

ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

Policy Statement

Barnet Local Authority (LA) recognises the conditional right of parents/carers to educate their children at home. Elective Home Education (EHE) is the term used by the Department of Education (DfE) to describe parents' decisions to provide education for their children at home instead of sending them to school. This is different to home tuition provided by a LA or education provided by a LA other than at a school.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This guidance has been developed in response to the DCSF guidance on Elective Home Education 2007. It is produced for parents who choose to home educate.
- 1.2 The purpose of these guidelines is to assist parents or carers who may be considering educating their child at home or who have already taken the decision to do so and to inform parents of the legal position and the role of the LA.
- 1.3 Throughout this guidance, 'parents' should be taken to include all those with parental responsibility, including guardians and carers. The term 'child' or 'children' refers to all children and young people who are legally required to receive an education.
- 1.4 Barnet LA is unable to offer any financial support to parents who elect to home educate.

2 The law relating to elective home education

- 2.1 The responsibility for a child's education rests with their parents. In England, education is compulsory but school is not.

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable

- to his age, ability and aptitude and
- to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'.

- 2.2 Section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996 places upon the LA a duty to satisfy itself that the education is 'efficient and suitable'. If it appears to a LA 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 an education.'

2.3 LAs also have duty under section 175(1) of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. 'A LA shall make arrangements for ensuring that their education functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.'

2.4 Section 175(1) does not give LAs powers to enter the homes of children or otherwise see children for the purpose of monitoring the provision of EHE.

3 What is a full time 'efficient' and 'suitable' education?

3.1 The length of time children should be involved in learning is not specified in law. As guidance, children in school spend between 21 and 25 hours on schoolwork for 38 weeks of the year.

3.2 An 'efficient' education is not legally defined. It has been described in case law as an education that 'achieves that which it sets out to achieve'.

3.3 It is up to parents to fulfil their duty according to a reasonable interpretation of the term. Certainly what is provided need not be the same kind of "lessons" as are provided at school; it will be up to the parent to show that the child is making appropriate progress.

3.4 'Suitable' was defined in a judicial review as 'if it 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 option in later years to adopt some other form of life.'

3.5 What is suitable for one child might not be for another, but all children should be involved in a learning process.

3.6 The LA would expect the provision to include the following characteristics:

- consistent involvement of parents/carers
- recognition of the child's needs, attitudes and aspirations
- opportunities for the child to be stimulated by their learning experiences
- access to resources/materials required to provide home education such as paper and pens, books and libraries, arts and craft materials, physical activity, ICT and appropriate social interaction with peers and other adults.

4 What should parents do if they elect to home educate?

4.1 If your child is below compulsory school age, you do not need to inform the LA. However, our intention is to be supportive and to work in partnership and we would be grateful if you would let us know.

4.2 If your child is on the roll of a mainstream school, you must inform the headteacher in writing of your intention to withdraw your child from school in order to educate him/her 'otherwise than at school'.

- 4.3 The school will delete your child's name from the register and inform the LA.
- 4.4 If your child has a statement of special educational needs or an education health care plan and attends a mainstream school, you must also inform the Special Educational Needs Team senadmin@barnet.gov.uk.
- 4.5 If your child has a statement of special educational needs or an education health care plan and attends a special school, permission is required from the LA before a child's name can be removed from the school register. The school should inform parents of the legal position and inform the relevant LA. The LA will need to reassure itself, in consultation with parents, that the proposed arrangements for elective home education are likely to provide a suitable and efficient education which meets the child's special educational needs. Once this has been established, the statement/EHCP will be amended.
- 4.6 A school must not seek to persuade parents to educate their child at home as a way of avoiding an exclusion or because the child has a record of poor attendance.
- 4.7 If there are problems with school, we would encourage parents to contact the LA before asking for their child's name 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.

