

## **Information about Learning**



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## Helpful Information

### Plan, Do and Review Cycle

A plan, do and review cycle can be a helpful tool, and a tool you will probably use without even thinking about it. It is a tool we use in everyday life, and one that can be applied to learning. For instance, we plan a meal and get the ingredients; we make the meal; we then review it by deciding if the recipe worked or if we should change the recipe to improve it when we make it again. There is no expectation for you to use this, but it may be helpful.

**Plan:** Either you or your child chooses what to learn and gathers the resources to support learning.

**Do:** Provide the opportunity for learning and for learning to be applied (these can be practical or written activities).

**Review:** Check their work and understanding (e.g. observing/ discussing what they have learned/ marking/ providing verbal feedback about their work) to see if you can move on with the learning or whether the learning should be repeated.

### Curriculum

It is **not** a statutory requirement for home educating families to teach the National Curriculum or the EYFS framework.

The National Curriculum is a document that outlines the expected learning standards in all curriculum subjects for children from Year 1 upwards. Similarly, the Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework outlines learning standards for children who are in nursery and reception where learning is mainly developed through play and hands-on experiences.

Both the National Curriculum and the EYFS framework can help you to understand what your child(ren) would be learning if they were at an educational setting, and could be used as a tool to prepare work or learning experiences that are suitable to their age and ability. Some parents may therefore find this to be a useful guide. We fully appreciate that other parents will not wish for the education being provided at home to be informed by what happens in schools.

The National Curriculum and EYFS framework are also helpful documents to use if home education is only being used for a short period and you would like your child(ren) to return to school at a later date. Teaching the National Curriculum or the EYFS framework will help your child(ren) transition to school more easily as they will have learnt similar content to their peers.

**As the parent or carer providing education, you have the freedom to choose what your child learns. You are free to focus learning around your child's interests or the topics or subjects you feel are most valuable.** Nevertheless, to ensure your child is able

to grow up as 'a citizen of modern Britain', an appropriate level of literacy and numeracy should be developed so they grow to become literate and numerate adults.

- [Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) ← Hyperlink
- [Primary National Curriculum \(Key Stages 1 & 2\)](#) ← Hyperlink
- [Secondary National Curriculum \(Key Stages 3 & 4\)](#) ← Hyperlink

## **Recording Learning**

Keeping a record of learning can be helpful for reviewing and recapping what has been learned. You can use photographic evidence, collect worksheets, complete booklets, record voice notes, make posters, update scrapbooks and so much more.

## **Feedback**

You do not have to mark your child(ren)'s work but it is important that you look at the work afterwards or have a discussion about it. Doing this is a helpful tool to see whether the learning was successful and provide the opportunity to give reinforcing praise. If there are any mistakes, you are then able to explain and clarify anything that has been misunderstood.

## **Praise**

Praise is just as important for supporting your child(ren) in their learning. It can help motivate and encourage further learning. Praise can be given in many ways:

- Verbal praise;
- Displaying work that you or your child(ren) are proud of;
- Sticker charts (for example: your child(ren) could work to get a certain amount of stickers to receive a reward or treat for their hard work);
- Storing work that you or your child(ren) are proud of in a special folder or box.

## **Progress**

Regularly reviewing prior learning ensures what has been taught has been remembered and thus learned. This will help you to identify if you need to recap any prior learning. It will also help you to identify which resources and learning opportunities are working best for your child(ren).

You could check your child(ren)'s progress in the following ways: informal discussions with your child, mini quizzes, worksheets and tests. There are no requirements to do this but they can be a helpful tool for home educating parents in determining where to go next with the learning.

## **Who can provide provision?**

Although your child(ren) may be electively home educated, this does not mean they have to remain at home. There are a variety of ways to educate your child(ren) away from a school setting. It is up to you, as the parents and carers, to choose what education you provide for your child(ren). The following are some possible provision choices:

- Educate full-time at home yourselves;
- Join with other EHE families to share educational experiences;
- Employ a part-time tutor to supplement the education you provide at home (tutors should have enhanced DBS checks and should be able to show you their up-to-date certificate [see note on safeguarding below]);
- Join a **registered** tuition centre who can offer small group classes that supplement learning at home;
- Online courses, tuition and lessons;
- Flexi-schooling as mentioned in the guidance (but this is at the school's discretion);
- College (some offer part-time education for children, who are 14 plus, to support them with qualifications).

