

# education otherwise



August 2000

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**SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE OCTOBER ISSUE OF THE  
EDUCATION OTHERWISE NEWSLETTER TO THE FOLLOWING EDITORS:**

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C/o Christine Adey (address below)

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of the jobs on the newsletter contact  
Christine Adey)

Please include your name, address and phone number and mark material 'for publication'.

Contributions are more likely to be included if they are concise.

**DEADLINE FOR THE OCTOBER ISSUE IS 1ST SEPTEMBER 2000**

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## From the Editors...

The August Newsletter has the latest news from Scotland about meetings with the Scottish Executive and the new laws that will affect home education. This coincides with a new report from the Scottish Consumer Council, Home Works, about Scottish Local Authorities and their approach to working with home-educating parents. It is very interesting and could have spin-offs for all of us. Read about it here!

Isobel Bogucki was underwhelmed by the response to Maths in the Special Section (Tut, tut, readers, see below). However, Isobel saved the day with a fascinating, thought-provoking view of Maths in schools and some mathematical ideas to develop and inspire the whole family at home.

Home Education in the News covers an interesting article about second generation home-educators (Priscilla – we didn't know you were home-educated) and education at school and home in Japan. There's more on Japanese home-learning and dealing with the authorities, and how one parent found the Canadian education system helpful to homeschooling, elsewhere in the Newsletter. While Sarah takes a summer break from the Archives, Christine has slipped in an old **ARCHIE** that she couldn't resist. If your inactive thirteen year-old daughter (or son) is giving you concern, turn to the Problem Page for reassurance, and do write to Sue White with your response to next issue's problem. Book Reviews and Resources covers a wide range of interests and ages as usual, including some free resources and a book about learning in its widest sense that may be of interest to parents home-educating their children.

And finally, feedback from members about the Newsletter is always welcome. It is your newsletter, and we need your contribution, in particular, personal experiences and accounts. These are very popular and help to give balance and variety.

**PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE** send articles and letters to the Newsletter.

We want to hear your story.

### CONTENTS

	PAGE
SPECIAL SECTION	2
BOOK REVIEWS AND RESOURCES	7
HOME EDUCATION NEWS	10
ARTICLES	13
PROBLEM PAGE	27
EDUCATING ARCHIE	28
LETTERS	29
EQ BUSINESS	33
REGIONAL DIARY	36
ADVERTISEMENTS	40

**Please write in:** next issue's Special Section is **Learning a Foreign Language**. Are your children learning a foreign language? How are they doing it? At what age did they start? Are there any difficulties? Can you recommend any courses, text books or general approaches? Write c/o Christine Adey (address opposite)

## The Wonderful World of Mathematics

The aim of this article is to encourage you to think about and enjoy some maths. At one time mathematicians worked in isolation and secretly but there is now a vast international network of publications and open meetings. Every year nearly two hundred thousand new theorems are published in journals.

Mathematicians have come from all walks of life: an Archbishop of Canterbury, a monk, a tax assessor, a professor of medicine, a fencing master, a lawyer. Many people now spend all their time doing maths - and enjoying it.

The oldest mathematical tablets date from 2400 BC but the urge to create and use maths pre-dated that and it has been a human activity for thousands of years. Buying goods at the market, decorating a ceramic pot, measuring an area of land, betting on the outcome of some activity, building structures for living in; worshipping in; burying the dead, erecting large statues, tying knots ...

Other branches of science have tried to reduce knowledge to a simplified form, physics looking for the one law to unify all forces, biologists discovering the answer to life in the double helix. Conversely Mathematics seems to be on the verge of producing completely new areas of study. Maths was the science and symbolism of quantity and space but developed into the area of chance and risk and more recently topology, chaos and fractals. Some pieces of maths have become obsolete through non-use.

### *Maths Teaching in Schools*

Of all the subjects in the National Curriculum followed by state schools I believe that Maths is by far the most badly taught and the teaching of maths causes a great deal of damage which is very hard to undo. Many people get hooked on maths and enjoy problem solving in spite of the way that the subject has been presented to them, but so many more are frightened and feel incompetent to carry out everyday calculations.

*A Mathematician's work is a tangle of guesswork, analogy, frustration, thinking and finally resolution using a proof to check that your mind is not playing tricks. Children can do this naturally if allowed to.*

If your child is at the outset of home maths education, do not put anything on paper for as long as possible and certainly not until you know that the basic comprehension is very firmly in place. Keep everything concrete and based in real life situations. I have watched the way that my own three children have become mathematically literate with no formal teaching. The eldest enjoyed maths workshops and read books by Martin Gardner and Ian Stewart, so I was not too surprised when on starting GCSE maths and doing formal paperwork for the very first time, was able to achieve full marks. The second manipulated numbers necessary in everyday life but avoided all other maths input. Doing GCSE maths

during the past nine months was harder, but still did as well as or better than friends who have been taught maths for eleven years in the school system (a B In one module). My own experience of tutoring schoolchildren has shown me that teaching can damage the ability to think creatively, to be able to visualise and understand problems.

So if your child has come out of school and is not one of those who loves maths then abandon written work until you have gone through the basics in real life situations. If you do not understand anything, try lying down, close your eyes and relax. Let your mind wander until it is ready to visualise and play with the problem. Sometimes the understanding can pop into your mind days later.

If you have three apples and add two apples a mental picture of five apples is the image perceived by the brain. If you write  $3+2$  the image is just that, a few squiggles.  $5 \times 3$  is seen as lines on the paper whereas five groups of three objects can easily be seen to be three groups of five objects and fifteen altogether just by inspection.

Cut up your toast into halves and then quarters and it is obvious that half of a half is a quarter ( $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2} = \frac{1}{4}$ ) and a half of a quarter is an eighth ( $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{4} = \frac{1}{8}$ ). Cut up your large pizzas into sixths, or eighths or tenths. It is obvious that a tenth is smaller than a sixth. When you are asked at the petrol station what that dot means in front of the last 9 in the price it is easy - imagine a penny cut up into ten parts like the pizza and you only need nine of those bits rather than the whole ten. You show how many whole pennies you need and put the point before showing how many tenths you need. Imagine cutting up that tenth into a further ten pieces and each piece will be a hundredth of the whole.

### *Mathematical Ideas*

There are many books that have good ideas for exploring the maths around you. Find out how a sunflower, a pineapple and a pine-cone illustrate a well known series of numbers. If you want to tile your kitchen floor, which of the following shapes would you not use: Equilateral triangles, squares, regular pentagons or hexagons?

Look at the shapes of shadows cast by a lampshade on a wall, can you see a parabola?

Spirals are fascinating - galaxies - helterskelters - ammonites. Leaf attachments along a stem are spiral with the result that each leaf has maximum exposure to the sun. Logarithmic, 3D, flat spirals ...

Symmetry - in flowers; a starfish's 5 fold symmetry; a snowflake's unique shape ...

A Monomino is 1 square and a Domino 2 squares joined together in only one possible way. A Triomino can have two shapes, either 3 joined end to end or 2 end on with 1 to the side making an L shape. Tetrominos and Pentominos have 4 and 5

squares respectively. How many different shapes exist for each? {5 & 12} The minimum number to tile a rectangular shape is the 'order' of the polyomino. A Domino has an order of 1. Which shaped tetromino has an order of 4? Which shaped pentomino has an order of 10?

What have the following in common?

Black cat, crow, fur hat, umbrella, polar bear, chameleon, blonde wig and a beach ball?

What they have in common is they have absolutely nothing in common. The cat is black, alive and hairy, The crow is black, alive but not hairy. The blonde wig is not black, not alive, but is hairy. The beach ball is not alive, not black and not hairy. So for the 8 mentioned items 4 show each characteristic, black; alive; hairy. There are 6 possible combinations. A Venn diagram uses three overlapping circles that have 6 regions to show the shared characteristics. In this case the cat would occupy the space enclosed by the three circles. If four circles are overlapped there are 14 regions but this is insufficient to show the possibilities for 4 characteristics {16} Venn explored other shapes and discovered that four ellipses overlapping could produce the required number of regions. He went on to use rectangles with circles to produce enough regions for 5 characteristics. When a century later a stain glass window was ordered to commemorate Venn, the biologist asked to design it came up with a beautiful solution to the problem of finding a Venn diagram for any number of characteristics. Not only that but it was an example of the modern area of maths – a fractal! Look at a cauliflower cut down the centre, the overall pattern repeats itself as you look at successive stalks, another fractal example.

How can a Knight visit each square on the chessboard only once? A knight jumps two squares in one direction followed by one square at right angles to the landing square. The earliest recorded solution was by De Moivre. The ending square was nowhere near the first. Legendre found another solution in which the last square was a move away from the first to produce a closed loop of 64 moves. Euler, who did a lot of his work after becoming blind, found a solution that was a closed loop that covered one half of the board before starting the other half.

Try the knight's quest on a 5x5 board, 6x6 and 7x7. A closed loop is possible in one of these. Is there a 4x4 board solution? (You could use two buttons strung a knights move apart). Knights may also quest on rectangular boards. No quest is possible on a 2x3 but a closed loop is possible on a 3x4. How about 3x5 or 3x6 rectangle? A 3x7 rectangle is possible but the choice of start/finish is limited. Alexandre Vandermonde b1735 looked at a quest over the 6 surfaces of a cube each surface being a chessboard. Dudeney found a solution visiting each surface in turn. You can complete the quest on a 2x2x2 cube with a closed loop. Is a 1x1x1 cube too cramped?

Talking of surfaces, everyone knows that a piece of paper has two of them. Front and back or top and bottom or left side and right side depending on how you hold the paper. Take a strip approx. 30+ cm long and 6 cm wide. Join the ends together carefully aligning them. How many sides does this loop have?

Make some more, but this time before sellotaping, twist one end over (Sellotape all along the join on both sides). You have a loop of paper, how many sides does it have? Start at any point and draw a line along the centre, where does it end?

Now cut your two loops along the centre of the strip. The first will produce two loops of the same diameter but half the width. What happens in the second case?

Make another twisted loop called a Mobius band. Cut the band nearer to one edge. What happens if you put 2 twists into the starting band?

Topologists form a variety of surfaces by bending and gluing edges. If both pairs of opposite edges of a rectangle are glued, the result is a torus, but if one pair is twisted you get what has been called a Klein bottle - a surface with no edges and only one side!!

A useful cube is the die. A good game for 2 players is for player 1 to place the die on the table scoring what appears on the top face. The 2<sup>nd</sup> player may turn the die to bring a new adjacent face to the top adding that to the first score. The loser is the player who makes the total exceed 31 (or any other agreed value).

There are good books of dice games.

