

# Elective Home Education

## Information for Parents

April 2024



## **ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION (EHE) - INFORMATION FOR PARENTS**

### **CONTENTS**

WHAT IS EHE?  
REASONS FOR CONSIDERING EHE - SUPPORT  
PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES  
WHAT DO I HAVE TO TEACH?  
LOCAL EHE SUPPORT GROUPS  
PRIVATE TUTORS AND EXAMINATION CENTRES  
FUNDING AND RESOURCES  
EHE REVIEWS  
THE LAW RELATING TO ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION (EHE)  
CONTACT DETAILS

### **WHAT IS EHE?**

1. Elective home education (EHE) is the term used by the Department for Education (DfE) to describe a parent's decision to provide education for their child(ren) at home or otherwise than by sending them to school. This is different to home tuition provided by a local authority or education provided by a local authority other than at a school.
2. Children whose parents elect to educate them at home or otherwise are not registered at mainstream schools, special schools, independent schools, academies, Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), colleges, children's homes with education facilities or education facilities provided by independent fostering agencies. Some parents may choose to engage private tutors or other adults to assist them in providing a suitable education, but there is no requirement for them to do so. Learning may take place in a variety of locations, not just in the family home.
3. Elective Home Education (EHE) is sometimes referred to as 'Education Otherwise' and is known as 'Home schooling' in the USA.
4. For the purposes of this document, 'Parent' refers to the person with parental responsibility or the person who has the care of the child.

## REASONS FOR CONSIDERING EHE - SUPPORT

5. **A parent should only withdraw their child for EHE if they fully intend to provide a suitable education.**
6. Some parents find themselves in a difficult situation where their child is extremely unhappy at and/or refusing to go to school. Additionally, some face fines and prosecution for their child's failure to attend school. Often, these parents are advised that EHE is an easy way out and that it solves all the issues at once. Unfortunately, it can actually make the child's situation worse. There will be reasons why the child does not want to attend and these should be addressed. It is far better to tackle the issues with the school and other agencies, where appropriate, to secure the support that the child needs. If it is clear that you are working with agencies to resolve your child's problems, you will not be prosecuted. Schools, the Attendance Advisory Service and the EHE Officer can all signpost parents to supportive agencies as well as offering advice and guidance themselves. In the worst cases, there are children who are out of school and not provided with the education or the help they need for extended periods, making the issues much harder to resolve.
7. Some parents decide to home educate because they and/or their children are experiencing difficulties in school which they believe cannot be overcome. They mistakenly believe that declaring EHE will move them up a waiting list for a preferred school or increase priority for a school place. It will not. EHE is considered as educational provision, just as if the child were in a school.
8. Sometimes it may be that the relationship between family and school has broken down entirely or your child is so unhappy that they are refusing to attend and you have been unable to find a solution in partnership with the school. In this case you may feel your child needs a fresh start in a new school and, as long as your child is still on roll, you can apply to transfer to another school by completing an in-year application to the school(s) of your choice. The following website page has information you may need as well as contact details if you need help or advice: [https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200286/apply\\_for\\_a\\_school\\_place/450/apply\\_for\\_in-year\\_school\\_admissions](https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200286/apply_for_a_school_place/450/apply_for_in-year_school_admissions) You also need to bear in mind that schools might be full so you may not get your first choice.
9. Sometimes the assistance of a third party who can be impartial can help resolve matters. You can contact Royal Greenwich Attendance Advisory Service to ask for support: [school-attendance-advisory@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:school-attendance-advisory@royalgreenwich.gov.uk) 020 8921 8510
10. The Family and Adolescent Support Service (FaASS) is for children, young people and their families who need extra help with emotional, educational or social needs. FaASS supports children who may need additional help on top of universal early help programmes. FaASS also focus on young people and their families who are at risk of

being involved in youth violence, crime or anti-social behaviour, exploitation and other difficulties.

[https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200234/children\\_young\\_people\\_and\\_families/2400/family\\_and\\_adolescent\\_support\\_service\\_faass](https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200234/children_young_people_and_families/2400/family_and_adolescent_support_service_faass)

11. There are many sources of support for young people in Greenwich which they can access directly themselves. These include Live Well Greenwich, [Young People Archive - Live Well Greenwich](#), Young Greenwich [Young Greenwich Youth Services \(young-greenwich.org.uk\)](#) and the Charlton Athletic Community Trust (CACT) <https://www.charltonafc.com/charlton-athletic-community-trust> They offer services for parents and families too.
12. Obviously, there are many parents who choose to home educate because they have a particular philosophy or lifestyle or desire to provide education for their children themselves. These parents should also feel free to contact the EHE Officer if they would like any support or information about resources, activities, examinations or any other issue.

## PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

13. Parents, not the state, are responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age is provided with a suitable education. Despite the term 'compulsory school age', education does not have to be undertaken at school, even though state-funded education is available for any child of compulsory school age living in England.
14. A child becomes of compulsory school age from the first of the following dates: 31st August, 31st December or 31st March, which occurs after that child's fifth birthday; and remains so until the last Friday in June of the academic year in which the child becomes sixteen. Children may also be educated at home in order to participate in education and training until the age of eighteen. There are no specific requirements as to the education to be provided if a child has ceased to be of compulsory school age.
15. **When a parent chooses to home educate, they assume full legal responsibility for all aspects of their child's education.** The local authority cannot provide a curriculum, books, worksheets, resources or examination provision. As a home educating parent, you must research, resource, deliver and pay for everything yourself. It is a considerable responsibility, not to be undertaken lightly. It is advisable to have done some research and planning in advance. You can contact the EHE Officer who can advise and signpost you to resources. The EHE Officer cannot provide you with teaching and learning materials.

**CONTACT:** [elective-home-education@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:elective-home-education@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)

16. **Parents who choose to educate their child at home assume full financial responsibility for all aspects of their education provision**, including any additional requirements for a child with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). There is no funding available from the LA or any other agency to support them. There is no central tuition service or bank of tutors or resources such as laptops that parents can access. There is no automatic provision for young people to take public examinations, including registration with examination boards and examination centres. These would have to be researched, organised and funded by parents, often at considerable expense.
17. If a parent withdraws their child from a school in order to educate at home but then changes their mind, there is no guarantee that a place would still be available at the same school. An application would have to be made in the usual way through the LA's in-year admissions process or, where applicable, directly to the school.
18. Declaring EHE should never be used as a means to circumvent school place allocation at the start of primary or secondary education, or as a means to get priority with in-year transfers. This is not only likely to be unsuccessful but also risks the child being out of suitable provision for a period, affecting their educational development. EHE is regarded as provision, just as if the child were in school. It will not help move a child up school waiting lists. **A parent should only withdraw their child for EHE if they fully intend to provide a suitable education.**
19. If a parent wishes to provide EHE and their child is on roll at a school, the parent should write to /email the Headteacher with an explicit statement that they intend to provide the child with a suitable education and a request that the child be removed from the school roll. This is to confirm that provision is being made for the child's education, otherwise than at school. Parents whose children have never been in school are not obliged to inform the authorities of their decision to home educate but are encouraged to notify their LA by contacting the EHE Officer who can provide advice and signpost support.
20. A parental notification should include the following details:
- each child's full name
  - an explicit statement of intention to provide EHE and request to be removed from the school roll (*I wish to provide my child with home education ; I wish to home educate my child; I'm going to educate her myself* are acceptable;  
*My child is not coming back to your school* is unacceptable)
  - date from which EHE is to commence (cannot be backdated)
  - signature of the person with parental responsibility

21. Once you have written to your child's Headteacher, the school should make a referral to the Local Authority's EHE team and we will contact you by email.
22. Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can equally be educated at home. If a child has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and a parent notifies the school of their intention to home educate, the school must arrange an emergency review of the EHCP to reflect the change in provision. This review should involve the parent, the child (where appropriate), school staff (e.g. SENCO), the child's LA SEND caseworker and the EHE Officer and should consider how the child's special educational needs will be met at home. It is important that the parent is made fully aware of the implications of this decision, how it may affect aspects of the EHCP, funding implications, sources of support and information and the process to follow if EHE should cease. Annual Reviews should continue to take place, just as if the child were still at school. The EHE Officer should be invited to each Annual Review so that information and expertise can be shared effectively.
23. If the child is on roll at a special school, the parents must obtain the agreement of the local authority before the child's name can be removed from the school roll. Government guidelines stipulate that this should not be a lengthy or complex process. RBG recommends that parents are given contact details and advised to seek advice from the EHE and SEND Officers before formally asking the school to remove the child from the school roll.
24. If your child has SEND, as well as contacting the EHE Officer, you can contact the Royal Borough of Greenwich SEND team for advice. 020 8921 8029  
[Special-Needs@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:Special-Needs@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)

## **WHAT DO I HAVE TO TEACH?**

25. The EHE Officer cannot provide you with teaching and learning materials. You can contact the EHE Officer who can discuss your situation with you, advise and signpost you to resources.
26. There are no rules about what you must teach your child if you are home educating. You do not have to follow the National Curriculum or adopt a school-style education. In fact, some parents home educate precisely because it provides the freedom to educate your child in an entirely different way. However, if you think your child may return to mainstream education at some point in the future, it makes sense to be aware of what their school-based peers are learning.