5 What will the LA do?

- 5.1 When the LA first becomes aware that parents have elected to home educate, the child's name will be added to the Elective Home Education register.
- 5.2 The EHE advisory teacher will contact the parents to suggest an initial meeting to discuss what education provision has been made and what might be expected from the LA.
- 5.3 Many families find a home visit helpful but some parents may wish to meet at another venue. If this is not considered a suitable approach, an alternative method of communication will be agreed upon.
- 5.4 The legal duty of LAs is concerned only with children who appear not to be receiving a suitable education. However, case law (Philips v Brown (unreported) 20 June 1980) established that a LA may make informal enquiries of parent who are educating their children at home. '...parents will be under no duty to comply however it would be sensible for them to do so.'
- 5.5 Although the LA has no statutory duty to monitor the quality of the home education on a routine basis, the LA will contact parents annually to request up to date information.
- 5.6 Where the education is deemed to be unsuitable, the LA will write to the parents to request further information and to highlight improvements that might be made. If, following a further visit, it is still deemed to be unsuitable, the LA will make a referral to the Education Welfare Team (EWT).

5.7 The EWT may begin the process of serving a School Attendance Order requiring the parents to send their child to school. This could only be revoked if parents present evidence to the LA that a suitable education is being provided.

6 Special Educational Needs (SEN)

6.1 Children with SEN may be educated at home whether or not they have a statement or an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP).

6.2 While a statement of SEN/EHCP remains in force the LA has a duty to review it annually.

6.3 If a parent believes their child to have a SEN they can request an assessment by an educational psychologist by contacting the educational psychology team in the LA.

7 Conclusion

7.1 The LA is committed to a successful education for all children and recognise that elective home education can work well for some children. If, after careful consideration, parents decide to educate at home, we hope that proves to be a happy and constructive experience. The LA is not able to provide teaching support or detailed curriculum plans, but will offer encouragement and advice.

7.2 If at any time parents decide that elective home education is no longer suitable, the LA will offer support in finding a school place.

8 Complaints

8.2 Any concerns should in the first instance be taken to the Officer for Elective Home Education - Mary Helmore mary.helmore@barnet.gov.uk

8.3 If concerns still remain, parents are able to make a complaint to the Local Authority. Information on the Local Authority complaints process can be found on the LA website www.barnet.gov.uk or by contacting the Complaints Officer childrens.service.complaints@barnet.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Useful contacts:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)

1C Aberdeen Studios
22 Highbury Grove
London
N5 2DQ
Tel: 0808 800 5793 (advice line)
Tel: 0808 800 0327 (exclusion advice line)
www.ace-ed.org.uk

- ACE is an independent information and advice service for parents/carers of children age 5-16 in state-funded education in England and Wales. ACE can give information on a wide range of issues including exclusion, admissions, special educational needs, bullying and attendance.

Education Otherwise

PO Box 3761
Swindon
SN2 9GT

Helpline: 0845 478 6345
www.education-otherwise.net

- Education Otherwise give support and information to families whose children are being educated out of school or who are considering home-based education. There are local groups, individual contacts and information leaflets.

Oxford Home Schooling

Oxford Open Learning
4 Kings Meadow
Oxford
OX2 0DP

Tel: 0800 0111 024
<http://www.oxfordhomeschooling.co.uk/contact/>

- Oxford Home Schooling provides Home education courses & Home schooling resources covering a range of Qualifications in Key stage 3, GCSE IGCSE & A level

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 Homeschooling

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 of England.

National Association of Gifted Children (NAGC)

Tel: 0845 450 0295

www.nagcbrtain.org.uk

Bullying UK

www.bullying.co.uk

Bullying UK offers advice and 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 organization, offering a wide range of information for parents, **dyslexic** adults and teachers, with details of the international conferences it organizes,

[Parent Partnership Barnet](#)

Parent Partnership offers free, confidential, impartial information, guidance, advice and support for parents/carers of children with special and additional needs.

Examination boards

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

Appendix 2

Some websites that families have found useful for resources:

General

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.crickweb.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.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/maths/timestable/>

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

Geography

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

Science

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

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

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.htm

www.codeacademy.com

Internet Safety

BBC – www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/topics/safety-and-privacy

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>

Appendix 3

Frequently asked questions

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 attend school. However, for a variety of reasons, a small minority of parent decide to take on the duty to educate their child/children themselves, that is to 'educate at home'.

What are the responsibilities of the parents/carers?

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that:

'It shall be the duty of the parent of every child of compulsory school age to cause her/him to receive efficient full-time education suitable to her/his age, ability and aptitude (and to any special educational needs s/he may have) either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'.

What is the local authority's duty under the 1996 Education Act?

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.

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 16. 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.

What is full-time education?

