Havering
Elective Home
Education Service

Guidance for Parents
Elective Home Education is education provided other than at school, usually by parents teaching their own children at home. You do not need to be a teacher or have any other special qualifications to be a home educator.

This guide aims to provide information for parents and carers on:
- the legal position on educating children,
- the processes involved, and
- highlight some of the support that is on offer should you wish to receive it.

Can I educate my child at home?

Parents have a responsibility to provide an education for their children. Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 gives parents the legal right to educate their child at home:

‘The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable
   a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and
   b) to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.’

Parents/carers sometimes decide to home educate for a variety of reasons, which may include:
- Distance or access to a local school
- Religious or cultural beliefs
- Philosophical or ideological views
- Special Educational Needs
- Dissatisfaction with school system
- Parents’ desire for closer relationship with their children
- Short-term intervention for a particular reason, e.g. child’s unwillingness or inability to attend school
- Bullying

What is the difference between elective home education and home tuition?
Who within the local authority can offer support to home educators?

We, at the Elective Home Education Service and the London Borough of Havering, Learning and Achievement Service offer advice and helpful support to those who wish to home educate their children. Our Service works with parents to ensure your children have the best possible opportunity for learning during their period of home education.

It is the duty of parents to ensure that the education provided is efficient and full time. Parents are also under a duty to ensure that the education is suitable to the child’s age, ability and aptitude. The Elective Home Education Service will provide parents with the opportunity to show evidence of their child’s home learning experience and continuing educational progress. The London Borough of Havering does not have a statutory duty in relation to monitoring the quality of home education on a routine basis but has the statutory power to intervene if it appears that parents are not providing a suitable education.

What is an “efficient and suitable education”?

An interpretation by the courts of these words in the Education Act 1996 is that the education should prepare a child for life in the modern society and enable them to make progress towards their potential.

Do I need to follow the National Curriculum or a formal timetable?

No, as home educators you are allowed to educate your children in the way you think most appropriate. You are not required to follow the National Curriculum nor do your children have to sit examinations. You do not have to have a timetable or set hours during which education will take place, nor do you have to employ a qualified tutor to deliver tuition, although, of course, you are welcome to do any or all of these. You may, however, find the National Curriculum a useful basis around which to plan your child’s programme of study. Copies of the National Curriculum are available from the Department of Education on their website www.education.gov.uk.

When deciding how much time to devote to your child’s education you may find it useful to know that the Department of Education recommends the following weekly teaching hours:

- 21 hours for 5-7 year olds
- 23.5 hours for 8-11 year olds
- 24 hours for 12-16 year olds

You will want to consider how the education you provide will help your child to develop:
- communication skills
- observation and awareness skills
- problem solving skills
- creative and imaginative skills
- literacy skills
- numerical skills
- physical skills
- personal and social care skills

Who can I contact if I am considering elective home education?

If your child is currently in school

You can speak to your child’s class teacher or Head of Year and

OR

Contact the Elective Home Education Service on 01708 433177

If your child has never been enrolled at school

Contact the Elective Home Education Service on 01708 433177
Who do I have to notify, when opting for elective home education?

**If your child is currently or has previously been attending school**

You must notify your child’s Head teacher in writing that you wish to withdraw your child from the school register.

The school will then notify Havering Learning and Achievement Service within two weeks.

**OR**

If your child has never attended school

Please notify the Elective Home Education Team

**PLEASE NOTE**

If your child attends Special School, you need permission from the local authority to Home Educate and ensure you can otherwise cater for his/her special needs.

Can my child still take exams?

Your child may wish to have the opportunity to take formal examinations. If they intend to undertake GCSE or IGCSE (International GCSE) examinations for example, this will affect the work which you plan to undertake together. A list of current addresses of commonly used examination boards is given in the ‘Useful Contact Details’ on page 12 of this booklet. Having identified the examination board and subject(s), you will need to obtain the syllabus of work to be followed for each course in sufficient time to be able to complete the programme of study. When contacting the examination boards ask for the section dealing with ‘Private Candidates.’ All this can be done successfully but it does take time. If you decide on this course of action there are distance learning providers who may be able to assist you, but we would strongly recommend you check the total charges for using these providers.