27. The National Curriculum is the guide used by schools to plan their courses. It is a set of subjects and standards used by primary and secondary schools so children learn the same things. It covers what subjects are taught and the standards children should reach in each subject. Below is the link to the National Curriculum in England:

<https://www.gov.uk/national-curriculum/overview>

28. You can find an outline of each school's curriculum on their website. If you go to a school's website, click on the link to 'Curriculum' and you will find an outline, term by term, for each year group, often accompanied by a philosophy or rationale. This is useful because you can see what your child would be covering if they were at the school, what the school is doing with younger children and what they will do with the year groups above. Click on the links below to see a couple of examples from local schools. Once onto each site, you can navigate by clicking on the menus which come up.

[Curriculum — Heronsgate Primary School](#)

[Curriculum - Thomas Tallis School](#)

- 29. The resources below have been recommended by some EHE families. It must be emphasised that we are unable to vouch for their quality. We are simply signposting resources which others have found useful for you to consider.**

30. These are two online schools used by some local home educating families. They are like school but children attend online only, by logging on and joining lessons. You have to pay fees to register.

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

[Sophia High School | The UK's Premium British Online School](#)

31. The companies below provide full courses based on the National Curriculum which your child can follow and complete at your own pace. All the materials are sent to you and are also available online. The child can complete assignments which are marked by online tutors who then provide feedback. Again, fees are payable. There are usually discounts according to how many subjects you choose. Some parents choose courses like this to spread out GCSEs or A Levels over a number of years rather than taking them all at once. The companies can support you in finding local examination centres.

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

[Best Homeschooling Online Courses | Wolsey Hall Oxford](#)

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

32. During the pandemic, the government set up The Oak Academy to provide free materials, including lesson plans and resources, for teachers, parents and young people. Many home educators say they find it useful.

<https://classroom.thenational.academy/year-groups>

33. Below are some links to other online providers which have been recommended and appear to be live and still active. We can't tell without registering. Please note that we cannot make judgements about any of these sites or verify their quality.

[www.edplace.com](http://www.edplace.com) – some free activities as well as annual and family subscription deals

[www.oxfordowl.co.uk](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk)

<https://www.icslearn.co.uk/courses/gcse-and-igcse/>

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

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/>

[IXL | Maths and English Practice](#)

## LOCAL EHE SUPPORT GROUPS

34. There are many support groups locally. There is the annual **Home Education Family Picnic** which meets annually and is organised by the Royal Borough of Greenwich, London Borough of Lewisham and Bexley Local Authorities. Once you are registered with us you will automatically receive invitations to the picnic where you can meet other EHE families as well as LA staff.
35. The **South London Home Education Group (SLHE)** can also put you in touch with other home educating families and activities. At present there are a number of weekly meetings in the borough, some for purely social activities and others covering sports or group lessons in a variety of subjects. Their email address is [slondonhe@gmail.com](mailto:slondonhe@gmail.com)
36. The SLHE wiki is at [www.slhe.wikia.com](http://www.slhe.wikia.com) This has an overview of activities in the area and links to resources, e.g. popular online learning sites with discounts for home educators, information on taking exams as an external candidate, and SEND support.

**CONTACT:** [elective-home-education@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:elective-home-education@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)



37. The SLHE has a directory of London home education groups which they can send out to new home educators. Because this includes personal contact details for a large number of people, including private phone numbers and addresses, they don't make it publicly available online but are happy to provide it to home educators on request.
38. The following yahoo support group/ online forum one parent described as “brilliant – a lifeline”

[HE-Exams-GCSE-A\\_AS\\_Levels-OU-Others@yahoogroups.com](mailto:HE-Exams-GCSE-A_AS_Levels-OU-Others@yahoogroups.com)

## PRIVATE TUTORS AND EXAMINATION CENTRES

39. Many parents employ private tutors, especially to provide extra expert tuition in preparation for GCSE's and A Levels. Please note that there is no register of approved tutors held by the LA since tutors do not have to be Ofsted registered.
40. **It is essential that you check a tutor's credentials to ensure that they are qualified and have a current valid Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate.** This is a police check to ensure the person has no conviction preventing them working with children or vulnerable adults. Ask to see evidence and check references with those who have written them to ensure that they are genuine – anybody can claim to be a tutor and documents are easily forged. Personal recommendation of the tutor or of an organised institution is possibly a good way to proceed.
41. If you would like more information about GCSEs and examinations, the following organisations have been suggested to us by home educating parents but we cannot vouch for them in any way. They provide tuition services and some are registered examination centres.

### **Catford Excel Exam Centre**

[GCSE – Excel Exam Centres](#)

115 Rushey Green, London, SE6 4AA (Other venues too)  
020 3651 2032

### **Best Tutors**

[info@besttutors.co.uk](mailto:info@besttutors.co.uk)

1-19 Wakefield Street, Edmonton, London, N18 2BZ  
020 8807 4170

### **Dulwich Tutors**

[info@dulwichtutors.com](mailto:info@dulwichtutors.com)

B21.6, Parkhall Business Centre, 40 Martell Road, Dulwich, SE21 8EN

**CONTACT:** [elective-home-education@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:elective-home-education@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)

020 8653 3502

**Social Arts For Education: SAFE School**

[info@safeschoolbexley.co.uk](mailto:info@safeschoolbexley.co.uk)

253 Eltham High Street, SE9 1TY

020 8850 3286

**The Tutorial Foundation**

Private Tuition: [admin@thetutorialfoundation.co.uk](mailto:admin@thetutorialfoundation.co.uk)

Exam Centre: [exams@thetutorialfoundation.co.uk](mailto:exams@thetutorialfoundation.co.uk)

76 Freelands Road, Bromley, Kent, BR1 3HY

020 8460 0181

**Educational Excellence and Wellbeing**

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

112-114 High Street, Croydon, CR0 1ND

020 8688 8665

**Pascals College - Beckenham**

[www.pascalscollege.co.uk](http://www.pascalscollege.co.uk)

137-139 High St, Beckenham BR3 1AG

020 8663 6733

**Croydon Metropolitan College**

[admin@croydonmet.org.uk](mailto:admin@croydonmet.org.uk)

30-32 Southend, Croydon, CR0 1DN

020 8688 5777

42. We are constantly looking for examination centres so, if you can recommend anywhere which might help other EHE parents, please do let us know.

## FUNDING AND RESOURCES

43. At the present time, there is no funding locally or nationally to support home educators: the LA cannot provide financial support, there is no central tuition service or bank of tutors or resources that parents can access. Full responsibility for all aspects of educational provision, including any additional requirements for a child with SEND, now falls to the parent.
44. There is no automatic provision for young people to take public examinations – these also have to be researched, funded, organised and resourced by parents.

## EHE REVIEWS

**CONTACT:** [elective-home-education@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:elective-home-education@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)

45. The EHE Officer will contact the parents of all children provided with EHE in order to review the provision being made for each child's education. The LA has a legal duty to identify children who are not receiving suitable provision and to rectify the situation.
46. At the review, the EHE Officer will consider the evidence provided and make a judgement about whether it is suitable for the child. Generally, evidence includes samples of work showing progress over time, what the child and parent say about the learning, any plans or records the parent keeps, and so on. There is no prescription about what constitutes evidence. The EHE Officer will look for anything sufficient to convince a reasonable person that the child is in suitable provision. Parents can feel free to discuss what they can provide in advance of the review.
47. Parents have no legal obligation to engage with this process but case law has established that "it would be sensible for them to do so". Government guidance makes it clear that LAs should act if they cannot establish that a child is in suitable provision. The Royal Borough of Greenwich will definitely take such action.
48. If it appears that a child is not receiving a suitable education, the EHE officer will generally, in the first instance, address the situation informally by offering advice and support to help enhance the education being provided and agree a follow up meeting to monitor progress.
49. If it then appears to the EHE officer that a child is still not receiving a suitable education; or if the parent has refused to engage or provide evidence of suitable provision, the officer will write formally to the parent requiring them to satisfy RBG that their child is receiving a suitable education as required by section 437 (1) of the Education Act 1996. Parents will be given 15 working days to reply. Their reply should provide evidence sufficient to convince the EHE Officer that the child is now in receipt of a suitable education.
50. The EHE Officer will also refer the matter to the Fair Access Panel (FAP) in order for a school to be named in case such evidence is not forthcoming, leading to proceedings towards a School Attendance Order (SAO) under Section 437(3) of the Education Act 1996. In line with RBG FAP Protocol, children whose education is deemed unsuitable, will generally be referred back to their previous school in the first instance, unless there has been an exceptional change in circumstance, to aid continuity in education and peer socialisation.
51. If it appears to the RBG LA, after considering the parental response to its written notice, that the child is not receiving a suitable education and that it is expedient that the child should attend school, a School Attendance Order is likely to be issued. Failure to comply with a School Attendance order is likely to lead to prosecution under Section 443 of the Education Act 1996.

