

## **Additional Information about Elective Home Education (EHE)**



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## **What is elective home education (EHE)?**

Elective home education is the parent or carers choice to take legal and financial responsibility for ensuring their child(ren) receives a suitable, efficient and full time education out of a school setting (at home or otherwise).

As a parent or carer, you have a legal right to choose to educate your child(ren) at home. Parents are not required to register or seek approval from the local authority. The exception is where a child has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and attends a maintained special school. In this circumstance, Solihull Council would need to approve the child moving to elective home education. All electively home educating parents are required to satisfy the local authority that a suitable, efficient and full time education is being provided.

If you are thinking about educating your child(ren) at home, or are already educating your child(ren) at home you may find this leaflet helpful.

Listed below are some important documents that should be read before you decide to begin EHE. They explain the law regarding EHE and information about the provision. The Solihull EHE policy specifies what we, as a Council, are responsible for in terms of EHE.

- [Solihull EHE Policy](#) (The link to this is on our webpage)
- [Elective Home Education: Guidance for Parents \(DfE\)](#) ← Hyperlink
- [Elective Home Education: Guidance for Local Authorities\(DfE\)](#) ← Hyperlink

## **Considerations**

### **1. Consider what your reason for home education is.**

The choice to home educate is yours as parents. It is always best if the decision to home educate is a well-considered and positive choice for your family. You should not be made to feel like you have no other choice but to home educate by your child(ren)'s school. Please contact us if this is the case.

If your family is experiencing problems with your child(ren)'s current school, teacher or head teacher, please try to work with the school to resolve these problems. If, at any point, you wish for your child(ren) to return to a school setting, they would be offered a place back at the school they most recently left. Therefore, it would be beneficial to resolve any issues in case you wish for them to return to education at a later stage.

### **2. Consider the thoughts and feelings of your child(ren).**

It is important that you think about the social and emotional impact home education may have on your child(ren). If they would be negatively affected by the change, perhaps consider an alternative option to home education or identify how you would overcome this. Many home educating families in Solihull meet up so that their children can enjoy exciting social activities together.

### **3. Consider what subjects you would like to teach and how.**

It is important to consider what you would like your child(ren) to know and learn before home educating so you can ensure you are equipped to be able to teach it. It could be very costly if you need to hire a tutor to teach certain aspects of a curriculum, that are more complex and specialist, particularly in secondary education.

### **4. Consider the costs of EHE.**

When a child(ren) is in home education, their education is solely the financial responsibility of the parent or carer. Therefore, you must consider the amount of money that is needed to provide resources (such as books, worksheets and practical resources, like art supplies), equipment (including a computer) and opportunities to go on educational visits, etc.

Furthermore, it is important that your child(ren) develops socially. Therefore, it may be beneficial for them to join a club to ensure they are meeting children their own age. Most clubs require fees to be paid upon joining.

Additional costs may arise if you wish for your child(ren) to sit examinations to gain qualifications such as GCSEs and A-levels. Each exam can be taken for a fee at an exam centre. Your child would be entered for exams as a private candidate.

## **5. Consider your environment.**

Guidance states that 'home accommodation which is noisy and/or cramped is likely to make it very difficult for a child to learn and make satisfactory progress'. Therefore, you must ensure that you can provide an environment that is conducive to learning for your child(ren). If the home is not always suitable, a local library may be an alternative, more suitable setting that you could use as required.

## **6. Consider how you can support your child(ren) to develop socially.**

Social development is an essential part of growing up to be a 'citizen of modern Britain'. It is therefore important that you provide your child(ren) with ample and regular opportunities to mix with children their own age, formally and informally.

This could be through meeting up with friends previously made at school, joining an EHE group and meeting other families through the group, playing with children in the neighbourhood or joining a club.

## How to begin home educating and the council's role thereafter

### **Step 1: Tell the school**

Once you have decided to home educate your child(ren), you must inform their school. You must send the school a signed letter explaining that you wish to home educate your child(ren) and when you wish for the school to remove your child(ren) from their register/roll. The school will then inform Solihull Council of your choice. Your child must start full-time education once they reach compulsory school age. This is on 31 December, 31 March or 31 August following their fifth birthday - whichever comes first. If your child's fifth birthday is on one of those dates then they reach compulsory school age on that date. If you are choosing to electively home educate from the point at which your child becomes of statutory school age, you are currently under no obligation to let the Council know. This may change in the future as the Government continues to debate statutory registration for all EHE children. However, whilst not required, it would be helpful to inform us as we can offer information and support.

### **Step 2: Contact from Solihull Council**

A member of the Inclusion Service will be in touch to discuss your decision. There should be no significant break between the end of schooling and the provision of a good education for your child(ren) at home. Time lost in your child(ren)'s education is very difficult to recover.

Solihull Council is entitled to make informal enquiries of parents to establish what education is being provided. Parents are under no legal obligation to agree to such a meeting or to produce specific evidence but you should consider carefully the reasons for not doing so, what is in the best interests of your child, and the most sensible approach to take.

