



# HOME EDUCATION

Home education is an alternative to school; it is parents' right in law to choose an appropriate educational setting for their child.

Some families make a carefully considered decision to home educate long before their child reaches school age.

There may be many different reasons as to why this is best but ultimately you may feel that in some way you can offer a more suitable education for your children at home.

Some parents send their child into the school system, but later find that school does not work for their child.

Home education is not right for everyone, but there are a number of support groups that can provide advice and useful guidance on how to make home education both a successful and enriching experience.

## **Pros of home education:**

- Your child can learn at their own pace and in their own way. Some children respond well to structured learning, some children learn better by following an autonomous or child-led approach. For some, a mixture of approaches works well
- You can adapt materials to your child's learning style or to their special interest
- The time and place in which they learn can be adapted to support their specific needs (e.g. movement breaks, sensory breaks, or allowing time for medication to take affect)
- Flexibility to go over subject areas more than once, in more depth or in a multi-sensory way
- Opportunity for flexibility to focus on life and social skills
- Allowing your child to learn in depth about a subject that really interests them
- Tailoring their education to their chosen job/career
- Choosing sports and other activities that support your child's development at a time that works for them
- One-to-one support for your child
- Can solve other social problems such as bullying or anxieties
- Fewer exam pressures, although home educated children can and do sit exams

## **Points to consider before entering into home education:**

- The need to be inventive in order to keep your child's attention
- Lack of motivation can be a problem for both parents and children
- Some parents may feel daunted if they are unsure of a topic, although there are lots of resources available on the internet to explain topics
- Potential for lack of socialisation and isolation, although there are a great many activities and days out arranged by home educators
- Less natural time apart from your child
- No funding for any activities, resources or exams
- It can feel overwhelming to be the person in charge of your child's education



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**For more information on home education see the websites below:**

[www.educationotherwise.net](http://www.educationotherwise.net)

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

[www.he-special.org.uk](http://www.he-special.org.uk)

[www.home-education.org.uk](http://www.home-education.org.uk)

**There are several Facebook groups for families who are home educating, including:**

Home Education Essex - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/160003064111014/>

Essex Home Educators Home Schooling -  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/726869220722733/>

Essex Home Education Meet-Ups - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/748782115157823/>

SEN Home Education in Essex -  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/166039887285902/members/>

There are other Facebook groups including ones that organise trips, provide discounts on educational resources, SEN specific groups and smaller localised groups. Some Facebook groups will let you join if you are considering home education and would like to find out more, such as Home Education Essex and SEN Home Education in Essex.

Forest Schools are often used as a good option when home educating:

Billericay Forest School - <http://www.billericayforestschool.co.uk/>

Twiggles Explorers & Outdoor Play - <https://www.twiggles-explorers.co.uk/>

Bush Tucker Forestry School - <http://www.bushtuckerforestryschool.co.uk/>

Muddy Boots Forest Adventures - <https://www.muddybootsforestadventures.co.uk/>

**Advice from national charity Contact on home education:**

**Does my child have to go to school?**

As a parent you have a legal duty to ensure that your child receives a suitable education when they are of compulsory school age. Education does not have to be in a school. You can choose to take full responsibility for your child's learning, and educate them from home.



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## **What if my child is already at school and I wish to home educate him?**

If you are considering taking your child out of school, it is a good idea to get advice first. You can write to the head teacher to say that you are de-registering (withdrawing) your child from school and you are requesting his or her name to be removed from the school roll. The school must inform the local authority. You do not have to tell the local authority yourself if you are withdrawing your child from a mainstream school. However if you are withdrawing your child from a special school you need to get permission from your local authority.

## **What kind of education do I have to provide for my child at home?**

You do not have to try to copy the education that a school provides. For example you do not have to provide a set timetable of lessons or a particular curriculum. How you arrange your child's education is your decision. However, the local authority has a duty to identify children not receiving a suitable education and may contact you regularly for information about what you are providing. It is a good idea to prepare for this by keeping a file of evidence, which could include an education plan, and samples of your child's work. This will help you to cooperate with any requests for information. If the local authority is not satisfied that you are providing a suitable education, they have the power to order you to send your child to school.

## **Can I home educate my child if she has an EHC Plan?**

Local authorities can continue to maintain an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for a child who is being educated at home. The procedures and timescales are the same as for a child at school. However, if the local authority is satisfied that you can provide the help set out in the EHC Plan they do not have the duty to arrange it. The EHC Plan can name a school that the local authority considers suitable, but will also state that parents have made their own arrangements for the child's education. The local authority still has a duty to review the EHC Plan annually.

The contacts and links given via this SNAP information sheet have been shared as a starting point for your own research. We believe the information to be genuine and correct at the time of publishing, however no responsibility for loss occasioned by any person acting or refraining from acting as a result of the material contained herein can be accepted by SNAP.