52. If, at any stage following the issuance of the Order, parents present evidence accepted by the LA that they are now providing a suitable education, they may apply to have the SAO revoked.
53. The LA will always seek to work in partnership with parents and will only take legal action as a last resort, after all reasonable avenues have been explored to bring about a resolution of the situation.
54. If the LA prosecutes a parent for not complying with a School Attendance Order, it will be for a court to decide whether the education being provided is suitable. The court can revoke the Order if it is satisfied that the parent is fulfilling their duty. It can also revoke the Order where it imposes an Education Supervision Order.

## THE LAW RELATING TO ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION (EHE)

55. Article 2 of Protocol I of the European Convention on Human Rights states that:

*"No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching is in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions."*

56. This right is enshrined in English law. Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 provides that:

*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.*

57. An "efficient" and "suitable" education is not defined in the Education Act 1996 but "efficient" has been broadly described in case law as an education that "achieves that which it sets out to achieve":

*A "suitable" education is one that, "primarily equips a child for life within the community of which s/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 options in later years to adopt some other form of life if s/he wishes to do so".*

58. Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 states:

*"A local education authority must make arrangements to enable them to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children in their area who are of compulsory school age but —  
are not registered pupils at a school, and*

*are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.”*

59. Section 437 (1) of the same Act makes clear that local authorities must intervene if it appears that parents are not providing a suitable education. This section states that:

*"If it appears to a local education authority 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 education."*

60. Section 437(3) Education Act 1996 provides that if a parent fails to satisfy the local authority within the specified period that their child is receiving a suitable education, the local authority has the power to issue a school attendance order (SAO) requiring that the child become a registered pupil at the school named in the order. Failure to comply with an SAO can result in a prosecution under Section 443 of the same Act.

61. Section 13A of the Education Act 1996 sets out duties for LA's in relation to high standards and the fulfilment of potential:

*“(1). A local authority in England must ensure that their relevant education functions and their relevant training functions are (so far as they are capable of being so exercised) exercised by the authority with a view to—*

- (c) promoting high standards,*
- (d) ensuring fair access for education and training, and*
- (e) promoting the fulfilment of learning potential by every person to whom this subsection applies.*

*(2) Subsection 1 applies to the following:*

*Persons under the age of 20;—*

*Persons aged 20 or over and for whom an EHC Plan is maintained.”*

62. Local authorities also have general duties to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (see section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004). EHE officers, along with all local authority employees, have a responsibility to ensure all children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted throughout their work. Section 175 (1) provides:

*“A local authority shall make arrangements for ensuring that their education functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children”.*

## CONTACT DETAILS

### **The Royal Borough of Greenwich Children's Services**

The Woolwich Centre  
35 Wellington Street  
Woolwich  
SE18 6HQ

#### **EHE Officer:**

Sharon Pathak  
020 8921 8502 / 07805 746 521  
[sharon.pathak@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:sharon.pathak@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)

#### **Attendance Advisory Service**

020 8921 8510  
[school-attendance-advisory@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:school-attendance-advisory@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)

#### **SEND**

020 8921 8029  
[Special-Needs@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:Special-Needs@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)

#### **School Admissions**

020 8921 8043  
[school-admissions@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:school-admissions@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)

#### **FaASS (Family & Adolescent Support Services)**

020 8921 3172  
[mash-referrals@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:mash-referrals@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)

#### **SLHE (South London Home Education Group)**

\* Independent group NOT affiliated to the LA\*  
[slondonhe@gmail.com](mailto:slondonhe@gmail.com)  
[www.slhe.wikia.com](http://www.slhe.wikia.com)