What if my child has a learning difficulty or a disability?

Parents’ right to educate their child at home applies equally where a child has a special educational need (SEN). This right is irrespective of whether the child has a statement of SEN or Education Health Care Plan or not. However, where a child has a statement of SEN or Education Health Care Plan and is home educated, it remains the local authority’s duty to ensure that the child’s needs are met.

The following passages are helpful guidance published in the “Home Educated Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) – Guidance Letter” February 2010.

“9. Where the parents of a child with a statement or Education Health Care Plan take him or her out of school to home educate the statement or Education Health Care Plan must remain in force. The local authority must assure itself that the provision that the
parents make is suitable, including that it is suitable for the child’s special educational needs. If the provision the parents make does meet the child’s SEN and is suitable to the child’s age, ability and aptitude then the local authority is absolved of its responsibility to arrange the special educational provision set out on the statement or Education Health Care Plan and, under section 324 (4A) of the Education Act 1996, the name of a school no longer has to be specified in Part 4 of the statement. Part 4 will be amended to state the type of school the local authority considers appropriate but go on to say the ‘parents have made their own arrangements under section 7 of the Education Act 1996’.

10. If, on the other hand, the provision made by the parents is not suitable and does not meet the child’s special educational needs then the local authority is not absolved of its responsibility to arrange the provision in the statement or Education Health Care Plan.

12. Where a local authority decides that the provision parents are making for a child with a statement or Education Health Care Plan is suitable its duty to review the statement or Education Health Care Plan at least annually continues. Both at the time parents start home educating a child with a statement or Education Health Care Plan who has previously been attending school and at the time of subsequent annual reviews the local authority must be able to assess the suitability of the provision that is being made for the child. If the local authority is denied access to the child and is unable to see the provision that is being made and there are no other means of establishing suitability, it cannot fulfil its duty of ensuring that the provision is suitable for the child and meets his or her SEN and will issue a school attendance order.”

Unless the Statement or Education Health Care Plan specifies provision at home to be made by the local authority, the statement or Education Health Care Plan becomes a legally unenforceable document. The local authority will no longer have a statutory duty to arrange the provision specified in the Statement or Education Health Care Plan and nor will parents (who have no statutory duty to provide such anywhere anyway).

The local authority is still under a duty to review the statement or Education Health Care Plan at least annually, until such time as they cease to maintain it. Where a child is established in elective Home Education, it is reasonable for the local authority to conclude that it is no longer necessary for them to make provision or to continue to maintain the statement or Education Health Care Plan. Parents who no longer seek provision from the local authority could write to the local authority asking them to cease to maintain the statement or Education Health Care Plan, as it is no longer appropriate.”

How can the Elective Home Education Team help?

Initially we ask you to complete and return a Family Contact Information sheet giving us basic contact details and also ask you, if you can, provide us with information about your home education programme, this will help us to help you better. Once received, we will write to you to arrange your Home Education Adviser to meet with you and your child at a venue of your choice, this can be your home or Mercury House, Romford (see details below).

We understand at this stage you may still be finding out what works best for you in home education but this meeting gives us an opportunity to get to know you as a family, talk about your proposed educational programme, answer any queries you may have and support your child’s home educational programme.

All children being electively home educated in the London Borough of Havering are offered their own Home Education Adviser who is an experienced adviser and teacher.
We can offer you a range of strategies and advice to support the educational provision you are making. However, the Home Education Adviser will not provide a programme of work or resources; neither will he/she offer any teaching. Continuity of contact should help you to develop a positive and supportive relationship with your Adviser and feel assured that they have an understanding of the needs of your child and what you are both working to achieve. We therefore think it is important that the Adviser has an opportunity to meet with both you and your child.

