

Elective Home Education GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

This information is to support parents or carers who elect to educate their children at home and to explain Camden Local Authority's (LA) procedures. Elective home education can also be known as education otherwise. However education otherwise can also be used to describe other forms of education, we feel that Elective Home Education best describes the commitment and effort that many parents make to educating their children.

Legal Requirements

Education for all children in the United Kingdom is compulsory; attendance at a school is not. Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states "it shall be the duty of the parent of every child of compulsory school age to cause him to receive efficient full time education suitable to his age, ability, and aptitude, [and to any special needs he may have] either by regular attendance at school or otherwise." To be considered efficient, a child (ren)'s alternative or home education need not be the same as that a child would receive at school, but it must convince a reasonable person that the education is appropriate for the child (ren) needs.

When a child has special educational needs, there is a legal requirement to meet the child's special education needs. Guidance will be given in the child (ren)'s statement of Special Educational Needs where appropriate your child's needs will be reviewed annually by SEN team.

The pupils can be educated at home by their parents, by tutors provided by their parents, at an education establishment or a group formed by like minded parents or indeed any combination of these. There seems to be no limit to the varieties and combinations used. During this time the responsibility for the education of the young person lies directly with the parent or guardian. All equipment, books and fees are their responsibility; there is no funding from the local authority. The exception may be where the LA supports Special Education Needs arrangements and where alternative provision has been agreed by the LA.

What Constitutes Good Practice?

Commonsense dictates that young people need to be educated to enter the environment in which they will be living when they grow up.

There is no obligation on the part of families to follow the National Curriculum or any of its testing procedures. Some families Home Educating use the National Curriculum in some form or another and a few also follow the International Baccalaureate curriculum.

Some families follow their own "home made" curriculum using The Net and a compendium of published resources, but experience has shown that as the children get older and they may move to more formal qualifications and learning then the planning may have to become more structured but this should not lessen the learning experience and the involvement of the parent.

As a parent you do not have to be a subject specialist in order to facilitate your child's learning in a particular area. There are many publishers, providing textbooks and workbooks following both the National Curriculum and other subjects— especially in the three Core subjects – English, science and mathematics. These provide continuity and the step by step progression.

One of the advantages of Home Education is that families can move their children along the curriculum at a pace to individually suit the child. They can forge ahead on subjects where they have strengths, and consolidate with parallel material in areas that present difficulties.

WORKBOOKS

There are a variety of workbooks available from book shops and available to order online.

They can be a very effective means of delivering subjects.

- Parents and tutors often use them to bolster the exam results of pupils in mainstream schools.
- They are very clearly targeted to age groups
- They can help to ensure that the child receives a comprehensive foundation in any particular subject.

TEXTBOOKS/REVISION GUIDES/STUDY GUIDES/CLASSBOOKS

As children get older it can be more difficult, especially in subjects such as mathematics, for parents to get on top of actually facilitating learning in a particular subject. Workbooks in and of themselves can provide valuable practice the use of a good textbook or classbook can be helpful in explaining the subject.

In order to find a good textbook it maybe helpful to looks at the publisher's website of a work book the parent or child particularly likes

Experience has shown that using the Index of these publications effectively is a good way of planning. For instance some work books or study guides, especially in subjects such as mathematics, organise the work in chapters. Within each chapter the work can be organised in degree of difficulty – easiest first.

Therefore, for instance, a student can be ploughing through the first chapter – perhaps number – and getting slower and slower as the work gets progressively more difficult. If the first one or two sections from each chapter were approached in turn before returning to the first chapter then the work would be uniformly progressive, more interesting, and, most importantly of all the student is more likely to meet with greater success. Remember for example a KS3 workbook covers three years of study, Years 7, 8 & 9 –plenty of time to develop skills and experiences.

HOW YOU MAY PLAN THE WORK

In order to best support the learning of a young person it is a good idea to have a happy medium between an overly structured approach (which may put the young person off learning) and a totally hands off approach (which maybe too chaotic and effectively lead to very little learning taking place. There may be a tiny percentage of mature students that can totally lead their own education, but the vast majority of young people need and enjoy their work being structured and corrected at regular intervals. Without this stimulus they may drift.

Modern publications have the answers in the back!

