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## Addresses for contact:

### Elective Home Education Co-ordinator/Visitor

Telephone (01225) 394454  
Bath & North East Somerset Council  
Education Inclusion Service  
Lewis House  
Manvers Street  
Bath  
BA1 1JG

### Education Otherwise *[enclose A5 stamped addressed envelope]*

PO Box 3761  
Swindon  
SN2 9GT

Helpline Number: 0845 4786345

General Enquiries: [enquiries@education-otherwise.org](mailto:enquiries@education-otherwise.org)

### Independent Panel for Special Education Advice

IPSEA  
4 Ancient House Mews  
Woodbridge  
Suffolk  
IP12 1DH

Mon – Thurs 10:00 am – 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Telephone: (01394) 382814

### Useful Websites:-

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

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

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

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# Education Inclusion Service



# ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

Information for parents who are considering  
educating their children at home

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## Parents Right of Choice

This booklet has been written to help explain to you what may be involved if you decide to educate your child outside the school system. It includes some of the legal aspects and explains some of the situations which you may encounter.

### Education Act 1996, Section 7 states:

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

For most children this means they usually attend their local school, but for some the parents decide to take on the responsibility for their education outside of the school system, i.e. educate them “**otherwise**” than at school.

The Local Authority (LA) is not required to investigate education “otherwise” unless they have reason to believe that an adequate education is not taking place. Where there are concerns about a “suitable education” the LA may make formal enquiries of parent/carers. You are not obliged to co-operate but we recommend that you do.

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## Returning to school



After a period of educating your child at home you may decide to seek readmission to school perhaps because you wish him/her to study for external examinations and receive specialist teaching. If you have any worries or need advice and support on how best to organise a return to school, the Elective Home Education Co-ordinator or Elective Home Education Visitor will be able to support you.

The contact number is on the last page of this leaflet.

For some parents the experience of educating your child at home is positive and rewarding, but for others it is not.

**Please do not underestimate the amount of work this will involve for you as the prime educator.**

*Finally, if you have decided that home education is the best solution for your child, may we wish you every success.*



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## How often do visits occur?

We hope to visit every family within the first 6 months of opting for home education and to have regular 12 monthly visits from then on. The purpose of the visit and contact is to complement your parental plans for education by offering information and support. An earlier visit can be arranged if parents request it or if the Local Authority believes it to be necessary. If there are any concerns over the education being provided more frequent contact may be necessary.

## Points to note

Educating your child at home is a big responsibility which will require a major commitment in time and enthusiasm on your behalf. It is important to prepare well in advance so that you are able to feel confident about meeting the financial implications of educating at home. You will need to consider ways of ensuring your child does not become isolated as social interaction is vitally important to your child's development. Involvement in activities and team experiences and learning to share with and help others are, in our opinion, some of the real benefits of school life.

Deciding to educate your child at home may not be in your child's best interest particularly if it is as a direct result of a disagreement with the school at which your child is currently registered. In the first instance we would advise you to talk to school staff or the Children Missing Education Service in an

**If your child is reluctant to attend school, educating your child at home is not necessarily the best solution. If this situation arises we would advise you to consult the Headteacher or the Children Missing Education Service.**

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## Some Terms Explained

### Compulsory School Age

#### Starting School

Children whose 5<sup>th</sup> birthday falls before 1<sup>st</sup> September, 1<sup>st</sup> January or 1<sup>st</sup> April become of compulsory school age on whichever of these dates follows their fifth birthday.

#### Leaving School

For children whose 16<sup>th</sup> birthday falls between September 1<sup>st</sup> and August 31<sup>st</sup> the school leaving date is the last Friday in June.

#### Efficient Education

This is defined as education which achieves its stated aims.

#### Suitable Education

This is defined as education which enables children to achieve their potential and prepares them for life in a modern civilised society.

#### Full-Time

The Act does not state how many hours equate to full-time. Children attending school normally spend between 21 and 24 hours a week on work plus any extra time for homework.

## Special Educational Needs

**If your child has special educational needs he/she may be the subject of a Statement of Special Educational Needs. If this is so you must make the provisions as set out in Part 3 of your child's Statement. If you decide to withdraw your child from the school named in the statement, you will need to discuss this beforehand with the LA. The annual review of the statement would usually take place wherever your child is being educated. It is the LA's responsibility to be satisfied that appropriate provision is being made to meet your child's special educational needs.**

**The LA will make informal enquiries if they have reasons to believe that your child is not receiving an appropriate education as set out in Part 3. Part 4 should state that you are educating your child at home or outside of England Wales. Under section 319 of the Education Act 1996 the LA may arrange for your child's provision to be made other than at school.**

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## Otherwise

**The law does not clearly explain this phrase but it is taken to mean being taught at home by parents or teachers or elsewhere, e.g. in a college and not at school.**

### Who do I Contact?

You only need to contact the LA when your child is of compulsory school age. If your child is of compulsory school age and is registered at a Bath & North East Somerset school you must write to the school saying that you intend to educate your child at home and the date this education will start. Please could you include your child's name, date of birth and the school at which he/she is registered? You may also choose to inform the LA at this stage.

If you move into Bath and North East Somerset and your child is already being educated at home you should write to the LA giving your child's name, date of birth and previous address.

### What happens next?

In all cases you will receive an acknowledgement and a form to complete inviting you to share how you intend to educate your child at home. You are asked to return this information to the Elective Home Education Co-ordinator within 20 days.

The LA has the responsibility of ensuring that all children of compulsory school age and living in the Bath & North East Somerset area are receiving an efficient full-time education.

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## Elective Home Education Visitor

Once your information has been shared an LA officer will offer to visit you at home to assist you in your role as educator. In order to provide information and support you may be asked to make examples of your child's work available.

Although the LA will not usually provide books or other equipment you may need, we would be happy to discuss any areas of concern that you may have and offer advice and guidance.

### What happens after the visit?

We will write a report on the visit and indicate, in our judgement, whether the education you are providing

- a. *meets the requirements to provide an efficient, suitable full time education;*
- b. *appears to be in breach of these requirements.*

You will receive a copy of this report. We are aware that many parents like to receive a report about the education they are providing as it helps to confirm their education provision is suitable & remove any anxiety about being an educator.

If the report indicates **b)** you will be given information about what it is that does not satisfy and given 6 weeks to address the issues. A follow up visit will then be arranged and if, after this visit, the situation has not improved satisfactorily we may consider a School Attendance Order which will require your child to attend a named school. You need to be aware that failure to comply with such an order is an offence.

We would wish to do everything possible to prevent such serious action being taken but must stress that we have the responsibility to ensure that all children are receiving the efficient and suitable education to which they are entitled.

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