The allocated time from your Adviser can be used in any of the following ways:

- discussion about your child’s programme of study
- resolving difficulties within a curriculum area - your Adviser may be able to assist you or arrange to contact a colleague with specialist knowledge

We are aware that when children produce work they are particularly proud of they may wish to share their success with others. Our Advisers will make themselves available to celebrate this work in some way.

At some point during the year your Adviser's time allocation will include, in consultation with you, an annual progress report that will comment on the quality of the provision, highlight particular strengths and explore any areas which may need further development.

**Preparing for a visit from the Elective Home Education Team**

We believe in positive relationships and mutual respect between our Service and parents, we need to work together from time to time and communicate on a reasonably regular basis. Services dealing with children have monitoring and welfare responsibilities under legislation; therefore we are sure you will understand that it will be necessary, as part of our routine duty to meet with you and your child at least once a year. We would appreciate your co-operation as responsible parents to enable The London Borough of Havering, Learning and Achievement Service to carry out our responsibilities effectively to maintain the best interests of your child, particularly in relation to our statutory safeguarding responsibilities.

As representatives of the London Borough of Havering, Learning and Achievement Service we also want to give you the opportunity to present evidence of the systematic learning experience which your child is receiving and to demonstrate your child’s continuing educational progress. Examples of this may be presented in whatever form you find most convenient - the choice is yours.

**What ways are there to show evidence of a suitable education?**

You can decide how best to show evidence of your child’s education. You could do this in a number of ways and the list below is not exhaustive.

You may for example:

- Meet the Home Education Adviser at home, to discuss work and progress.
- Meet the Home Education Adviser representative elsewhere, to discuss work and progress.
- Write a report, provide examples of work and date work. Use a log to record the learning.
- Have the work endorsed by a recognised third party.
- Provide evidence in any other form.
What if it appears to the Havering Learning and Achievement Service that a suitable education is not being provided?

We aim to work in partnership with parents. We find most concerns can be addressed without entering into statutory procedures.

If there are concerns about the education a child is receiving and these cannot be addressed informally:

- The local authority under section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996 will inform the parent in writing of these concerns by serving a section 437(1) notice on the parent, requiring them to satisfy the local authority within the period specified in the notice (not less than 15 days on the day the notice is served) that the child is receiving such education.

- Once a parent receives such a notice they will then have the opportunity to adapt the education being provided, so that it meets the necessary requirements and satisfies the local authority that the education provided is efficient and suitable.

- A further arrangement is then made to review the work that the child is doing. If this appears to the local authority that a suitable education is being provided, no further steps are taken.

- If it still appears that an efficient and suitable education is not being provided for the child, the local authority will make a School Attendance Order. This requires parents to register their child at school. Failure to comply with a School Attendance Order could result in a prosecution.

- At any stage during this process, the parents may present evidence that they are now providing a suitable education and have the School Attendance Order revoked. If the local authority refuses to revoke the School Attendance Order, parents can choose to refer the matter to the Secretary of State. If the local authority prosecutes the parents for not complying with the School Attendance Order, it will be for a court to decide whether or not the education being provided is suitable and efficient. The court can revoke the School Attendance Order if it is satisfied that the parent is fulfilling his or her duty.

Will my child receive an Annual Report from the Elective Home Education Team?

Yes, our Advisers will be wanting to assure The London Borough of Havering, Learning and Achievement Service that each home learning experience is working for the individual child. Whilst it is recognised that individual children’s needs may vary within the same family, in order for the Advisers to be consistent in their approach, they will follow a similar reporting format. For your information a copy of the basic format is included on page 13. Consistency of approach will also be supported by occasional random sample visits either at home or Mercury House with an Education Consultant accompanying the Adviser, this is to ensure your Home Education Adviser is providing effective support to you. We will let you know in advance if this is likely to be the case.

Are there additional costs for parents who home educate?

Yes. Educational funding only applies to children who are registered at a school. The London Borough of Havering, Learning and Achievement Service do not have a duty to offer financial support to home educating families. The Learning and Achievement Service only receive sufficient funding to fulfil their statutory duties. Therefore parents
are strongly encouraged to plan ahead and think carefully about the associated costs of home education as material resources, employment of a tutor and examination entries become the responsibility of parents.

Identity Cards

Each child being suitably home educated can request a photocard confirming they are being home educated in Havering. This may be useful for student entrance to places of interest. If necessary, students could refer ‘Truancy Watch’ personnel to the Havering Elective Home Education Service contact number shown on the card for confirmation of their home education status. To obtain a photocard, a passport sized photograph with the name of your child written on the back should be sent to: Service Co-ordinator, Elective Home Education Service, London Borough of Havering, 9th Floor, Mercury House, Mercury Gardens, Romford, Essex RM1 3DW.

Anti-social behaviour and links with other agencies

If it becomes apparent from other agencies, for example, Police, Youth Offending Team or substantiated reports by members of the community, that a home educated pupil is participating in anti-social activities during the normal school day, then it is likely that we will approach parents in order to review their child’s educational progress.

If I want my child to return to school, what do I do?

Quite often, children or their parents find that home education is not for them. It is a great responsibility and involves a considerable commitment of time and energy. If you do decide that you wish your child to return to school please contact either the Home Education Service on 01708 433177 or School Admissions on 01708 434600 schooladmissions@havering.gov.uk and we will be able to provide you with assistance to get your child back in school.

Is there a complaints procedure?

If you are not happy with any aspect of the Elective Home Education Service please contact:

Education Inclusion and Support Manager
☎ 01708 433837
Education Inclusion and Support Service
9th Floor, Mercury House, Mercury Gardens, Romford Essex RM1 3DW

Enjoy your home education in Havering.
## Tutor Adviser Report Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of learner</th>
<th>Date of Birth:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>Contact number:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of visit:</td>
<td>Venue for visit:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last School attended if any:</td>
<td>Reason(s) for opting to Home Educate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present at visit:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family profile:</td>
<td>Brief family history and where child fits into family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context of visit:</td>
<td>Initial visit / follow up visit / invitation to look at particular project etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work covered at home and evidence of work seen and resources used:</td>
<td>Follow limited subject range / follow broad subject range. Indication of areas followed ie: English, Maths, Science, Cookery, Art and craft, ICT, Sports, Visits to places of interest. <strong>Evidence:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning: personnel cohesion assessment</td>
<td>Who is supporting the learner? Parent / paid tutor / other member of family Part of planned programme or separate studies How parent evaluates work and makes constructive suggestions as to how it can be improved and developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipated plans: work experience careers interviews</td>
<td>For 15 / 16 year old learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational progress:</td>
<td>Progress – note progress over time and if no progress discussion as to how can this be achieved in the coming year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for socialisation: interests pastimes</td>
<td>Friends / family / Church / hobbies / sports clubs etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent(s) comments:</td>
<td>Parents’ hopes and aspirations for home education. Any anxieties they may have or information they require.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner’s comments:</td>
<td>Learner’s hopes and aspirations from home education. Any anxieties they may have or information they require. Affirmation of their wish to continue with Home Education ( if old enough to comment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutor Adviser’s comments/advice:</td>
<td>Whether discussion and evidence of work indicates learners’ and parents’ hopes and aspirations are being achieved or are being worked towards. Suggestions to support and assist these aims, if appropriate. Are they achieving what they set out to do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Borough of Havering, Learning and Achievement Information:</td>
<td>It is important to maintain a satisfactory level of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
education for your child. If the provision is deemed unsatisfactory a referral may will be made to the Education Welfare Service. This may then result in the issue of a School Attendance Order instructing you to return your child to school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report completed by:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>