Whatever provision you decide on, it is important that the learning is supported at home and additional opportunities for learning are being engaged with.

## **Safeguarding**

If you employ a tutor to supplement the education that you are providing at home, you will need to make sure that your child is properly safeguarded. The current Department for Education guidance for parents states:

*“Parents may choose to employ other people to educate their child, though they themselves will continue to be responsible for the education provided. They will also be responsible for ensuring that those whom they engage are suitable to have access to children. Parents will therefore wish to satisfy themselves by taking up appropriate references such as an appropriate Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) check and local authorities should encourage them to do this”*

Similarly, if you choose for your child to attend an out of school setting for part of the week, you will need to be satisfied that all health and safety standards are met at the setting and that staff are vetted to ensure that they are suitable to have access to children. Any such setting that is providing full-time education to 5 or more pupils of statutory school age, or to 1 pupil with an Education Health and Care Plan, or to 1 pupil who is Looked After (in the care of the local authority) must be registered with the Department for Education as an Independent School. Failure to do so would mean that the provider is operating illegally.

The EHE Team can provide further advice to parents on this.

## Approaches to Learning

Here are three educational approaches that we have seen EHE families use within Solihull.

Within each approach, there are an unlimited range of variants you can apply. No approach is going to look the same in every family. The approach you choose should be one that works for you and your family. Your children are unique and home education provides you with the perfect opportunity to tailor learning to their individual interests and learning styles.

You may wish to take some parts of one approach and combine it with another. It is okay to try an approach and change it if it is not working. Education and learning styles are bespoke for each child and are ever changing and evolving. What works one week may not work the next.

**All of these approaches, and any other approach you may use, are supported and recognised by Solihull Council. One approach is not given preference over the other. We have seen evidence of all of these approaches, and others, working really well. When an approach works well, a child is able to make progress in knowledge and skills.**

### Autonomous Approach

An autonomous approach is one which a family puts the child at the centre of their learning. This is sometimes known as child-led. Usually, the child chooses what they want to learn about and when they want to learn it.

For this approach, learning is usually based around a topic or theme, such as dinosaurs, World War 2, animation, Halloween or fairy tales. It is usually a more activities based approach to learning than a subject based approach. Children often learn a vast range of knowledge and skills from a range of disciplines as they are exploring a topic. They tend to learn new skills when they need them to carry out certain activities, meaning that learning tends to occur naturally and organically in a meaningful way.

This approach has enabled families to adapt learning to a child's preferred learning style, whether that be learning through reading, practical activities, listening or watching. Usually, learning in this way does not require text books, workbooks, worksheets or any other formal educational materials, although some families use them to provide learning opportunities in certain aspects of a topic.

Children are usually encouraged to have the time to ask questions about ideas and topics that are relevant, meaningful and interesting to them and find the answer to them without having to be redirected back onto the task they are doing. Thus, certain topics could last one day while others last a month or more, dependant on how long a child is interested in

the topic. The intention for this approach is usually to make learning meaningful, interesting and relevant to a child in order to increase the child's self-motivation to learn, and to support them to develop a love of learning.

Adults have an essential part to play in this learning approach. They often act as facilitators, to make the learning opportunities and activities (based on the child's interests) possible and ensure their child has the resources they need in order to learn what they want to learn. This can include facilitating discussions around a topic as they learn. When children are younger or starting to adapt to an autonomous approach, adults may need to guide the process until the child can make choices on their own.

### **Structured Approach**

A structured approach is one in which a family plans out the learning activities in advance, either loosely or in detail. Usually, this approach lends itself to a timetable being created. Timetabling the day does not mean it has to look like a school day, organised into subjects and lessons, unless you want it to. Some families like to use the child-led approach mentioned previously but find it useful to apply more structure to it, organising what activities a child will do and when. Some parents encourage their children to participate in creating a weekly timetable as it helps them to be more invested in their learning.