Music is very mathematical. There are 8 notes in the Western scale but only 5 in Chinese music; try playing only the black notes on the piano or C D E G A on the white notes. Japanese music also has a scale of 5 notes, A B C E F and E F A B D

Estimation is a very useful ability.

What is the population of England? How many people will you see in the next hour? Estimate what the time or temperature is before looking, how long will your shopping trip take, how many red cars on a journey?

How many Barbie dolls are sold every business hour? 25,000! How many are sold in a year assuming a 6-day week, 8-hour day? If each measures 1 foot, how far would they stretch in a year? How many years before they reach the moon? Miles to the moon 221,463 {63,072,000 dolls per year 10,000 miles 18 years}

If it were possible to fold a piece of paper in half 32 times, how thick do you think it would be?

What is the price of a kilo of potatoes at the moment? How much do you pay if you bought a kilo of crisps?

Do you find large numbers confusing?

People have been around for two and a half million years. The dinosaurs dominated the earth for one hundred sixty million before they disappeared. How much longer until we beat their record?

Round 8,763,429,019.678 to the nearest hundred thousand. {8,763,400,000}

Two fast breeding bugs which double their population every minute, are put into a bottle at eleven in the morning, and the bottle will be full at noon, when will it be half full?

Suppose the bottle was half full at eleven thirty, when would it be full?

What would the consequences be if the moon circled the earth in exactly 30 days and the earth circled the sun in exactly three-hundred-sixty days?

Jewish years vary from 353 to 385 days, while Muslim years run for either 354 or 355 days. There would be no leap years and no months of different lengths. It would be horribly regular. Why do we have weeks? 30 days is too long for our minds to cope with. Some cultures had 3 ten-day blocks, for example ancient Egypt and revolutionary France. But even 10 is a bit too much for us. With 30 days we could have either five 6-day weeks or six 5-day weeks. We would probably not use the decimal system. With a 12 month year and a 6 day week we would be steered to a duodecimal system. The Babylonians developed a 60 system that we use in our time and angle measurement.

How can you use four 4's with any symbols +, -, x, \*/\*, square root, decimal point to make all the numbers from 1 to 20?

### *Did you know?*

A million tons of pulsar stars would fit into a thimble.

Painkiller poisoning hospitalised 30,479 people in 1990.

Half of the earth's surface is three kilometres or more below sea level.

Killing a turkey a minute for a British Christmas would take 100 working years.

Reading the American anti-pollution regulations at the rate of 4 minutes per page would take you ninety-six eight-hour days without lunch-breaks.

If you do not have a grasp of number you can be conned by salespeople, the papers that you read, the government ... Maths is needed in finance, engineering, physics and it has penetrated geography, sociology, psychology, medicine, linguistics and even history.

The understanding of maths is increasingly essential and a lot of maths is simply FUN.

Ian Dury, rock singer and artist, died in March this year. He had been the subject of Desert Island Discs some time ago and, after his death, the programme was repeated as a tribute. Here's what Ian had to say about school; his mother taught him to read at an early age: "By the time I went to school, I didn't want to go there. I was bored ...". Talking about his experiences at a later school, Ian described being beaten: "They thought that the slipper didn't hurt me because I'd had polio." Eventually, he was made to learn 80 lines of poetry at a time as an alternative punishment. In the end, Ian was expelled for allegedly throwing a piece of fish at the head-master's wife.

*Sarah Guthrie*

## Book Reviews and Resources

### The Mum Trap by Ruth Symes

I liked this book a lot. It is a story about Anna, her little sister Gem and their dad. Anna and Gem's mummy died and they decide to try and get a new mum. It is really good because it gets more and more exciting as it goes along, so it is really exciting at the end. They have a new postman (Kate) and she gets scared of Rambo (Gummy Harris' dog with no teeth) and dad laughs and Kate gets cross. After that Anna makes friends with her. Anna goes to a school disco with Leo (her boyfriend) and when she comes home they have Kate as their mum.

Molly Whitehall (9)

£3.99 ISBN 0 86264 933 1 Published by Anderson Press Ltd (020 7840 8483) [www.andersonpress.co.uk](http://www.andersonpress.co.uk)

### The Chemical Elements by Nechaev and Jenkins

I thoroughly enjoyed this book and felt like Adam Hart-Davis of BBC2's 'Local Heroes' (one of our favourite television programmes), enthused to know more about the exciting story of how these elements were discovered and about the great scientists whose experiments led to those discoveries. Knowing very little about chemistry and thinking that it was a daunting subject, I found that this book explains in an understandable way how all the different substances and materials on our planet are derived from 92 elements. Each scientist is brought to life in a charming way, from Karl Scheele discovering 'Fiery Air' (Oxygen) and Humphrey Davy, a self-taught genius who not only invented the miners' safety lamp named after him, but also discovered potassium and sodium and seemed quite a character. The book was first published more than 50 years ago and the original author's work has been brought up to date to include the man-made elements of the nuclear age. Mendeleev's periodic table of the elements continues to grow as our insight into and understanding of nature and matter continue to grow. This is a fascinating story, written clearly and in an easy way to understand. It can provide a good historical introduction to the subject of chemistry and is especially useful as a background to science for children and any adults new to this area of study, particularly for those involved in home education.

Eileen Hancock

£6.95 ISBN 1899618112 from Tarquin Publications, (01379 384 218) [www.tarquin-books.demon.co.uk](http://www.tarquin-books.demon.co.uk)

### Eurocats by Susan Street & Michael Naylor

*Eurocats* has some lovely colourful pictures and tells the story of two cats, Susie and Mickey. Susie has moved to the countryside; her new neighbour is Mickey, a tabby cat who reads newspapers and

drives his own car. They visit France and Germany. There's an awful lot of "educational" information in this book - capital cities, currencies, French and German food, how a balloon flies and so much more. Thomas loved the pictures and liked the stories; Tricia liked the stories and picked up on some of the information. We thought it was funny for cats to wear caps, drive a car, talk to their owners etc yet still go in through a catflap! For me, the mix of fact and fiction didn't quite gel enough and I felt there were a few stereotypes in there (eg: French striped jumpers & berets, male cat Mickey knows so much and has to educate female Susie - am I taking this too seriously?) but as a way of introducing information about Europe to youngsters in a fun way it seems to work.

Tricia (8), Thomas(4½) and Sue Onions

£8.95 ISBN 1 85776 477 3 Published by The Book Guild (01273 472534) [www.bookguild.co.uk](http://www.bookguild.co.uk)

### Wise-up by Guy Claxton

This book is not specifically about home education, although it does include one short reference directly to home-schooling. There are other references to John Holt, whose name and work will be very familiar to readers of this newsletter and home educators generally. The involvement of parents in children's learning is also covered. The subject is learning in its broadest sense, with a comprehensive review of the available skills and techniques used at various stages of development throughout life.

Guy Claxton explores the full range of learning techniques, from those associated with infancy and childhood based more on instinct and 'immersion' (exploration, investigation and experimentation), through the development of more intuitive and imaginative ('soft') skills, as well as the intellectual ('hard') skills of later development in adulthood. However, he supports the criticisms of more traditional educationalists who have tended to relate these techniques somewhat dogmatically to successive stages in life, from earlier intuitive development, with intellectual skills considered to be the highest stage of achievement associated with learning later in life. They are reviewed as the components for a 'toolkit', which is available for continued use in learning throughout life. His proposal is that all of the skills and techniques are vital elements in that toolkit and should remain available for potential use in lifelong learning. They can be drawn on for help in 'knowing what to do when you don't know what to do', based on a comprehensive range of 'hard' and 'soft' skills as appropriate or required, in a constant process of 'learning to learn' throughout life.

Although exploring a wide range of subjects associated with learning, some quite theoretical and abstract, Guy Claxton's writing is not too dense or overly academic and there are many practical illustrations as examples. I would recommend his book as a good background for developing different approaches to learning, especially for parents of children being educated at home. We are very often concerned just as much with developing our own learning skills in the process of helping our children to learn. Such a use of the skills reviewed in this way is, therefore, just as valuable for our own approaches to educational development. Their use can be taught and passed on in turn for mutual benefit from our involvement in the lifelong process of 'learning to learn', which Guy Claxton believes to be especially important in what he calls this 'age of increasing uncertainty'.

Nick Steenman-Clark

£16.99 ISBN 0 7475 40691 Published by Bloomsbury (020 7 4946008)

### Letterbox Farm (Video) by Peter Tye

This video of word recognition stories for young children is not only educational and fun, with animated stories but also shows visits to real farms. It was a big hit with Eoghan and Freyja. They enjoyed both the animation and the farm visits. The short stories focused on four words: 'stop', 'lost', 'shut' and 'look', all in relation to things happening on the farm and with a repeated cheerful song to accompany them (adults may find this a bit irritating after a while!). Its use of both phonetic and standard alphabetic pronunciations could be confusing and perhaps using just phonetic pronunciation would be better. Overall, a useful and interesting aid to encourage word recognition with early learners and consolidation for children who already have some reading skills.

Eileen Hancock with Eoghan (3), Freyja (7)

£9.95 video (30 mins) ISBN 0 85236 353 2 from Farming Press, (08700 780271) www.farmgate.co.uk

### Out for the Count

A counting book. This book is about a boy who cannot sleep and counts higher and higher numbers and scarier and scarier animals. What I like best is the quite scary illustrations of the bats and the ghosts and the tigers. I also like the way it is written in a poem. I think this book would be more suitable for someone age 5 than me but I liked its unusual idea.

Kit Friesleben (6)

£5.99 ISBN 0 7112 0665 1. Published by Frances Lincoln Publishers (0171 284 4009)

### Green Myths for Young Children

Beautiful colourful pages, with lovely pictures and easy to read print. The stories are exciting and interesting. I liked 'Jason and the Golden Fleece' and 'Persephone and the Seasons' best. It's a bit like learning history, even though the stories are myths they were important to the Ancient Greeks, stories they told to each other. It's fun to see how they thought the seasons worked, compared to what I know about the seasons now. It's a good book for my age group to read to myself. It tells you how to say the Greek names.

Erin Hartley (10)

£12.99 ISBN 0 7460 3725 2 Published by Usborne www.usborne.com

### The Song of the Birds by Hugh Lupton

This is a collection of stories about birds. They are from a variety of countries around the world. Throughout the book there are beautiful illustrations. This book is in a very distinctive style, it is written how a story-teller would tell the stories. Hugh Lupton lives in East Anglia which is where I live, so I have heard him tell stories before. When I read these stories, they remind me of Hugh Lupton telling them. My favourite story is 'The Pigeon, the Sparrowhawk and the Theft of Fire'. It is about a time when the world is very cold and humans have no fire but Meeka, the moon, does have a tail of fire like a comet. One day Wata, the pigeon and Kwetalbur, the sparrow hawk are talking and they decide to steal fire from Meeka. They take the fire when he is asleep then Meeka awakes and throws spears at them but they are quick and put the fire in the trees so people can rub sticks together and fire comes out, although Meeka has quenched the fire with water. This is a version of a native American coyote story, where coyote puts fire inside the sticks, which I also like. Overall this is a beautiful and enjoyable book.