AS THEY GET OLDER

Experience has shown that when the young person gets towards Year 10 (15 years or older), families need to think to the future.

There is a growing tendency to wish for entry into formal education at either Sixth Form Level or Post 16 Colleges.

In Camden entry for “A” level Courses without GCSE Grades seems difficult if not impossible. Entry for an NVQ may be slightly easier.

Experience has shown that obtaining a prospectus two years before entry (when the child is 14 years old) is good practice, as knowing what is required for entry at this point means the parent and the child can plan effectively.

Before apply for a place in a sixth form or post 16 college we recommend the parent writes to the Principal or Head of Faculty to ask what the requirement are to allow their particular child to enrol. This is because there maybe minimum qualification requirements. The Home Education Advisor maybe able to provide a reference for the child which may assist with their enrolment.

There are a number of private colleges that offer tuition and or exam only facilities (GCSE) for Home Educators. There is a cost for exams. Parents can search for these online using a key word search such as “colleges” and “private candidates”.

There are Correspondence or Tutorial organisations that offer complete packages of courses leading to the sitting of GCSE’s. These have a high success rate – but can be expensive. Parents can search for these online using a key word search such as “correspondence courses” and “tutorial colleges”.

Camden’s Connexion service is available to offer advice and support for pupils on education course, training courses, colleges and employment opportunities. Contact details are listed at the end of this document.

THE DUTIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

It is the responsibility of the Local Authority where the child lives to intervene where it appears to them that a suitable education is not taking place.

Once a family have confirmed in writing to the school where the pupil is enrolled that the child is to be home educated, the school will remove them from its roll. The school will then inform the Education Welfare Service who will ask the Home Education Advisor to contact the family during term time.

Current practice is to make contact sooner rather than later, in order to build in a time during which plans for the development of the curriculum can be discussed.

If the contact occurs too early in Home Education then it is unreasonable to expect much to be up and running. Conversely, if there is too much of a time lapse, then families struggling with their child's home education could become frustrated.

There is no duty to offer advice to families, but Camden's current practice is offer advice and support where requested. The Home Education Advisor will make contact with the family and they are able to offer if required a visit of approximately one-hour, or longer either, to your home or the place where education is taking place. During the agreed visit the Home Education Advisor may ask to talk to your child (ren) and look at any records or plans of the education, although you are under no obligation to comply with this request. We are happy for a friend of the family to be present during a visit.

We recognise that effective education can vary greatly, especially in the support material used by families. Therefore any advice and support will be based on what has worked well for other families Home Educating in Camden.

CURRICULUM RECCOMENDATIONS

Children normally attend school for between 22 – 25 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year. However, this measurement of "contact time" is not relevant to elective home education where there is often almost continuous one to one contact and education may take place outside normal "school hours". Camden suggests the equivalent of three hours teaching time a day, for 200 days per year is ample time for providing a suitable education using formal means. The following features we suggest are one way of providing a suitable education and can help parents demonstrate the suitability of the education they are providing. There is no formal requirement to use these suggestions; they are examples of good practice observed by our advisor. There are other methods of providing a suitable education.

Suggested features of a suitable education

One way of showing that evidence of planning, monitoring and achievement is to show the **WORK COMPLETED BY THE PUPIL**. For instance a family may store written work on the three core subjects in three individual ring binders. All work would be **DATED** within the last 12 months with correction where necessary. Any workbooks or textbooks can be placed alongside. A reading record is excellent practice, but production of recent texts read by the pupil will suffice, especially if supported in a general discussion on likes and dislikes regarding reading matter. Reading material does not always have to include fiction, as there are many who read illustrated reference/interest books containing much in the way of sophisticated vocabulary.

Work in other subjects can be stored in a similar fashion.

Other features of suggested successful practice are listed below.

- ❑ **Regular planning**
(of a variety of activities and tasks appropriate to the age, ability and aptitudes of the child)
- ❑ **Keeping records**
(the best records of academic work is just the work itself)
- ❑ **Facilitating learning (can include teaching)**
(listening, helping, asking questions, and encouraging progress as well as setting work)
- ❑ **Regular marking**
(correcting mistakes, giving feedback on how work can be improved, celebrating achievements, keeping a record of progress for example ticking the indexes at the back of the textbooks)
- ❑ **A range of resources and equipment**
(for example books, materials, paints, educational games and puzzles, TV, computer, plus things normally available in the home: kitchen utensils for cooking, tools for working with wood, gardening, etc.)
- ❑ **Suitable space to work**
- ❑ **Regular use of local facilities and amenities.**
(such as libraries, museums, galleries, sports facilities, parks.)
- ❑ **Opportunities for regular physical exercise**
- ❑ **Opportunities for the child to mix socially with other children of similar age.**

Outcome of a visit

As a result of the contact and or visit, the Home Education Advisor will decide if there is any cause for concern about the suitability of the education being provided. A report will be produced describing the education provided and outlining any concerns the Home Education Advisor may have. If there are no concerns that the education is not suitable to the age, ability and aptitude of your child (taking into account any special needs they may have) confirmation of this will be passed to the Education Welfare Service. The Home Education Advisor will, of course, be happy to offer further advice and support should it be requested. Camden will routinely re-visit all cases annually. There is no requirement to do this but it enables parents to discuss changing priorities as children get older.

Sometimes, the education is considered to contain satisfactory elements but with concerns about certain aspects. The Home Education Adviser may also have reason to believe that the family have the potential to improve the provision using the advice and support given during the contact or the visit and summarised in the subsequent report.

If this is the case arrangements will be made to make contact with or revisit the family again in approximately three to six months. The nature of these concerns will be clearly explained to parents and carers and advice and support given where appropriate.

Occasionally the Home Education Advisor will have serious concerns about the suitability of the education provided. In this case a formal procedure under the Section 437 Education Act 1996 will be undertaken. This may lead to a referral by the Home Education Advisor to the Education Welfare Service.

If at any time you decide that you would like your child to enter full time education you should contact the Camden LA Admissions Officers on 020 7974 1625.

Safeguarding and child protection

The local authority has a duty to safeguard the welfare of all children within the borough. Child protection issues may arise in relation to elected home education and where appropriate referrals will be made to Safeguarding and Social Care (Social Services). Referrals will be discussed with parents before they are made except if it is felt that to do so would put the child at further risk of harm.

Where a parent does not engage with the Education Welfare Service within a calendar month of attempts to contact the family then a discussion will be held with the Education Welfare Service manager and where appropriate a referral will be made to Family Services and Social Work (Children's Social Services) to follow up. Where there have been previous child protection concerns this referral may be made earlier after discussion with the Education Welfare Service manager and the duty social worker.

Letter to prove elective home education

Attendance is a key priority for Camden and we are aware that many parents and children who are educated at home are stopped when we carry out truancy patrols and they may be asked by other people why their child is not in school.

Camden Education Welfare Service has a letter we can provide parents and pupils which can be produced to confirm that home education is being carried out. If you would like a copy of this letter please email donna.dean@camden.gov.uk or ed.magee@camden.gov.uk with your child's name, date of birth and address and we will be pleased to issue the letter.

Immunisation

Pupils in Camden schools are able to receive vaccinations at various times in their lives. Home Education pupils may miss out on these vaccinations so we have included the following advice in our guidance for parents as a reminder.

There are two vaccinations available to your child during their teenage years: The school leavers' booster, which is the fifth and final dose of the course of diphtheria, tetanus and polio vaccine and the HPV vaccination which protects against cervical cancer. Diphtheria, tetanus and polio are serious diseases which can kill. The fifth and final dose of vaccination is given between the ages of 13 and 15 and completion of the course is essential for full protection against these diseases. Your child can receive the vaccination after the age of 15 at their GP practice. You need 3 HPV vaccinations over six months to complete the course. Both of these vaccinations are normally given at school.

The teenage years also offer an opportunity to catch up on any pre-school vaccinations that have been missed. The MMR (measles, mumps & rubella) vaccination is the safest way to protect your children against measles, mumps and rubella, all of which can lead to serious complications for those infected. If a person is immuno-compromised in some way (e.g. those receiving chemotherapy or organ transplant patients), then they cannot receive the MMR vaccination. These people will be automatically protected against these diseases if 95% of the population is vaccinated, as this will achieve herd immunity. Herd immunity means that there is sufficient vaccination in the population such that the disease is prevented from circulating. All children should have had 2 MMR vaccinations by the time they are 3 years and 4 months. If your child has only had one MMR or has had none, then this vaccination is also available.

To ensure your child does not miss out, please make an appointment at your GP for the school leavers' booster and MMR vaccination (if necessary) and call Carol Howard on 0203 317 3663 for an appointment at NHS Camden's Immunisations Community Clinic (monthly at Kentish Town Health Centre) for the HPV vaccine.

For more information, please contact your GP or alternatively, Patricia Stephens, NHS Camden's Immunisations Nurse Specialist on 0203 317 3716. You can also visit www.immunisation.nhs.uk

The Education Welfare Service can be contacted at:

**Crowndale Centre
218 Eversholt Street
London
NW1 1BD**

**Tel: 020 7974 7162
Fax: 020 7974 5228**

Ed Magee
Service Manager
Education Welfare Service
ed.magee@camden.gov.uk

Resources last updated November 2011

Resources (last updated November 2011)

Information about Elective Home Education on the internet

There are many websites devoted to and offering advice about elective home education. These are a selection of some of them. The websites were correct as of the date the policy was reviewed. However some websites do change from time to time and it may be more appropriate to do a search via a search engine such as Google or Yahoo.

The inclusion of an organisation is not with any endorsement; it is merely a resource that exists. You should talk with the individual organisations to see if they will be able to provide the service / support you or your child needs.

In many cases you will need to search within the site to look for the information, common words to search for are “home education”, “education otherwise” or “elective home education”

You may also be re-directed to other websites which give additional information.

Websites you may like to look at are:

Department for Education (formally the Children School and Families - DCSF and the Department for Education and Skills - DFES)

www.education.gov.uk

Has guidance on home education.

Support Organisations / websites

Adventures With Education

Adventures With Education is an unincorporated voluntary association supporting home educating families. AWE is a Hackney based group although we support families throughout London. It is an informal support group for home-educating families and not a supplementary school

It is a self funding group providing regular meetings, trips, workshops and residential holidays for members. It relies on parental input to make the group work. As well as various ‘one off ‘ workshops, it has regular structured sessions taking place weekly, bi-weekly and monthly. Examples of regular activities include; Book club, Awe-chestra, story time, ‘the great debate’, French, arts and crafts, science

It meets every **Tuesday** during term time 11AM- 3PM in **Kid’s Adventure Playground Spring Lane Big Hill Clapton E5 9HQ**

<http://awe.gn.apc.org>

Education Otherwise is a self-help organisation run by and for families who are interested in home-based education. They can be contacted by post only at:

Education Otherwise
PO Box 3761
Swindon,
SN2 9GT

If writing it would be helpful to enclose a stamped addressed envelope with your enquiry.

HELPLINE: 0845 478 6345. Call charges will apply to this number and phone operator costs may vary if phoning from a mobile.

www.education-otherwise.net

Edyourself

<http://edyourself.org>

A website set up by Fiona Nicholson a Home Education Consultant.

Home Education Advisory Service

www.heas.org.uk

The Otherwise Club

Contact by post only:

1 Croxley Road London W9 3HH

Provides regular social interaction for families to exchange views and ideas, workshops and group activities for members – annual membership applies.

Exam boards - search under private candidates

AQA

www.aqa.org.uk

Edexcel

www.edexcel.org.uk

OCR

www.ocr.org.uk

International Baccalaureate

www.ibo.org

Connexions – national website

www.connexions-direct.com

Connexions in Camden

78 Parkway,

Camden
London
NW1 7AN
020 7482 3996

<http://home-ed.info/gcse.htm> - advice on correspondence courses for GCSE

Websites about phonics

- BBC Phonics Year 2 which looked promising and BBC Schools.
- There are BBC Bitesize sites too. The list is endless – one just has to choose carefully rather than dabble in too many. This material is often free.

The following 4 sites are used by a practising teacher.

- Primaryresources.co.uk
- Firstschoolyears.com
- Crickweb.co.uk
- Coxhoe.durham.sch.uk

There has been so much emphasis on raising standards in KS1 and 2 by examinations and targets that the Net contains overwhelming quantities of free information. For instance type in Literacy Strategy or Numeracy Strategy and see what comes up! The full curriculum is there