The length of time children should be involved in learning is not specified in law. As guidance, children in school spend between 22 and 25 hours on schoolwork for 38 weeks of the year.

What is efficient education?

This is not legally defined. It is up to parents to fulfil their duty according to a reasonable interpretation of the term. What is provided does not need to be the same kind of lessons as are provided in school. It will be up to the parent to show that the child is making appropriate progress.

Do I need to be a trained teacher to educate my child at home?

You do not need to have formal qualifications or be a teacher to educate your child at home. Qualities such as patience, enthusiasm and flexibility are invaluable.

What happens if I do not inform the local authority of provision for education or the local authority is not satisfied with the provision?

The LA has a legal duty to satisfy itself that suitable provision is being made. A refusal to provide evidence may lead to the local authority taking steps to return a child to school. However, the local authority would first wish to take all reasonable steps to work together with parents.

Where the local authority is not satisfied that the parents are meeting legal requirements, parents will be given this information in writing and a reasonable period of time will be allowed to improve the situation. Again if the provision does not improve then this may lead to the local authority taking steps to return a child to school. However, we would hope to reach agreed improvements by detailed discussion with parents and will make all reasonable efforts to do so.

If your child has never attended a school there is no legal requirement to inform the local authority.

What if my child has special educational needs?

Children with special educational needs may be educated at home whether or not they have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). If your child has a Statement or EHCP and is attending a mainstream school you do not need permission from the local authority to take your child off roll. If your child is attending a special school, then permission must be sought. The local authority will then contact you to ask for some information.

If your child is educated at home and you believe s/he may require a formal assessment of his/her special educational needs, you can request this from the local authority.

Does the local authority help financially in any way?

If a parent/carer elects to home educate, they assume financial responsibility for their child's education including the cost of public examinations.

Who can help?

There are number of independent and support agencies. Appendix 1 provides information about some contacts that may be helpful.

Appendix 4

Registration form and statement of provision (can also be completed on line
http://www.barnet.gov.uk/info/930049/home_schooling/335/home_schooling)

Elective Home Education Registration Form

<p><u>Family surname:</u></p> <p>-----</p> <p><u>Parent/Carers' names:</u></p> <p>-----</p> <p>-----</p> <p><u>Home language(s):</u></p> <p>-----</p> <p>-----</p>	<p><u>Children's Names:</u></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 20%;">Name</th> <th style="width: 10%;">Date of birth</th> <th style="width: 10%;">Year</th> <th style="width: 10%;">Gender</th> <th style="width: 10%;">Ethnicity</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Name	Date of birth	Year	Gender	Ethnicity																									
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<p><u>Home address:</u></p> <p>-----</p> <p>-----</p> <p><u>Postcode:</u> -----</p>	<p><u>Telephone contact details:</u></p> <p>Home: -----</p> <p>Work: -----</p> <p>Mobile: -----</p> <p>e-mail: -----</p>																														
<p><u>Previous school(s):</u></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 20%;">Child's name</th> <th style="width: 20%;">School</th> <th style="width: 20%;">Local authority</th> <th style="width: 20%;">Date withdrawn</th> <th style="width: 20%;">Details of any Special Educational Needs/Statement</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>		Child's name	School	Local authority	Date withdrawn	Details of any Special Educational Needs/Statement																									
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<p><u>Reason why child/children withdrawn from school roll:</u></p> 	<p><u>Reasons for electing to home educate:</u></p> 																														

Completed by **Parent/Carer** **Date.....**

Please return this form to Elective Home Education, High Incidence Support Team, Children's Service, The London Borough of Barnet, Building 4, North London Business Park, Oakleigh Road South, London N11 1NP

Elective Home Education – Statement of Provision

Child Name		D.O.B	
Address			
Parent / Carer Name(s)		Position	
		Position	
Date of Statement		Received via	Visit <input type="checkbox"/> Post <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Fax <input type="checkbox"/>

Philosophy, Ethos & Structure

*How is your child educated? Is there a time table? Is the environment autonomous?
How are your child's needs responded to?*

Learning Opportunities & Experiences

What is being offered?

Involvement in Activities

What choices are offered? What is taken up?

Personal & Social Development

Opportunities to interact with peers and adults

Any other comments

Completed by: **Parent/Carer**

Date:

