parents will need to ask how much the school/college/examination centre will charge, as, under current legislation, it will be the parent(s)' responsibility to pay the exam board fees for their child.

The Local Authority is not able to provide this funding for GCSEs if a child is receiving elective home education.

It is your responsibility to identify exam boards and syllabus material and to prepare your child for the GCSE exams. Parents are responsible for meeting deadline dates and the costs for registering for the GCSE exams through the accredited centre.

6. What Haringey will accept as evidence that a suitable home education is taking place

Initially, we will seek to informally visit you at home to assess the education, and also the learning environment in which the education will or is taking place. As the visit is in your home, we will do everything to ensure that you feel in control of this process. This visit also allows us to talk to you in a relaxed setting and manner and introduce both ourselves and the support and guidance that we can provide to you.

If you are not comfortable with us visiting you in your home, we will seek to agree to meet in a neutral venue of your choice, for example a library or café, where we could discuss education and our Advisory Teacher could look over samples of work that has been completed by your child.

In the event that you are not willing to meet at a neutral venue, we will ask for examples of completed work to be sent to us so that our Advisory Teacher can make a limited assessment of the education that is taking place.

As a minimum requirement, we would expect to see that all children have completed work in English and Maths. We will also look for the following:

- Children are aware of their targets and how to get them.
- Work completed is marked and dated
- Work shows progression
- There is regular feedback given to the child/ren

Where examples of work are submitted as evidence that an education is taking place. We would accept the following:

- Work marked and endorsed by a professional education practitioner. This can be a private tutor who holds a British teaching qualification and is registered with the Department for Education as being a qualified teacher. They must also have a DFE number. An educational psychologist who can supply the local authority with registration to the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) as this is the statutory regulator for practitioner psychologists in the UK.
- The samples of work can either be scanned and email to Camilla.jacques@haringey.gov.uk or they can be sent by post to 4th Floor, Alexander House, Station Road Wood Green N22 7TR.
- The samples of work will need to illustrate that the child/ren have made progress in their learning and understanding of the topics being studied. This can be evidenced by annotating the work so that it is clear to the Advisory Teacher what the aims and objectives were at the time of setting the work.

As a local authority we believe that standards are more likely to have an influence on the education that electively home educated children receive, if they are supported by the “outside” forces, rather than being ignored or even opposed. The Advisory teacher’s role is to support and advise you in your educational journey.

7. Special Educational Needs

Children with special educational needs (SEN) may be educated at home, whether or not they have a statement/EHCP.

If your child has a statement of SEN/EHCP and is attending a mainstream school you do not need permission from the Local Authority but if your child is attending a ‘special school’ you must seek permission from the Local Authority **before** your child's name is taken off the school roll. (A special school is a school where children with a statement of special educational needs/Education and Health Care Plan may be educated. This is usually in cases where their needs may not be met at a mainstream school).

Special schools should not automatically remove a child from their roll because a parent states that s/he intends to opt for home education. Parents must seek the consent of the Local Authority before making arrangements to home educate. Until this confirmation is provided and the Local Authority has approved the educational provision for the child, the child is expected to attend school as normal. Failure to attend without reason will be treated as unauthorised absence and relevant action taken by the school or the LA.

The Local Authority will contact you to ask you for some information. While the EHCP/statement of SEN remains in force the Local Authority has a duty to review it annually.

There will need to be consultation with parents to ensure that needs identified in the EHCP/statement of SEN are being met in the home. The Annual Review of the EHCP/statement can serve as the annual contact for EHE purposes.

If your child is home educated but does not have a statement of SEN and you believe he or she may have special needs you can request a statutory assessment from the LA.

8. Conclusion

Home education can and should be a happy, fulfilling and successful experience for your child(ren) . However, we recognise that in some cases the delivery of an education at home may become too burdensome for a family or a parent or child and in those instances we encourage you to contact us and we will do all that we can to support you in either making the experience a positive one or in finding a suitable school for your child.

9. Useful additional information

Haringey’s Elective Home Education Advisory Teacher is Camilla Jacques. Camilla can be contacted on: 020 8489 5046 or via email at Camilla.jacques@haringey.gov.uk

The Elective Home Education Advisory Teacher sits within the Schools and Learning section of the Local Authority and works closely with the School Admissions team, Children Missing Education officers and Haringey’s Education Welfare Service.

The role of the Elective Home Education Advisory Teacher is **not** to tell parents how to educate their children or to promote registration at school. It is to assess the education provided and, where appropriate, provide support and information for parents. Only when there are concerns that a child is **not** receiving a full time education suitable to his or her age, ability and aptitude will matters be escalated.

10. Some websites that you may find helpful

Structured Home Learning

<http://structuredhomelearning.com/>

Structured home learning offers a comprehensive, fully timetabled plan and resources for any stage all the way from foundation to year 9.

The European Academy for Christian Home Schooling

Tel: 01793 783783

www.christian-education.org

World Wide Education Service

<http://www.weshome.demon.co.uk/teach.html>

An accredited UK based education organisation providing home schooling courses and materials based on the National Curriculum.

National Association of Gifted Children (NAGC)

Tel: 0845 4500295

www.nagcbrtain.org.uk

Bullying UK

www.bullying.co.uk

Bullying UK offers support to pupils, parents/carers and teachers on ways of dealing with bullying at school.

The British Dyslexia Association

www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/

UK national organisation offering a wide range of information for parents, dyslexic adults and teachers, together with details of the international conferences it organises.

Examination

<http://www.educationalresources.co.uk/examboards.html>

Websites that some families have found useful for resources

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/bitesize/

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/>

www.timetoteach.co.uk/links/homeschoolresources.html

<http://www.futureschool.com/>

<http://www.homeworkelephant.co.uk/>

<http://www.cricketweb.co.uk/>

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/Home.html>

<http://www.happychild.org.uk/>

www.muddlepuddle.co.uk

www.clever-dragons.com

English

<http://www.bibliomania.com/>

<http://www.aquila.co.uk/>

Maths

<http://www.mathszone.co.uk/>

Geography

<http://www.mapzone.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/mapzone/>

Science

<http://www.sciencewithme.com/>

<http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/gamesactivites.html>

Other websites

http://home-ed.info/Resources/science_resources.html

<http://physics.org>

<http://www.krampf.com>

www.sciencemuseum.org.uk

<http://www.superchargedscience.com>

ICT

http://www.teach-ict.com/programming/scratch/scratch_home.html

www.codeacademy.com

Internet safety

BBC

www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/topics/safety-and-privact

CEOP

<http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Childnet International

www.childnet.com

Mumsnet

www.mumsnet.com

The Parent Zone

www.theparentzone.co.uk

Internet Matters

<http://www.internetmatters.org>

Note:

Haringey Council accepts no responsibility for the content of the above websites. Content and descriptions were as stated at the time of research.

11. Frequently Asked Questions:

The education of a child at home is an important responsibility for a family. It demands a serious commitment of time, money, patience, and energy. If you are considering educating your child at home as opposed to a school, the following questions and answers will help you in making your decision. They also outline the way in which Haringey Council carries out its duties under the 1996 Education Act.

Does my child 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'*. Most parents carry out this duty by ensuring their child attends school. However, for a variety of reasons, a small number of parents in Haringey decide to take on the duty to educate their child/children themselves, that is to 'educate at home'. Many parents make a very positive success of home education and make satisfactory provision.

What are the parents'/carers' responsibilities?

Under section 7 of the 1996 Act, parents of every child of compulsory school age *'shall cause the child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his/her age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or 'otherwise'*. Education is a statutory requirement for your child: registering your child at a school is not.

What is compulsory school age?

The law requires a child to be educated from the start of the school term following their fifth birthday until the last Friday in June in the school year in which a child reaches sixteen. The participation age was raised in 2013 and 2015 and home education is a legal option post -16 just as it is for under -16s.

Who do I have to inform if I decide to educate my child at home?

If a child is on the roll of a school, the parent(s) must inform the head teacher by letter that they intend to home educate. The head teacher is then required to notify the local authority. If they do not inform the head teacher in writing the child will remain on roll and the parent *may* be liable to prosecution for non-attendance.

What is the Local Authority's duty under the 1996 Education Act?

The statutory role of the Local Authority is clear with regard to home education. The LA has two duties:

- 1) to provide support for home educating families (at a level decided by local authorities themselves) and if families wish it; and:
- 2) to intervene with families if the local authority is given reason to believe that a child is not receiving a suitable education.

The Local Authority has a duty to take action if it appears a child is not receiving education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Therefore, if your child is not on a school roll, the Local Authority will ask you for some information about your educational provision.

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. "Efficient" education is defined in case law as education which 'achieves what it sets out to achieve'. Implicit in this notion is that parents should know and articulate what they set out to achieve through the education they provide to their child(ren).

Do I have to educate within school terms and times?

Education at home can be more flexible and less rigid than at school. You can decide how to organise your child's education across the day, week and month. As a guide, the length of time a child should be involved in learning each week is not specified in law, but as guidance, children in school spend between 22 and 25 hours per week on schoolwork, for 38 weeks a year.

What if the Local Authority is not satisfied that I am providing a suitable education?

As recommended by the Government's Home Education Guidelines for Local Authorities, we will always seek to discuss any concerns with you before taking any legal action. If it appears that a suitable education is not being provided to your child, we will seek to gather any relevant information that will assist us in reaching a properly informed judgement on whether a suitable education is taking place. This will include us seeking any information that you are willing to provide which explains how you are providing a suitable education for your child(ren). As parents, you will be given the opportunity to address any specific concerns that the LA has. Your child will also be given the opportunity, but is not required, to attend any meeting that may be arranged between you and the LA or invited to express his or her views in some other way, for example in writing. Ultimately the Local Authority may choose to send you a formal notice asking you to satisfy us that your child is receiving suitable education, and if you are not able to satisfy us of this then we will consider serving a School Attendance Order requiring you to send your child to school.

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

You can seek a place in a school at any time and let the Local Authority know of your intention. It is not always possible for a child to go back to the same school if home education does not work out and you may find a very restricted range of school options, particularly if your child is in the later stages of secondary education.

What will happen if we decide to move?

Please let the Elective Home Education Advisory Teacher know your new address. If you are moving out of the borough and still intend to educate your child at home the Elective Home Education Advisory Teacher will put you in touch with the Education Department in your new borough.

What should I do if my child has Special Educational Needs?

Parents' right to educate their child at home applies equally where a child has special educational needs (SEN). This right is irrespective of whether the child has an EHCP/statement of SEN or not. Parents of any child subject to the statutory provisions of an EHCP (or Statement) who are considering whether to make their own arrangements should discuss this with their child's named SEN Caseworker to ensure that they are fully aware of alternatives (amended provision and/or change of placement) and their SEN statutory rights of appeal. If your child has an EHCP/statement of SEN and is attending a mainstream school you do not need permission from the local authority but if your child is attending a 'special school' – you must seek permission from the local authority before your child's name is taken off the school roll. The local authority will contact you to ask you for some information. If a child has an EHCP/statement of SEN and the parent chooses to home educate, information will be shared between the SEN casework officer and the Elective Home Education Advisory Teacher. If your child is home educated but does not have an EHCP/ statement of SEN and you believe he or she may have special needs you can request a statutory assessment.

What if my child has social care involvement?

Home education cannot be seen as a protective factor for a vulnerable child at risk. Home educated children are subject to less monitoring and scrutiny than those who attend school. Services are less likely to become aware of the signs of abuse or neglect. The local authority recognises that current legislation and guidance inadvertently helps the small minority of home educators who use elective home education as a cover to conceal child neglect and abuse.

Where a child is made subject to a child protection plan or is already subject to a child protection plan, the conference chair should make clear that if the parent has already declared elective home education, or states an intention to do so, the risk will be re-considered in light of this information with the likelihood that the child is considered unsafe as a consequence. The chair will therefore immediately ensure that the plan is changed or reviewed to protect the child and if this includes a stop to elective home education with immediate effect the chair will outline what harm is likely, what the risk is, and how it is increased as a result of continuing to educate the child at home. The resulting plan will reflect the necessary actions that need to be taken.

What else should I consider before taking the step to home educate?

Deciding to educate your child at home is a major step that not only involves commitment but also a tremendous investment in time, money, and energy. It is well worth talking to someone who has experience of the highs and lows of home education before finally making a decision. Where parents are looking to home educate due to a breakdown in relations at the school and the parents are notifying of intent to home educate for these reasons, there should be a presumption that mediation will be explored prior to a final decision being made on whether to remove the child from the school roll and that the LA can be engaged in that process. The LA would expect all Haringey schools to have had a discussion with parents, signposting them to support and guidance before making any formal decision.

The local authority must establish whether a family is genuinely providing education or whether it is simply avoiding engaging with the school system. In the latter case officers must consider both child protection and educational issues and respond accordingly within the legal frameworks available. Home education is not a way of solving your child's non-attendance at school. Many families make a

pro-active decision to home educate. Such families usually provide a high standard of education for their children. However, some families may feel that electing for home education is the only available option when it appears that school issues cannot be resolved or where personal circumstances mean that attending school regularly is problematic. The local authority Elective Home Education Advisory Teacher aims to support families in these situations to ensure families understand the implications of the child no longer being on a school roll, for example having to locate an exam centre that accepts external candidates, and the lack of school places for young people during GCSEs.

ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION INFORMATION AND REFERRAL FORM

Revised November 2017

ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION FORM

Parents' statement of arrangements for the education of their child

Please take time to complete this questionnaire as it will help to provide us with an understanding of the arrangements you are making for your child's education other than at school. By law, the council must be satisfied that suitable arrangements are in place. We would be grateful for your assistance.

Thank you.

Date: __/__/__

Name of child:	Date of birth:
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Name of child:	Date of birth:
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Name of child:	Date of birth:
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Name(s) of parents(s) or carer:

Home address:
Post Code:

Telephone number(s):

Email:

Last school attended:

Reason for wishing to home educate your child:
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TEACHING AND GUIDANCE:

Please list the people regularly involved in the education of your child:

What other guidance and support have you been able to obtain to support you in educating your child?

Does your child have a statement of special education needs?

Where does your child's education take place?

PLANNING:

Do you include any of the following subjects in your child's home education?

English	Yes/No	Art	Yes/No
Mathematics	Yes/No	Music	Yes/No
Science	Yes/No	Physical education	Yes/No
Technology	Yes/No	Religious education	Yes/No
History	Yes/No	Information technology	Yes/No
Geography	Yes/No	Languages	Yes/No

Other subjects (please specify):