Some families follow a theme or topic based approach with a structure. For this, the parent or the child may choose a topic or a theme they want to learn about (for example the Egyptians). Then, the child completes a range of activities about that theme or topic, organised and planned by the parent. These activities may be organised into different subject disciplines or key ideas about the topic. Children may give their parents specific topics or questions they would like to learn about within the main topic. The activities may be book based, practical or conversational based on the ideas being explored.

Here is an example of activities based around key ideas within a chosen topic (such as the Egyptians):

- Exploring what mummification is and how it was done – read about mummification, draw and label a diagram of a mummy, write a set of instructions for mummification, measuring a set of a mummy's bandages, draw and design a sarcophagus, go to Birmingham museum to see a mummy;
- Explore how mummies were found- watch a documentary about Howard Carter finding Tutankhamun, write a diary as if you were Howard Carter finding Tutankhamun, add up the cost of all the riches found with King Tutankhamun, look at a timeline of when King Tutankhamun lived compared to now;
- Learning about the structure and purpose of a Pyramid – learn about 3D shapes and what a pyramid is, make nets of a pyramid, research the layout of a pyramid, design a pyramid with different trap doors, write a story about someone entering your pyramid.

Here is an example of activities for a topic based around subject disciplines:

- English: Learning how to write a non-chronological report about the Egyptians
- Maths: Learning about 3D shapes related to the pyramids
- Science: Learning about the body and its anatomy linked with mummification
- Geography: Learning about rivers including the river Nile
- Art: Designing and making a death mask

Some children may not like to base everything around one theme and may be interested in a range of different themes, which relate to the different subject disciplines you wish to develop with your child. The options are endless.

### **School at Home Approach**

Some children and families prefer to keep to a regular structure and following a structure similar to that of a school day. Some families choose to use a school structure for some parts of the day or week (usually for the core subjects, English and maths) and a more autonomous approach for the rest of the day or week.

For this approach, children may follow the National Curriculum, a parent's own curriculum or a bought curriculum (such as Maths No Problems). Learning is often split into subject disciplines, such as maths, English, science, history, art, etc. Often children engage with the work aimed at the year group they would be in, their age or the year or age group that suits their ability level (this may be above or below their actual age or year group). We have seen families using this approach when the children are preparing to sit exams, such as GCSEs, or where home education is being used for a limited amount of time before children go back into a school setting.

- Some families choose to employ private tutors to help with certain aspects of the curriculum.
- Other families choose to use online learning platforms to study the different subjects.
- Some children attend tutoring sessions in a small group at an education centre.
- Some children work through workbooks with accompanying text books (such as CGP)
- Some families do a combination of the above to suit the needs, interests and aspirations of their children

## **Assessments and Qualifications**

Children who are being home educated do not need to take any formal assessments or gain qualifications, including Key Stage 1 and 2 SAT tests, GCSEs and A-levels.

### **SATs**

SATs tests are not offered externally. All prior Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 SATs tests are on the government website with the coinciding mark schemes for anyone to print off. The most recent SATs papers are published each year once SATs week has taken place in May. You may wish to use these tests as a personal assessment tool but there are no requirements to do so.

### **GCSEs & IGCSEs**

GCSEs and IGCSEs can be taken at any age, when you and your child(ren) think they are ready. It is up to you, as the educating parent or carer, to organise and fund these if you wish for them to be taken.

To take a GCSE, your child(ren) must be registered with an exam centre (within a school or externally) so an exam officer can register them with an exam board. You cannot apply directly to an exam board. Be aware that there are many exam boards that cover the same subjects, and each exam board has their own specification for what must be taught in the subject. Make sure you know these specifications and have covered them through your child's education at home. You can access the specifications and practice test papers online on the different exam board websites.

IGCSEs stands for International General Certificate for Secondary Education but can sometimes be offered to home educated pupils. You can find more information online.

### **Other Qualifications**

There are other companies that offer awards and qualifications.

For example:

ASDAN is an educational charity that offer curriculum programs and can award nationally approved qualifications. The qualifications are aimed at developing personal, social and employability skills. See their website for information: <https://www.asdan.org.uk/>

When choosing a qualification to complete, please consider whether it is going to be recognised by further educational settings or employers.