Emma Whitehall (10)

£12.99 ISBN 1 84148 044 4. Published by Barefoot Books (020 7704 6492) www.barefoot-books.com

### Making the Most of Today and ..... Making Every Day Count

Two wonderful pocket size books of daily readings for young people. They focus on problem solving, setting goals, feeling good about yourself, self awareness, creativity and self-esteem. Inspirational, with lots of positive messages. There is a page for every day of the year and each reading includes a thought provoking quotation and story.

Each book is £7.99. Published by Words of Discovery, Leicester LE8 0JZ (0116 273 3000)

### Perfect Prudence in the Perfect Present

This CD was great fun and enjoyed by a wider age range than the 4-5 stated. We haven't seen the television programme but no doubt watching it would reinforce the

learning going on here. We liked the way maths was seen to be relevant in daily situations and therefore valuable, rather than the '2+2=?' type thing. I should think it would be particularly useful for children with a learning block - "I can't tell the time", etc as it is such fun, in the way some learn to read through comics first rather than 'learning schemes'. Definitely recommended.

Kirsten Friesleben with Joe (14), Kit (7) and Jem (5)

*This is just one of a new collection of CDs that help teach literacy and numeracy (based on the Little Monster characters of the stories and TV series). Eight titles have been released to date for the 3-5 age group with four more titles to be released soon for 5 to 7 year olds.*

£9.99 each. Published by Ransom Ltd (01491 613 711).  
www.ransom.co.uk

### Create A World - Taz and Tweety's Funny Farm

A wonderful creative programme for the 6-12 year olds. On screen construction to help develop computer skills; cutting and building the farm models and Looney Toons characters from the 2D printed plans; playing with the models and creating an imaginary farm. My 6 year old has spent many enjoyable hours (mostly un-aided) investigating the programme, printing out the models, colouring them in (can also be printed out in colour), making and playing with the finished models. The models are surprisingly sturdy despite being made of just paper and glue. Some of the models are quite complicated and he needed to access the computer instructions on screen from time to time. My son says "It is really good fun, I love it - 10 out of 10. You can choose any model from the list, print it off and make it. You only need paper, scissors and glue, oh and a computer of course!"

Sally and Keith (6) Hall

£19.99 from any good software retailers. Published by Mattel Interactive. www.mattelinteractive.co.uk

### FREE RESOURCES!!

#### Survival for Tribal Peoples; activity pack about tribal people

The pack is aimed at promoting knowledge about tribal peoples around the globe. It contains a large world map showing the location of various tribes, 3 posters of children from different tribes and mock letters from each describing their lives and the problems they face. The teacher's notes contain some interesting background information, suggestions for using the resources and ideas for activities. The suggested age range is 8-12 but the pictures are brilliant and could spark interesting discussions and reflections with children of any age.

Martine Archer

Free of charge from Survival (see 'advert's page' for contact details)

### TITLES RECOMMENDED BY EO's

#### Football Maths by Don Shaw and John Shiels

Ben is reluctant to do maths but very keen on football. We've found an ideal way to combine the two with this series of books that cover all the maths topics in the National Curriculum. Even though it uses the concept of football it is all still very basic without distractions, although it does take Ben nearly as long to decide the team names as it does to do the actual page of work!

Diane Cromie with Ben (8)

ISBN 0-19-838232-4 published by Oxford University Press, Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP

#### Maths Study Books, Workbooks, Revision Guides etc (other subjects available)

I bought a selection of these books to use with some school pupils I tutor (primary age) who seem to love them, but I've also tried using them with my home-educated daughter who wasn't nearly so keen. For parents who are not very confident with maths, the "teaching" books (classbooks, study books and revision guides) include methods for solving every problem (they are not simply books full of questions - those are the workbooks, question books and homework books). In the question-type books, problems are livened up with a bit of clip art and rather bad puns, and there are there as usual a smattering of debatable "correct" answers (0 is an even number, for example or the helicopter's blades are turning clockwise). At least the art (if not the humour) is marginally better in the teaching-type books.

In their favour, the books are very cheap because home educators can buy them by mail order at school prices (from £1-£2 per book up to Key Stage 3), and as they are closely linked to the National Curriculum Key Stages, this will make them useful for home educated children who want to check their progress against school peers, or perhaps more probably for parents who want to check their children's progress. Overall, I'd recommend the teaching books for Key Stage 2 and above as exceptionally good value for money. Personally, I wouldn't bother with the question books or Key Stage 1 books. WHSmith stock a selection of these books, so go and have a look at them before you commit yourself.

Genny Bove

Published by CGP (0870 750 1242) (say you're a home-educator to get schools discount) www.cgpbooks.co.uk or e-mail at orders@cgpbooks.co.uk

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## Home Education in the News

### HOME NEWS

A recent article in the Education supplement of the Guardian newspaper took a look at two mothers whose own very different experiences of education out of school influenced their decision not to delegate their children's education to an institution.

#### Homing in

"Do fish have eyelids?" asks seven-year-old Gareth Henderson. "And do they sleep?" his older sister, Rebecca, pitches in. Their mother Jessica, not a marine expert, makes a mental note to look out her book on fish so she can answer their questions.

Gareth and Rebecca are inquisitive children, perhaps because they have their own teacher 24 hours a day to answer anything they might want to know. For the Hendersons are one of thousands of families in the UK who home educate.

Jessica is a second generation home educator; she decided to teach her children at home because of her own happy experiences as a child on a small island off the coast of Queensland, Australia, where she and her sister took correspondence classes and were taught by their mother.

"We spent half an hour a day on written work, which we would then post back," Jessica says. "The rest of the time we played and learnt to think about our natural environment. Being taught at home gave me great confidence. I got used to the fact that my ideas would be taken seriously. We were very free, it was an idyllic childhood."

The other children on the island faced a long ferry trip to school each morning. Jessica joined them for one year only, when she was seven. "At school I learnt about injustice," she says. "The headteacher would victimise some kids, especially the aborigines."

Jessica moved to England in the early eighties and trained to become an electrician. She has known all along that she would like to teach her children at home. "I've never seen the need for learning to take place in an institution."

The children have formal lessons a couple of

mornings a week with plenty of time devoted to play and other activities. Jessica has a plan for each day, although she admits it often changes. "What we do depends on the day. We are surrounded by beautiful countryside so we go on lots of outings."

The children also have lots of friends. "Some friends who go to school tell my kids they're very lucky!" Jessica says. She has no plans to send them to school in the future but stresses that the decision is theirs. "I check now and again if they're happy and they say they are."

Rebecca, 10, already has her future mapped out; she wants to become a writer. Gareth doesn't know yet, but he loves creating complicated Lego designs and Jessica thinks he might like to be an engineer. But could the children's career ambitions be thwarted by their unconventional education? "Universities take the enthusiasm and initiative of potential students into account," Jessica says. "They need people who can think differently. I'm quite confident that whatever they decide to do there will be a place for them."

Jessica can reel off the benefits of home schooling, but many parents can't decide so readily. Priscilla Park-Weir, who lives in Surrey with her army husband Iain, was also home educated, but sent her children to school after a spell teaching them herself. "I didn't think I wanted to educate my own children at home," Priscilla says. "Not at all."

"My own memories of being taught at home are fairly neutral ones," she says. "I never had that high a view of my own home education. It wasn't the concept of home schooling or the teaching, but the feeling of being cut off. But I suspect that I would have had that anyway, it was my personality." [...]

Despite earlier reservations, in the end Priscilla did teach her children, Helen and Gavin, at home for several years. "There were different threads leading to my children's home education," she says. "We were living in Aberdeen and it was a combination of the schooling there at that time and seeing other home-educated children so

## Home Education in the News

content in themselves. So many people don't realise home schooling is a legal option all the way through."

Because of her own childhood, she had felt that home schooling created isolation. "But my children were very confident and out-going, home schooling worked well for them. They would wait for their friends to finish school and then rush out and play," she says.[...]

Both the Park-Weir children did three A levels and went on to university. Helen now works in the investment management division of HSBC and Gavin, 22, is working for an internet start-up company. Priscilla believes her children's confidence and success is grounded in their early years.

"From an early age Mum encouraged us to ask questions," Helen says. "We always asked why? Why don't stars fall out of the sky? At school I remember thinking some of my teachers were stupid because they couldn't answer all my questions."

But when Helen has children of her own, would she consider teaching them at home? "I don't know if I'm the right kind of person to teach, but you never know, it's not something I definitely wouldn't do," she says.

In case she does decide to follow the home schooling path, here's a tip. Most fish don't have eyelids (only sharks, and theirs close from the bottom up). Also, although fish spend time resting, they don't really sleep as they have to keep moving to get water (and thus oxygen) through their gills.

(c) Pippa Crerar, *The Guardian*, 30 May 2000; printed with permission

### HOME EDUCATION ABROAD: Japan

Earlier in the year British newspapers reported the findings of a Japanese advisory committee set up by the conservative prime minister himself, Keizo Obuchi. In an effort to understand why his country was suffering an increase in social problems such as rising juvenile crime, a higher than ever suicide rate and high levels of unemployment, the prime minister sought the advice of a panel that included an astronaut and a playwright. Their report, which covered

everything from education to business, urged the Japanese people to think in terms of spontaneity and individuality rather than the existing culture of conformity as the only road to success.

Almost all schoolchildren in Japan follow a strict national curriculum until the age of 16. For an increasing number of children, the pressure for academic performance has become too great and they are seeking violent ways out. The following news report from the *Japan Times* illustrates one such story, and discusses how the school system itself may be to blame. The report also features the words of Kyoko Aizawa, who has campaigned tirelessly for a change in Japanese law to recognize home education as a viable option and for the cultural stigma attached to 'school-refusers' to be lifted. In the next issue we will focus more closely on home education in Japan and the increasingly positive support for it from the media there.

### Rigid schools failing kids in tough times

The rigidity of Japanese schools is suffocating children and is one of the causes behind the recent rise in youth crime, according to education experts.

Naoki Ogi, an education critic who taught for 22 years until 1993 in junior high and high schools, believes teachers need to open up their minds and listen to children before trying to control them, otherwise bullying, truancy and other problems will never see a decline.

"If teachers took the bullying seriously, the boy who hijacked the bus might have led a happier life," Ogi said, referring to a 17-year-old boy from Saga Prefecture who hijacked a bus earlier this month, killing one passenger and injuring two others.

The boy was reportedly bullied when he was in junior high school. According to one extreme account, he was forced by his peers to jump from the top of a flight of stairs at school, resulting in a serious back injury. Teachers at his school "did nothing" to stop the bullying, the boy reportedly told police after he was arrested.

"Teachers basically like kids," Ogi said. "But the educational system, which requires teachers to evaluate students' personalities, is distorting teachers' perceptions of the real feelings of children."

## Home Education in the News

In 1993, the Education Ministry introduced an evaluation system at junior high schools that factors in not only academic performance, but also students' attitudes in class. The evaluation, which is often criticized for reflecting teachers' subjective preferences, is looked at along with entrance exam results in reviews of high school admissions applications. Ogi said children are compelled to act out "good kid" roles at school for fear of losing points in their evaluations. "Therefore, more and more bullying is taking place behind teachers' backs," he said.

To give one example of closer communication between teachers and students, Ogi referred to one of his own teaching experiences. He gave a "communication notebook" to each of his students in which they could write to him anything they want, and he promised to keep it secret.

"Of course, not everyone wrote to me. But one girl, who was seen as a rough student, wrote 14 pages one day, and I wrote 14 pages back," Ogi said. "She said she was surprised that I actually took her seriously."

But a 26-year-old high school teacher, who has been teaching for five years, said her workload makes it difficult to have such close relationships.

"There is so much work to do besides teaching classes," she said, referring to such things as organizing school trips, taking care of club activities and participating in various teaching seminars.

"We simply don't have enough time even if we wanted to talk with each student," she said, "and it makes it more difficult when we have over 40 students in a class."

Ogi said the present-day school system, which was established more than 50 years ago, no longer meets the needs of today's information society.

"What children learned at school used to be the most up-to-date information available, but now they can get more recent information outside of schools," he said. The rigid educational system, typified by strict rules and uniform curricula, is

making schools unattractive.

"The classroom model of a teacher facing the blackboard with children taking notes and not being encouraged to speak has not changed at all," Ogi said, adding that the sharp rise in cases of bullying and truancy in recent years reflects children's feelings of oppression.

A more fundamental problem with Japan's compulsory educational system is that it offers no alternatives to school-based education, according to Kyoko Aizawa, head of Otherwise Japan, a home-education support organization.

"Children do not have the right to opt out of school," said Aizawa, who advocates allowing parents to educate their children at home.

"Even if they suffer from serious bullying at school, they have nowhere else to go," she said. Although an increasing number of children are attending "free schools," alternative schools that are not legally recognized by the state, Aizawa said these children, as well as home-educated children, are denied access to higher education in Japan.

"We're not against education in schools," Aizawa said. "But home-based education should be treated as one option, and there should be many options."

Today's youth spent their teens in the 1990s -- the decade of Japan's economic slump and a time, some feel, when the nation suffered a moral breakdown, which was illustrated by a series of corporate failures, nuclear accidents caused by corrupt work ethics, nerve gas attacks, and scandals involving bureaucrats and police officers.

Ogi says this social backdrop, as well as the rigidity in schools, is making the lives of adolescents difficult.

"Young people have no role models to look up to," he said. "Schools are not comfortable to be in and adults are not trustworthy, so how can they go through such a difficult period in their lives in a positive manner?"

(c) Junko Takahashi, *The Japan Times*, May 27, 2000; printed with permission  
Ann Kennedy Smith

## Home Education in Scotland

The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Bill has now completed its process and will shortly become law. As we reported in April, amendments to get rid of the requirement for consent to withdraw (in order to home educate) a child from school fell. There was a short time at the committee stage when it looked like one of the amendments would make it but as it often is within the machinations of politics it seems that the right 'bums were not on the right seats' on the day and those that were, were overcome with the usual dose of uninformed caution (you know the one: 'this is a safeguard'.) So for now we are stuck with sect. 35 and the need for consent to withdraw. However the story does not end there. At the third stage in parliament after some discussion an amendment was passed. Tabled by Brian Montieth MSP, the wording of this was a surprise to home educators:

*The minister may issue guidance as to the circumstances in which parents may choose to educate their child at home and education authorities will have regard to such guidance.* (wording to be confirmed)

The Scottish Executive Education Department had already intimated to us that they hoped to talk and listen about guidance later and indeed the second item in our original contribution (after the proposed amendment to sect.35) was the suggestion of a forum out of which would arise guidance on best practice. So one could take the view, 'so far so good' although the jury is still out upon just how dodgy this wording is. In it's favour, it appears that it was well intentioned and from the text of the discussion in parliament that the rights of home educators are not to be impeded.

Following on from this, the Scottish Executive Education Department asked for a preliminary informal meeting with the home educating organisations on July 3 in Glasgow. The meeting was convened by Jackie Welsh of the Scottish Consumer Council, (author of *Home Works*, the thorough research report on Local Authorities Approaches to Home Educating Parents in Scotland to be published on July 11 and sympathetic to our home educating issues in it's revelations, interpretations and recommendations.) Education Otherwise, H.E.A.S. and Schoolhouse were represented.

The meeting went well. Not surprisingly (but still heartening to experience) the home educators were all singing the same song. There were different notes and lines but the tune was harmonious as to the broad issues around guidance. The Scottish executive officers listened well and I believe actually heard our points including some of the subtleties. They pointed out that the guidance cannot override the law and we pointed out that Local Authorities actually need guidance to understand the law, as well of course as some demystification on home education.

To consolidate the home educating voice E.O. presented the Scottish Executive with an extensive home education information pack as a resource for the drafting process along with a summary of our suggestions at this time. Our suggestions included that they produce a clear 'Summary of the Law relating to Scotland' along with a pro forma 'L.A. guidelines for parents' based on the best existing examples and that L.A.'s become familiar with the scope and thinking of home education through training or similar and have a named contact for families.

We explained that there had been much discussion around 'guidelines' in E.O. and widely among home educators in the past few years and included 'Elective Home Education Legal Guidelines' as well as 'Summary of the Law relating to England and Wales' so that along with some of the best local authority examples they have the benefit of the breadth of home educating thinking on guidance. This is an illustration of how the work of so many can be channelled effectively at the right moment.

Thank you to those who are helping and all of those who have wished us well. As we all know home educators are as diverse as we are many and the support of those not active is as appreciated as the participation of those willing is welcome. E.O. has and is making a calm, constructive and competent contribution to this episode of education law-making in Scotland. We will endeavour to continue on this steady course.

*Ann Samuel Till (Edinburgh)*

## **Where to now?**

The Scottish Executive intend to talk with local authorities next and then to start to draft the guidance. In the meantime, if you have seen or experienced particularly good practice in some area of contact with your L.A. it could be useful now (not just from Scotland). One of the points we made very clearly, both in our contribution to the Bill and at the Scottish Executive meeting, was the distinction between Section 35, the requirements for consent to withdraw a child from school to home-educate, and Section 37, whereby the local authority are given redress if they are of a view that the parents' provision of education does not satisfy them. Section 37 (and its England and Wales equivalent), as we know from the well-aired debate, covers the issue of what we as parents may be expected to produce to show our educational provision (in order that a reasonable education advisor should be 'satisfied'). We have all heard a fairly extensive range of thinking on this. In contrast, the point here is that the "consent to withdraw" of Section 35 should not be contingent upon the "form and style of education provision" of Section 37, but on the right to home-educate, enshrined

in Sections 28 and 30 ('parents wishes' and 'by other means' - the Scottish equivalent of 'or otherwise'). The genuine stated intention to home-educate, with perhaps some indication of what that means to the family, should be sufficient. We hope that the Scottish Executive Guidance will make these distinctions clear.

What would be very helpful now would be your views on what you think would constitute such a stated intention to home-educate. In other words, what do you think should be sufficient to satisfy the L.A. in the granting of consent to withdraw?

It is a real shame that we in Scotland still have this discriminating extra obstacle. Stuck with it in the meantime, we can reduce its possibilities for causing more oppression by doing everything we can to assist the *listening* Scottish Executive to produce 'oppression-free' guidance. The draft guidance will be for consultation. Your views (UK wide) on this and any aspect of the consultation process are welcome at the 'in tray' address:

[hedbestscot@hotmail.com](mailto:hedbestscot@hotmail.com)

or : Ann Samuel Till, 49 Bellevue Rd. Edinburgh Eh7 4DJ (0131 556 6271)

"... Our research has revealed a worrying range of concerns about the way local authorities approach their relationship with home educating families. From the outset, information and advice given by local authorities can be unhelpful or misleading. The law places no time limit on local authorities to respond to requests by parents to withdraw their children from school, and offers no flexibility on attendance even when children are clearly having problems. These are serious shortcomings in the law, as they can place intolerable strain on families.

The confusion over the continuing role of local authorities in home education can leave families vulnerable to poor practice by those who simply do not agree with the concept of home education. Worse, there appears to be a growing trend towards a blurring of the distinctions between education and social welfare issues by local authorities, leading to parents facing the terrifying prospects of legal action and social work intervention – all because of a decision they have legitimately made about their children's education.

Such unacceptable harassment of consumers has no place in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and may not stand the tests of the Human Rights legislation. We utterly condemn the practices we have come across by some local authorities in Scotland..."

*Extract from the Chairman's preface of **Home Works**, produced by the Scottish National Consumer Council (see next article).*

## STOP PRESS!! Scottish Consumer Council Report

On 11<sup>th</sup> July 2000 the Scottish Consumer Council published their long awaited *Home Works*, a report on *local authorities' approaches to working with home educating parents in Scotland*. It was a damning report and highlighted "unacceptable harassment of consumers". The chairman's preface stated "We utterly condemn the practices we have come across by some local authorities in Scotland." Good stuff – and all the better for an independent group being able to say it.

The media response up here was unprecedented! The report was covered by most major and many lesser papers as well as being highlighted on radio and both the Scottish BBC news (lunchtime and evening) and Independent Scottish news programmes simultaneously – making videoing interesting! A huge well done and thank-you to all those families who made themselves available to the press at such short notice. I felt the overall coverage was extremely favourable towards parents and the press were definitely impressed with the tone of the report. The papers gave case studies of a wide variety of families - of those who had withdrawn from school because of bullying, special needs or underachieving, as well as families who had always home-educated and had no dealings with the authorities (on a personal level I particularly appreciated these families being willing to speak up). Also of encouragement was that families from the Highlands down to Glasgow and Edinburgh (well it's down from up here!) were shown. The authorities often want to marginalise us, but the press were able to show that not only are we nice normal human beings but that we are all over the place and doing a brilliant job!

I've been asked to include some personal experience in this report. I can only say that the events surrounding our own involvement were very enlightening and I now know more about how the TV news teams work. Our 'case' was highlighted in the Tuesday edition of *The Scotsman* as being an example of withdrawal from school and council power gone mad! Scarcely had the papers come out when the phone started ringing – Grampian TV had read the paper and could they.....OK, but I've got a photographer coming early so make it late - The man from the Evening Express was taking his last shot of the children and I was thinking 'just time to dive into the shower and do something with my hair' when the photographer shouted "The BBC's here" and two vans drew up in our drive – not wanting the headline 'BBC kept waiting while home-educator has shower', we obliged. I indicated it would have been nice if they could have asked first but the interviewer said his boss had (yes you've guessed it ) read it in the Scotsman. No sooner had they gone - their cameraman being in love with our bookcase and very pro- home-ed, than the Grampian crew arrived and had coffee before doing their bit!

And yes, I got my shower and sorted my hair but no-one was there by then!! The moral of the tale is never open the door before you've had a shower, and if any of you budding writers and good communicators want to consider a career in TV journalism – forget any original research, just read the Scotsman!

The kids loved it, Lizzie made a camera complete with tripod out of old junk while they filmed the interview and Charlie our 3 year old contributed by opening rattly sweetie wrappers into the sound equipment so we had to do re-takes. Both camera men were brilliant with the children, and one gave Lizzie some real filter paper for her model camera. The BBC interviewer wanted to get Lizzie to be interviewed on camera and asked what he could do to persuade her. I think he was taken by surprise when she said she'd do it for a working robot! He didn't come up with the goods and needless to say he didn't get the interview!!

A hectic day for us and doubtless for many others but overall the outcome has been a positive profile raising of the HE cause in Scotland. The media were responding to the SCC report and thanks to the efforts of many ordinary families that response was very positive.

Anyone who would like a copy of the SCC *Home Works* report can obtain one free of charge from the SCC by phoning 0141 226 5261.

*Liz Alderdice, Aberdeenshire*

## ***Home Works: An English Perspective***

Having had time only to skim through a copy of *Home Works*, this publication is a welcome boost for home education. I am particularly impressed to see parents who home-educate their children described by the report as consumers. In respect of our education authorities, both in Scotland and in England and Wales, that is exactly what we are. It has now been recognised by a respected independent body and everyone of us can work to encourage this perspective when we communicate with LAs, LEAs and the media. Parents in Scotland suffer an enormous disadvantage over those in England and Wales, in not being legally entitled to automatic deregistration of their children from school. The efforts of members of Education Otherwise brought about a change in the law in England and Wales some years ago now, and we will continue to work for change in Scotland, alongside other home education organisations.

*Christine Adey, Dorset*

## School Refusal

I remember when our daughter, now 15 years old, was about 8 months and I was feeling exhausted and desperate from her long sleepless evenings and our broken nights. Another mother from a local NCT support group would smile sympathetically and confess that her one year-old went to bed at 6.30 and slept until 8.00 the next morning. I couldn't understand why I was so unlucky. After making several evening phone calls to her, each time hearing the baby crying in her cot in the background while mother seemed unperturbed, I began to realise that parents don't all share the same perceptions of our children's needs.

As a coordinator, I have always been struck by the ability of parents who decide to educate their own children to be honest with themselves about their children's need to be happy and what sort of education they will really benefit from. In particular, parents who start to home-educate because of school refusal or a general sense of unhappiness at school have to trust their instincts and take a leap of faith into an unknown that only a tiny minority of families choose. That decision can be made harder if educational psychologists, welfare officers or headteachers are predicting disastrous social or emotional consequences for the child. But some parents just know that what their child is suffering is not acceptable. Their expectations are that their child should thrive and be happy, and if something is not right, it is their job to do something about it – it's their responsibility.

Some LEA officials struggle with the idea that parents should take responsibility for their children when school fails to work. They choose instead to see the child as the failure, who has failed to stand up to bullying or failed to settle in school. They can also accuse the child's mother of a failure to separate emotionally from the child, transferring presumed anxieties and causing all the problems. An educational psychologist wrote in a letter to me a couple of years ago that school refusers are "wilful" and deliberately choose to avoid going to school. His view was that he and his colleagues should "attempt to find a reason for the refusal ... address it appropriately ... and assist the parents in returning the child to regular attendance".

I pointed out to him that school refusal is largely about self-preservation where, for a variety of reasons, a child does not perceive school as a safe place. I think every child is entitled to feel secure in his or her learning environment. It seems inappropriate to regard as wilful the refusal to submit to a situation that is either physically or emotionally damaging. While school refusers/phobics do have a choice, it cannot be described as a free one. In fact, a reasonable person would consider it rational and healthy not to choose to submit to an intolerable situation. The LEA's argument would suggest that children could choose whether or not to submit to other experiences that they feel are harmful, such as more readily acknowledged forms of child abuse, and they are wilful if they do not. They would surely agree that this would not be right.

I think children are entitled to expect their feelings to be respected by LEA officers and their response to be taken seriously. This is not always the case, and I have seen evidence of this. Over the past ten years, I have known of families in my area where professionals “attempted to find a reason for the refusal”, “addressed it appropriately” and “assisted the parents in returning the child to regular attendance”. In practice, this meant encouraging parents to damage their relationship with their child by carrying them kicking and screaming into school, threats of taking the child into care, or threatening to prosecute parents. I have found the lack of sensitivity and common sense involved in some of this “work” appalling. It would be encouraging to think that the treatment of children who refuse to submit to an emotionally damaging school experience could focus more on the needs of the child and the alternatives available, rather than the requirements of the school system.

Perhaps things are changing; I seem to receive fewer calls these days from parents in a desperate situation with their LEA. It would be nice to think that the efforts of so many EO coordinators, contacts, and EO members who share their experiences with others and communicate with LEAs is slowly changing the way children and their parents are treated when school is not working for a child. Maybe the message about home education is getting to parents before the LEA has a chance to intervene with their “assistance”.

*Christine Adey, Dorset*

*Do you have a different experience of your child's school refusal and subsequent home education? Was your LEA sympathetic? Do you have a story to tell that others would benefit from reading? Write to the editor with your contribution.*

*Try explaining to the ed psych or EWO that your child suffers from \*fu-toko\*! (see next page)*

Next to the right to life itself, the most fundamental of all human rights is the right to control our own minds and thoughts. That means, the right to decide for ourselves how we will explore the world around us, think about our own and other persons' experiences, and find and make the meaning of our own lives. Whoever takes that right away from us, by trying to “educate” us, attacks the very centre of our being and does us a most profound and lasting injury. He tells us, in effect, that we cannot be trusted even to think, that for all our lives we must depend on others to tell us the meaning of our world and our lives, and that any meaning we may make for ourselves, out of our own experience, has no value.

*Instead of Education (Pelican 1977) John Holt*

## Home Education in Japan

*The following excerpt covers answers from Tomiko Kugai, a respected Japanese homelearning parent and advocate, to questions on home-schooling in Japan. Ms Kugai has a 14 year-old daughter. The full article appeared in this May's edition of KnoK News, a homelearning newsletter, produced by the Covert family -- Kazumi, Kenya and Brian. KnoK stands for \*Kodomo no Kokoro\*, meaning "Heart of a Child" in Japanese. It is their belief that the heart of any child is at the centre of true learning, wherever and however such learning may take place.*

EXACTLY HOW DO FAMILIES IN JAPAN GET STARTED IN HOMESCHOOLING?  
WHAT KIND OF STEPS DO THEY HAVE TO TAKE?

In many cases in Japan, families start out homeschooling through \*fu-toko\* (school avoidance) on the part of their child: Parents think their child has a problem, so they go through counselling and prepare to send the child back to school through so-called corrective facilities [kyosei shisetsu], such as an "adjustment guidance room" [\*teki-o shido kyo-shitsu\*] at school, a municipal "child consultation center" [jido sodan-jo] or a "free school" program.

On the other hand, there are those exceedingly few parents in Japan who are finding a problem with the methods of school itself, and they go on to choose learning at home as a way to raise their children. In such a case, the homeschooling child's name will continue to be listed on the school register in Japan, so there would be no need to individually notify the local board of education. Once parents have notified officials at the school of their child's desire to learn at home, that is generally sufficient in many cases.

There is also a slowly rising number of households in Japan that are choosing homeschooling from the very beginning. Here, too, there are no fixed procedures in Japan for dealing with homeschooling, so many homeschooling parents find it easier at this stage to go through the formal motion of registering with the school, and then inform school officials at that time of the child's intent to learn at home, instead of at school.

WHAT HAPPENS IF A FAMILY IN JAPAN INTENDING TO HOMESCHOOL RECEIVES NO COOPERATION FROM EDUCATION/SCHOOL OFFICIALS? WHAT RECOURSE DOES THE FAMILY HAVE?

It used to be that a child in Japan who didn't show up for school would not be moved up a grade or would not be allowed to graduate - but this was for \*fu-toko\*, not for homeschooling in particular. And even then, such actions by a school against \*fu-toko\*, for the most part, are rarely taken nowadays. There are the occasional cases of a school principal - usually one who possesses little understanding of the matter - making such threatening statements, but the Ministry of Education is telling school officials these days to refrain from such actions. If a

homeschooling family finds itself facing such a situation, it can - with the backing of a support group, for example - obtain the actual facts from various areas in Japan and present that information to the school principal during discussions. (Taking the case to a local board of education in Japan usually proves futile, and unfortunately no other official organisation exists to mediate such matters between a family and school.)

Regardless of whether or not there are restrictions on graduation, it is still possible for a child to proceed to a higher school level by taking and passing tests sanctioned by the Education Ministry, such as those for graduating from middle school [*\*Chu-gaku Kentei\**] and entering university [*\*Dai-gaku Kentei\**].

ARE THERE ANY COURT CASES IN JAPAN BEING HEARD AT PRESENT ON THE SPECIFIC ISSUE OF HOMESCHOOLING?

There are none at present, as far as I know.

AUTHORITIES IN SOME COUNTRIES TEND TO CONFUSE HOMESCHOOLING WITH "CHILD NEGLECT" OR "CHILD ABUSE." IS THIS A PROBLEM IN JAPAN TOO?

There is always the possibility of such confusion occurring. But where homeschooling itself is concerned in Japan, the relevant authorities for the most part don't make it a point to come to the home and check on things. So there doesn't seem to be a problem in this regard.

WHAT IS THE OFFICIAL STANCE OF JAPAN'S MINISTRY OF EDUCATION ON HOMESCHOOLING? HOW DOES THAT STANCE AFFECT HOMESCHOOLERS' DAILY LIVES?