If you do not do enough to satisfy the Council about the education being provided at home, we may have no option but to conclude that the education does not meet requirements.

### **Step 3: Providing Evidence**

The Inclusion Service will want to have an informal discussion about your child(ren)'s education. You and your child(ren) may wish to show us some of the resources you have and some work that has been produced.

We are happy to discuss your child's education over the phone, email, Teams or face-to-face. To ensure staff understand your child's education and the suitability of it, it would be helpful for us to have an overview of what their education is like and for us see a small amount of work that your child had produced. You can provide us with an overview of your children's education in a variety of ways e.g. write a letter, type a document, discussion etc.

Once we have learned about the education that you are providing for your child, a decision will be made as to whether the education is suitable. This will be based upon it fulfilling a variety of factors including being full-time and efficient.

#### **Step 4: Further contact**

If we find the education being provided is suitable, we will contact you after 12 months to arrange a further visit or for you to provide evidence that your child(ren) continues to receive a suitable education at home. We will always be available for support by email or phone in the meantime.

If we find the education being provided to be unsuitable, the Council has a duty to act. However, we are committed to working with you to ensure that you can provide a suitable education that meets your child(ren)'s needs.

## **Teaching and Learning**

Teaching and learning can be most effective when a plan, do and review cycle is used. There is no expectation for you to use this, but it may be helpful.

**Plan:** Choose what you want to teach (your curriculum) and gather the resources to support learning.

**Do:** Teach the skill/knowledge and get your child(ren) to apply their learning to an activity (these can be practical or written activities).

**Review:** Check their work and understanding (e.g. marking and/or providing verbal feedback about their work) to see if you can advance learning or the learning should be repeated. You could also use mini assessments to check long-term learning; are your children learning more and remembering more over time?

## **Curriculum**

Unlike educational settings, it is **not** a statutory requirement for home educating families to teach the National Curriculum or the EYFS framework. However, they can be useful documents, especially at the start of your home education journey, along with any recent school reports – if your child has attended a school.

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 provide a valuable understanding of what your child(ren) would be learning if they were at an educational setting, so you can prepare work or plan learning experiences that are suitable to their age and ability.

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 (for those in reception and nursery) will help your child(ren) transition to school more easily as they will have learnt similar content to their peers.

As the parent and carer providing education, you have the freedom to choose what your child learns. As previously mentioned, you are not required to teach the EYFS framework or the National Curriculum but may find parts of the documents helpful. Feel free to focus learning around your child's interests or the 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 taught.

- [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 to see if it is correct. 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. Making mistakes provides opportunity to learn more!

## **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**



You should review prior learning regularly to ensure what has been taught has been remembered and thus learned. This will help you to plan what to recap and teach next. It will also help you to identify which resources and teaching styles are working best for your child(ren).

You could check your child(ren)'s progress in the following ways: mini quizzes, worksheets and tests. There are no requirements to do this but they can be a helpful tool.

### **Who can provide provision?**

Although your child(ren) may be electively home educated, this does not mean they have to remain at home for their entire education. 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). Ultimately, the education needs to be full-time (which is defined as taking up a significant proportion of the week), efficient and suitable for age, ability, aptitude and SEND needs. The following are some possible provision choices:

- Educate full-time at home yourselves
- 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 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 the learning is supported at home and additional work is being completed. Please remember that the education you provide should not isolate your child(ren). Ideally, they should have the opportunity within the week to develop socially by meeting children of a similar age.

### **Important note relating to safeguarding your child:**

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.

## **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**

SAT 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 their 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 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 which 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 websites 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.

## Support and Resources

- Inclusion Service

Email: [inclusion@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:inclusion@solihull.gov.uk)

General enquiries: 0121 704 6663

Lead Officer: Michele Sadler

- Other home educating families can be a great resource: you can share ideas, learning resources, learn from each other's experiences and support one another. You may even be able to arrange opportunities to meet up, socialise or for your child(ren) to learn within a group. You can find many EHE communities online and through social media.
- The following documents have been created to support parents and carers to provide a fulltime, efficient and suitable education. There are no expectations for the documents to be used. The document is here to support and provide ideas; only you, as the educating parent, can decide if the resources are suitable for your child(ren).

Included within this document are the following:

- Templates to support planning and timetabling
  - Hyperlinks to resources (free and fee constrained)
  - Hyperlinks to places to visit for educational purposes
  - Hyperlinks to organisations and groups that offer support to home educating families
- [Primary Planning & Resources Pack](#) (The link to this is on our webpage)
  - [Secondary Planning & Resources Pack](#) (The link to this is on our webpage)
- There is a summer school for parents, put on by Birmingham City Council, that home educating parents from Solihull are invited to join. It will provide you with the chance to meet other home educating families, learn what good teaching and learning looks like and gather practice ideas for home education. Keep an eye out for more information and the dates on this website.