The Japanese government has issued no official opinion on homeschooling one way or the other. The ministry did, in 1992, issue a statement on *\*fu-toko\** [school avoidance] to the effect that: "As any child is likely to turn to avoiding school at any time, children need not be forced to return to school." This signalled the government's apparent recognition that to continue pushing school avoiders to go back to school could worsen an already serious problem. Following this statement by the ministry, school officials nationwide have generally softened their stance on children who avoid school.

As for those who homeschool: Though there may be exceptions, the ministry for the most part does not interfere in the daily lives of homeschooling families at present, neither encouraging nor discouraging such activities.

*For more background about Japanese education, see Home Education News*

# Archie from the Archives

While Sarah takes a summer break from the Archives, we've sneaked in a much-loved ARCHIE from the early 90's. (Dedicated to all those who dread their annual visit.)

★ MRS G OFFERS SOME HANDY TIPS ON HOW TO ★  
 ★ HANDLE THAT VISIT FROM THE INSPECTOR IN 1992 ★  
 [Cut this out & PIN to your BULLETIN BOARD] ★ NE FRIENDLY!

EDUCATING ARCHIVES BY SUE

① DO NOT INSIST ON SPEAKING FRENCH THROUGHOUT

alors, inspecteur, vous êtes en retard encore une fois hein?

② AVOID ENLISTING HIS HELP IN CUTTING HAIR

No No! That's far too short

③ ENCOURAGE HIM TO BE EXPLICIT AS FAR AS POSSIBLE

Have you got on to fractions yet?

what fractions had you in mind?  $3/4$ ?  $5/8$ ?  $2/9$ ?  $4/16$ ?

④ DON'T ASK HIM TO BRING IN THE COAL

④ NEVER OFFER HIM YOUR CAST-OFFS

I've no further use for this but it is 100% wool & the colour is you

⑥ ALWAYS ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO HAVE THE LAST WORD

- COME BACK, you haven't looked at my stamp collection or train numbers or my model dinosaur yet...

## So this is Home Ed?

Following a very disappointing outcome of a bullying issue “due to a gender orientated socio-geographic situation”, or in plain English, “there’s more of one sex than the other and we live in a small village so it’s not going to change”, and the failure of the village school to cope with a 4 year-old that could already read, we decided to remove both Phillip and Flossy from the village school.

We’d thought about home ed for many a year, even before the children were born, but the proximity of such an ideal seeming village school with two full time teachers and less than 30 pupils between them, situated quite literally “a child’s throw away”, (I really could have thrown them to school) led us into the school system.

The sudden removal of our two from such a small school caused some interest to say the least. The school lost its funding for them (shame we never gained it), and this had a major impact upon them as they’d already planned on spending it. The attitude of other parents was interesting, some enthused about they’d like to do it too, but weren’t clever enough (?), others took the more conventional “You’re mad” view. The school’s own view, however, puzzled me more. I used to administer the savings club; I was asked not to by the board of governors. I used to help out fixing things here and there; I was no longer asked, and to get an exchange of greeting took outright confrontation.

We have a slightly unconventional lifestyle: my wife works full-time, plus more besides, and has a very good career that she enjoys, subsequently I am teacher, house husband, chief cook & bottle washer etc. This works for us; perhaps a quality of home ed is the need to be flexible and go with the flow? Initially, all parents were sceptical; both our fathers refusing to even speak about home ed, mothers reserving judgement. A year and a half later, three out of four agree it is the right thing for us; my own father still refuses even to talk about the subject bar the occasional comment about “sending them to school at some point to round off their education”. Thus leading me somewhat long-windedly to ask the question, “What shape should an education be?”

*Steev Stamford, 1 Ferndale Avenue, Peak Dale, Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 8AZ*

### Thought for the month

The problem EO has is a simple one, in respecting everyone's right to be individual you have an organisation whose membership are all quite strong minded and above all individual. Sitting here, thinking about it, we should use the typical 'atom' type picture as our logo. It would reflect the central core that EO is whilst also showing the orbits of its component parts, the families, whirling around it, each following their own individual, but none the less defined path.

*Steev Stamford, Derbyshire*

## **EO Camp News**

### **Gwersyll Dewi Sant**

### **Saint Davids Camp**

Diolch yn fawr/ thanks to everyone who made the 2000 camp happen with fun and frolics, that means *you*, for being there! Sorry about the wind: Liz Stevens thought I had booked the weather, and I thought she had. You will be pleased to hear that the second week was calm and sunny.

This is a request for feedback from anyone who has ever been here to Gwersyll Dewi Sant since the first camp in 1995. Even though the camp so far has only needed one person to organise it, I want it to be *our* camp; I want to know what you think before making decisions about the 2001 camp. Personally, I would prefer to keep the camp as unstructured, flexible and as cheap as possible, with shared input. I would like to continue the new camp fund system, with all families contributing a nominal amount in order to be at Pencarnan thanks to the kind generosity of Sian and Alan, and so that activities will be free at point of use. Any thoughts on the system?

Ideas discussed at the 2000 camp included:

- September camp in 2001? The sea will be warmer, no clash with exams etc.
- Main camp in the square field behind caravans? Pros: more privacy, electric hook-ups, more flexible camping, closer to loos. Cons: further from beach with road to cross, less sea view.
- Pow-wow/circle time/meeting once or twice during the camp for info exchange or airing problems.
- Camp address list, do you want to be on one? Would you pay extra to get a copy?
- Limit number of families to 60 or so (there were 40 families this year, and five in 1995!) or be open to all to benefit from the camp?

Please write with your comments and ideas before the end of the year, and shhh, don't tell any one how great the camp is! Finally, there were some found items at the end of the camp. Let me know if you left anything behind. Did anyone find a wooden flute belonging to Rowena? Or 2 tent bags? Or a toy pony loved by Lucy?

*Yvette Hartley, 17 Maes Inqli, Newport, Penbrokeshire SA42 0TE*  
*[erin@erinandyvette.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:erin@erinandyvette.fsnet.co.uk) (01239 820968)*

## Peak Camp 2000

This is an account of the time we spent at Peak Camp, which is the social side of EO. A lot of the families at this camp have been attending since it started, as well as being the only camp they attend. The atmosphere is welcoming and so relaxed as to be horizontal. No events were organised and it is very freeform, with people arriving and departing all through the week.

Swooping below the clouds you see a verdant green and pleasant land, move in closer and a farm set on the edge of the beautiful Peak District is discernible. Already tents and caravans are springing up in the fields. Hoards of children in multicoloured clothing run from place to place, gradually turning a uniform brown as the week progresses. Gather together families from as far afield as Australia, all concerned about their children's education, and you have Peak Camp 2000.

On site was a toilet and shower block (Hot Water 20p) and is but a short picturesque 30 minute walk from Hartington. Buxton, Bakewell and other towns and villages are all near by car and foot. No planned activities, just a free form socialising event. Children roamed at will around the site and a number of toys and skill learning opportunities were available. The Tissington Trail or Manifold Valley trial is close by and bikes could be rented to explore these awe-inspiring abodes of natural beauty. With plenty of paths around the area, it is heaven for walkers. Everybody is approachable and it is possible to spend many hours talking and discussing many topics. When the campfire is going, marshmallows are toasted and people sing and drink. The relaxed attitudes are just what are needed to recharge the mental, physical and emotional batteries.

The weather is invigorating with that fine mix of variation all British people love to discuss. Running water is available under your tent and it is possible to top up that tan, but not every day. Bear in mind that this camp makes Bog Snorkelling look like a walk in the Park, change of clothing being a necessary requirement, waterproof if at all possible. Weather permitting, families can be found sharing the remains of their store cupboards at communal meals. Some nights a quiz tested most people's academic standing.

Do you consider yourself a townie? In that case, this camp is not for you. You missed it this year, are you going to deprive yourself next year?

*Richard and Julie Eaton, 52 Cedar Rd, Batchley, Reddich B97 6HN.*

Children do not need to be made to learn about the world, or shown how.  
They want to, and they know how.

*Instead of Education (Pelican 1977) John Holt*

## EO NEWSLETTER EDITORIAL POLICY

The following brief statement on editorial policy was proposed and accepted at the last EO council meeting, in order to help contributors, readers and editors in the compilation of the newsletter. We hope you find it useful when you come to write that article or letter you have been meaning to submit!

### GUIDANCE

The primary purpose of the Education Otherwise newsletter is to provide support and information for members. Education Otherwise supports all home educators irrespective of the particular approach they might choose to take in educating their children. The editors encourage members to make their own contribution, express their opinion and initiate debate. It is important that contributions are written in the first- or third-person ("I think this" or "She did that") rather than in the instructional or prescriptive second-person ("You should do this..." or "You are wrong to think that..."). Contributions can take many forms, for example: personal contacts, family stories, learning experiences, reflections on life as a home educator, expounding of a philosophical standpoint or resource recommendations.

The editors have a duty to produce a newsletter that is of most interest to readers, and all submissions will be subject to this principle, except Education Otherwise Council and administrative business, which must be included. Submissions may be edited for length and available space, where this does not change the message of the contributor. Articles are more likely to be included where they are concise. Where a contributor is critical of another member or group, the latter will be consulted and offered a right of reply, to be included alongside the original item. Any contribution considered by the editors to be offensive to other members will be edited or not published.

### ADVERTISING

Advertisements shall be limited to 1/8 A4 page (approx. 50 words). The advertisements editor may not be able to reproduce illustrations or logos. Members can advertise free of charge, but are asked to make a donation if they hope to make money from the advertisement. (e.g. property rental, services etc.) Non-members may submit advertisements, but the editor will ensure that they are of sufficient educational interest to members. A flat rate charge of £15-£20\* for individuals and £30-£40\* for larger concerns will be payable where the advertisement is for commercial purposes. Percentage of sales or reduced price for members is an acceptable alternative to payment, where agreed by the editor.

Fliers of up to A5 size may be included, where there are no more than two fliers per newsletter. (This does not include EO's flyers.) Inclusion of a flier will be on a 'first come first served' basis. Should demand for this service increase, the editor will be responsible for restricting repeat insertions from the same individual or organisation, and for including those judged to be of most educational interest to members. The cost will be £125 per issue. Heavier weight flyers may incur extra postage charges. In exceptional circumstances, a flyer may be included free of charge where submitted by a non-profit making education organisation that is offering free or outstanding benefits of interest to EO members. A reciprocal arrangement may be agreed between a non-profit making home education organisation and EO on an individual basis, at the discretion of the EO council.

*\*currently still negotiable*

*The editors*



## Problem page

### A PROBLEM ANSWERED:

I cannot get my 13 year old daughter actively interested in ANYTHING. She seems to have no imagination and I end up prompting, pushing and nagging. I fear she is turning into a 'boring lump'. How can I help her and avoid problems with the LEA

*Here is a selection of the answers received:*

Isn't that what all 13 year olds are like?

My advice is to ride the storm. It is very difficult to spend all day, every day, with a teenager so try to put a little distance between you if possible. Also you may have to lower your expectations.

*Maybe you could arrange for other people to do things with your child? Perhaps parents, friends, neighbours could take her out for the day/ morning?*

Keep a 'secret' diary of what she does do as evidence for the LEA. Secret only because, like a young child, she

may stop doing something she enjoys because you want her to do it (it's education!) It may also reassure you that she is learning even if it is not in the way that you feel is 'the right way'

*Keep the LEA off your back by telling them that just as we cannot see the air that we breathe, we cannot see the education that we know our children are getting. Mention that teacher's voted against performance related pay - you are not paid - therefore why should you be judged on your performance!*

Involve her in the community (see last month's newsletter for ideas)

\*\*\*\*\*

Please send replies to the following problem or any problems you would like to put forward for this page to tackle, to Sue White.

**My family and my in-law's are very unsupportive of our decision to home-educate our children. They are constantly comparing the children to their cousins, unfavourably and refuse to see them in 'school' hours. It is wearing us down. Can anyone offer advice as to how to cope?**

# Educating Archie by SEG

ONCE AGAIN MRS G & ARCHIE ARE AT A SUMMER FESTIVAL DOING EO INFO



STEINER CAFE

TODAY'S SPECIAL  
WALDORF SALAD  
(Sorry - No greens)

TAPE NOW  
PLAYING:  
The  
EURYTHMY-ICS  
(I did it My Way?)



WHO'S THIS MARIA MULTI-STORY THEN?



she owned  
a chain  
of garages

TOY  
ONES



HOME MEDICATION?  
WHAT'S THAT WHEN IT'S AT HOME?



TRAINING  
IN D.I.Y  
BRAIN  
SURGERY

DR  
PEPPER'S  
SUPER  
RED HOT  
FURRY  
ANIMALS



YOU'RE PULLING  
MY  
LEG!



JUST  
ENOUGH SO'S  
I CAN  
REACH  
WITH  
THE  
SAW

SINCE  
2000

© SEG JULY 2000

OF COURSE ARCHIE WAS JOKING, WASN'T HE, READERS? WHY NOT SPEAK TO ARCHIE DIRECT, WITH YOUR VIEWS AND IDEAS BY EMAILING HIM [Archie@pwtag.demon.co.uk](mailto:Archie@pwtag.demon.co.uk) COMING SOON, MRS G'S email (for those who have had problems experiencing Archie & would like help)

## Letters

*Please include full name and address when writing to newsletter editors. Name and address can be withheld on request. Due to limited space, some editing may occur.*

### HOME EDUCATION IN CANADA

I read with interest your item on home education abroad in the June issue and thought I would write and tell you about my experience. In 1998 we decided to return to British Columbia, Canada and as I was home schooling my youngest child here in Wales, I felt I wanted to continue.

What a breath of fresh air the Canadians were when it came to home education. They didn't just tolerate home schooling, they positively encouraged it. They understood that school did not suit every child; they understood that some children were not ready for school at 6 years old and needed to stay at home a bit longer. They also recognised the fact that some children may need to take a year or so out of school and be taught at home. Home education over there goes under the banner of 'correspondence school': in other words, you can keep up with what its happening in school so that if at any time your child would like to go to school, they would be familiar with the work.

A friendly support teacher interviewed me; we discussed my child's needs and interests and chose themes of work that my son would enjoy doing. I was offered a free computer and software and was given boxes of equipment,

which included videos, books, art supplies, stationery etc. I had a lesson plan I could follow at the pace that suited my child and each day we were both encouraged to write a few comments at the end of our lessons. Every few weeks I mailed off samples of my son's work to my support teacher, who marked it with colourful stickers and sent it back to us along with a nice letter of support and encouragement. The support teacher visits every few weeks and helps with any problems you might have, and you can telephone them whenever you like. The whole system is a joy compared to the United Kingdom.

Sadly, because of the work situation, we had to return to this country and I am back to teaching my child alone. I have been teaching at home for 3 years now. I received a letter from the education department when I first started home education. That letter asked for a lesson plan, which I sent to them. Since that time, so far, I have not heard from them again.

Perhaps one day the education system in this country will become as grown up as the Canadians are, but I'm not holding my breath!

*Patti Bright, 8 Maes yr Odyn,  
Dolgellau, Gwynedd LL40 1UT*

New family? Moved to a new area?  
Looking for contact? Don't forget to  
get in touch with your EO local contact  
for details in your area.

## Letters

### DARTMOOR EDUCATION GROUP

I have written each year to let members know how the Dartmoor Education Group is going and thought it was time to give an update, so here goes. We set this group up over 3 years ago. The children who come are home-educated but on some days of the week they come to Sands School in Ashburton, Devon and attend our group, run by a teacher who has been working for us for 3 years now. The children do creative activities, outings, environmental activities, sports, and the 3Rs with the teacher. It is great fun and the children enjoy going and seeing their friends on a regular basis. It combines the good bits of school with the good bits of being home-educated (or at least that's the idea anyway!). At the moment we have lots of lovely boys and are very short of girls, so if there are any girls out there in the Devon area who would like to join in the fun, please get in touch. It's not quite the same as flexi-schooling because the group does not have a curriculum that the teacher has to deliver. Instead the teacher develops the curriculum according to who is in the group, and we don't do any tests or have any targets or anything like that. You have to be over eight to join because of the Children Act. Sorry to any younger children who might have wanted to come.

Please get in touch if you are interested and send me a SAE for details. I know this way of doing things appeals to a lot of people because I get a lot of calls from people who want to set up something similar in other parts of the

country. I hope some of you have managed to do it because it has really worked for us.

*Susan Wilson, Tor View, Staddon, South Brent, Devon TQ10 9EG*

### RETAINING NEW MEMBERS

In response to the paragraph re retaining new members (NL 133), here are some of my thoughts for local EO support groups in attempting to "help (and keep) new members":

- a) If someone attends or contacts a group who knows no one, then they or their children may be in need of support or social contact. Welcome them.
- b) Provide excellent directions to meetings and events. Even if it is just a walk in the woods, check that your meeting place/car park is sign posted or easily recognisable. You may know how to get to the venue blindfolded but it can be stressful enough to walk into a room of strangers without being late from searching for the venue for ½ hour.
- c) Are there enough chairs? Or are you forcing someone out of the group because it is too embarrassing for them to search out something to sit on in strange surroundings?
- d) Talk. Preferably more than just "Hello". Ask how things are going. Say what's difficult for you. e.g. "We had a lousy day Wednesday – how has your week been?" Tell how home education works for your family: routines, outings, written work, euphoria, boredom, easiness,

## Letters

- good fun, tiring ... Not talking can give the impression that you've got everything sussed. Share the good and the bad.
- e) Use the phone/e-mail. Just a quick call or note can shatter isolation or self doubt.
  - f) Draw on new members' assets and ideas. Delegate.
  - g) Get enough sleep. It's not encouraging for someone embarking on HE to look around at a group of adults who all look tired or in need of a long break.

A local group may have a strong core of members, but if they fail to draw new folks into an open structure, it will eventually wither, leaving little for our youngest members. These points may seem trivial to some but longstanding home educators should not underestimate their positive effects when welcoming families new to EO.  
*Jane Radford, Leicestershire*

### ELECTRONICS IN KENT

Are there any children (aged 13+) who would be interested in doing electronics at West Kent College (Tonbridge), starting in September? Priority will be given to children that have come out of school due to bullying.

My son came out of school just over a year ago. He was interested in electronics and I managed to set up a 2 hour weekly course for seven children last year. It has been very successful with all of the children being very supportive of each other. They had two

lecturers when practical work was being done and one for theory teaching. Sometimes a mature student came in to help as well. All in all, it has been a very positive experience.

If you think your child would be interested, or you would like more information, please phone me on 01732 850826. This is especially for bullied children!

*Julie Taylor, Court Cottage, Court Lane, Hadlow TN11 0DS*

### READING BOOKS WANTED

Wanted: Oxford Reading Tree reading scheme books from Stage 6 and up or Ginn Reading Scheme 360 Level 4 and up or Gay Way (New Way) series, third book and up. Reasonable condition and price, please.

Mrs Roberts, Court Cottage, St Kew Highway, Bodmin PL30 3DP  
[karenannroberts@aol.com](mailto:karenannroberts@aol.com)

### SEEKING CONTACT

Is there anyone else in Exeter? My nearly 13 year-old daughter and I would like to meet other Home Educators who live in or around Exeter. Also, we are having difficulties with the LEA who think we want them to visit every 4 months. Does anyone else have this problem or are we being singled out? (Or am I being paranoid!?) Please phone 01392 679499. *Jo Borthen, 57 Florida Drive, Exeter EX4 5EX*

*Unable to get in touch with your local contact? If you are having difficulties, contact Isobel Bogucki (01403 261178)*

## Letters

I have two pre-school age children and am (more or less) decided on home-educating them. I would like to hear from other families who have home-educated their children from "nursery" onwards. In particular, how do you juggle educating older ones and caring for younger pre-educational age ones? How do you ensure the main educator has time out from their teacher/parent roles? How stressful is it?! Do you feel that children who never even start the school system are more shy/clingy/withdrawn than those who have? All thoughts, help and advice gratefully received.

*Karen McIntyre-Bhatty, 22 William Trigg Close, Athlingleborough, Northants NN9 5LD*

*Editor's note: please take up Karen's request - and send your replies to the Newsletter!*

### INDIVIDUALISED READING

The Reading & Language Information Centre, based at Reading University, runs a number of courses concerned with reading and language development. These are designed primarily for teachers, but may be of interest to parents educating their own children. The Centre also produces the *Individualised Reading Booklet* (£7.50 including postage) which is updated annually. *Individualised Reading* lists current children's books in graded reading age ranges from pre-school to 12+ years. I used it over the years to keep an eye on how our children's reading was progressing and as a guide to which books of a similar level of

difficulty we could borrow from the library. We bought several levels of the Nelson/MacMillan *New Way* reading books rather than the entire reading scheme, in order to keep down costs. I found that *Individualised Reading* was helpful in suggesting other books to read. The booklet is available from:

Reading & Language Information Centre, University of Reading, Reading RG6 1HY (0118 9875123)

*Christine Adey, Dorset*

### HOME ED MEETING IN FRANCE

The national summer gathering of *Les Enfants d'Abord* (French home-schooling association) will be held in the centre of France in the Bourbonnais mountains, from August 26th to September 2nd 2000 at:

*Résidence du Cordat, 03250 La Prugne  
tél. 04 70 59 78 08*

Built on large private domaine, the two residence buildings are situated at an altitude of 700 metres and overlook the valley of Besbre. The holiday residence offers apartments for 4 to 8 people, at a price of 32F per person. The facilities available include: outdoor swimming pool, tennis, restaurant, 2 TV rooms, billiards, a children's playroom, ping pong, volleyball, outdoor games for children, badminton. Possible activities in the area include horseback riding, mountain-biking, hiking, museums, arts and crafts. For reservations, please contact:

*Elyane Delmarès,  
La croix Saint-Fiacre, 03100 Vendat,  
France  
tel. : 04 70 59 81 23  
e-mail: DLS@cs3i.fr*

## EDUCATION OTHERWISE BUSINESS

### Education Otherwise Adverts

**STEVE A Story of Home Education** (64 pages incl. valuable index) published under the pseudonym Elizabeth James - is now available from the author, Mrs Margaret Stevens @ £4.50 (+ £1 p&p). Details: **01844 343 928** or order (with cheque made payable to Education Otherwise) from: **High Beech, Lower Rd, Looseley Row, Princes Risborough, Bucks HP27 0NU**

### **E.O. T-SHIRTS**

Good quality "Fruit of the Loom" white cotton T-shirts printed with the E.O. logo (red triangle kicked open by running children)

£ 5 adult (Medium, Large, or Xlarge)  
£ 3.50 child (3/4, 5/6, 7/8, 9/11, 12/13)

Postage & packing:  
Up to 6 shirts: £2.00  
7 shirts or more: £4.00

Cheques payable to: "E.O. Trading Ltd."

**Matthew Connor, 2 Whitegates Lane, Reading, Berkshire, RG6 1ED.**

**EDUCATING CHILDREN AT HOME** by Alan Thomas (Cassell 1998) This book covers research into 100 home educating families in delightfully readable format. There are accounts of different methods and lots of quotes from families. Offered to EO members at special price of **£9.50** from: **85 Coleridge Road, London N8 5EG**, cheques payable to Education Otherwise.

### **Free EO Car Stickers**

Help us spread the word, please send a reasonably large new SAE for your free sticker to **Ali Willer, 28 Cozens-Hardy Road, Sprowston, Norwich NR7 8QF**. They will only be free during the year 2000.

### **Foreign Home Ed Organisations**

If you hear mention of any overseas home education organisations we are anxious to establish as many links as possible. Please pass on the information to Ann Kennedy Smith on the newsletter team.

### **Complaints System**

We would like to find a Complaints Co-ordinator who can ensure that problems arising within different areas of EO's work are noted and followed up effectively. Someone with mediation experience would be very welcome. A lot of emotional energy is wasted when conflict is not adequately resolved.

Contact Isobel Bogucki 01403 261178

E-mail [isobelb@cheerful.com](mailto:isobelb@cheerful.com)

### **Public Liability Cover**

All EO groups that meet around the country are covered by our Public Liability cover. To qualify under this cover you do not need to have EO in your name but the people running it must be EO members and should encourage all who attend to become EO members as well as advertise the group's meetings under Regional Diary in the newsletter. If you hire a hall that requires you to have public liability insurance I can send you a copy of the certificate. **Priscilla Park Weir (Treasurer)**

**Open Council Meeting**  
**Sunday 27th August 2000**  
**Ripon and York College, York**  
All E.O. members are very welcome to attend.

To submit an item for the agenda contact the General Secretary,  
**Janet Wilkinson, 31 Framlingham Road, Peterborough PE2 8UG**  
Tel: 01733 554436  
Post holders should submit reports three weeks prior to the meeting.

### **EO Bulletin No 1**

This bulletin was sent out to all those doing a job in EO. It would be very helpful to receive some feedback from those who have already received a copy. Is this a good idea? Should we continue?

## EDUCATION OTHERWISE BUSINESS

### LOCAL CONTACT UPDATE

#### Resignations

Surrey Sue and David Field

N. Yorkshire Meraylah Allwood

#### New Acting Local Contacts

East Sussex Bo Howard

Herefordshire Kath and Malcolm Hawkins

Wiltshire Samantha Moody

01794 4342041

#### Areas needing a Local Contact

Brighton & Hove, Carmarthanshire, Channel

Islands, Cheshire, South Gloucestershire,

Gwynedd, Hertfordshire, Isle of Man, North

Manchester, Powys, Surrey, Strathclyde,

Tayside, Tyne & Wear, N. Yorkshire

All current LC's should now have received a

copy of the 5<sup>th</sup> (and last) edition of SINC plus

the current Local Contact guidelines.

Why not find out more or send your

comments to me Isobel Bogucki 01403

261178 E-mail [isobelb@cheerful.com](mailto:isobelb@cheerful.com)

### Enquiries Volunteers Needed

We have an excellent team of volunteers dealing with our telephone and postal enquiries, but there is a gap in the system where an enquirer who is not a member wants local information, but the local contact is not willing to spend time with non members, as they have enough on their hands dealing with members.

Our telephone enquiries people encourage those needing local information to join EO and obtain information that way, but understandably some want to know about the local situation before deciding whether to join, or because they feel imminently threatened by their LEA.

We are a charity and should be prepared to help all comers as best we can. Of course we can encourage them to become members or send us a donation for the help we give them, but cannot insist.

We would like to find people in each region who these calls could be passed on to. They would know which local contacts or other active people in their region are happy to take

non-member's calls or have some local information to give the enquirer themselves. We need cover all over the UK, not forgetting Scotland where help is especially needed.

Initially there would be plenty of help in dealing with these calls until you are familiar with the questions asked and where to get the information they need. We would hope to recruit people willing to ask for help from those in EO with more experience, someone with a sympathetic nature who can gain the trust of enquirers and be willing to help whatever the circumstances and support a wide range of philosophies and approaches to home education.

**If you think you MIGHT be able to help us, please phone Edwina Theunissen  
Tel: 01978 661 882**

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### EO Telephone Affinity Scheme

The Phone Co-op continue to send me low bills with lots of 1p calls (minimum charge). You too can join and cut your bills as well as a little something for EO. You keep your own number and line, just dial 4 digits first. The Phone Co-op are now offering all customers an 0845 number (which would come in on the same line) so their friends and family from afar can phone them for the cost of a local rate call. For more details phone, write or email Priscilla Park Weir (see back pages)

### Communications Group/Local Contacts

A Communications Group has been set up to support the General Secretary's role and to try to keep in better contact with all those doing a job in EO. We have produced our 1st bulletin which can be viewed on the web site or obtained by email on request from

**Richard Eaton**

**[richard007\\_1999@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:richard007_1999@yahoo.co.uk)**

Local contacts might find it useful to receive a regular copy of this. If they do not have email perhaps someone in the county would be willing to act as an email address for them.

## EDUCATION OTHERWISE BUSINESS

### Volunteers Needed - TEENS

We need a volunteer to co-ordinate information for parents who have children coming out of school at 13/14 - perhaps a team of 3 people could spread the load amongst each other. These children are generally coming out because of bullying or unhappiness and the parents do not know where to begin or who to turn to. Please help. Phone Priscilla Park Weir 01276 22735.

### Does Home-Education leave you with time on your hands?

Of course not, but perhaps you would like to help EO? We need a distributor for our publications, ideally to start before the Autumn rush. You need about 3 hours free a week, some storage space, and a friendly post office nearby. Perhaps you would like to share the job with a friend?

**Chris Harper**, who has been doing the job for about 4 years, will offer any help needed for you to get started. To get more info, ring him on **01886 884 740**.

### "Compulsory School"

The Education Act 1996 and related materials use the words "compulsory school age" to mean the ages between which children must be provided with a suitable education, at school or otherwise. This leads to a general misunderstanding that it is 'school' that is compulsory rather than 'education'. EO are considering the idea of pressing for a change to the wording of the Act, to prevent this misunderstanding. Such a change would not make any difference to the legal position of home educators as it is already indisputable that school is not compulsory. However, it may have a widespread effect if the popular press, DfEE and LEA documents and other educational material were no longer able to quote the misnomer. Have you any thoughts, comments or suggestions on this issue? If so, please e-mail Clare Murton at [camurton@compuserve.com](mailto:camurton@compuserve.com) or write to 'Compulsory School' c/o Janet Wilkinson (General Secretary)

**Phone numbers of council members on the inside back cover**

### NEW PHONE NUMBER

Do you have a poster up in your local library or community centre? Do you have some old EO stationery that you are using up?

PLEASE make sure it has the up-to-date helpline phone number on it. We are still getting more calls to the old number which is actually costing people more money than necessary.

**0870 7300074**

Thank you.

### LEA or Education Otherwise?

Have you been approached by someone from your LEA describing themselves as from 'Education Otherwise'? E.O. has trademarked the phrase 'Education Otherwise' and Local Authorities **should not** be using it to describe their home education inspection departments because of the possible confusion it could cause. If you have encountered this in your area and would like to help protect people from being misled by official's who use the phrase, either deliberately or otherwise, please contact your nearest council member or Janet Wilkinson (General Secretary) for advice on writing to your LEA.

### E.O. Regional Gathering - Penrith Cumbria

**Saturday 25th November 2000  
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

Key note speaker, Children's activities, Discussion groups, Update on Scottish situation, Legal workshop, Resources purchase/ exchange, Lot of home educators from the local area to talk to.

Cost : Adults £3 Children £1

For further information contact Sarah Cook.

S.A.E. to: **The Old Cottage, Croglin,  
Carlisle, Cumbria, CA4 9RZ**

**Phone: 01768 896019**

E-mail: [sarah@croggies.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:sarah@croggies.freeserve.co.uk)

## DO NOT MISUSE CONTACT LIST

We are registered with the Data Protection Registrar as required under the Data Protection Act 1984 and we must ensure that the names and addresses in the contact list are used for no other purpose than social contact with regard to home education.

*Do not use the contact list to send out any sort of advertising, however relevant to home education.*

If someone uses the contact list for a purpose other than its expressed intent (ie social contact) and a complaint is made to the Data Protection Registrar, they can be subject to a fine of up to £5000.

We must deal most severely with this or lose our right to be on the register, so if this request is ignored membership will be terminated immediately, the right to rejoin will be permanently forfeit, and a complaint will be made to the Data Protection Registrar.  
*Priscilla Park Weir - Treasurer*

### Another Curriculum Volunteer

Henrietta Turnbull has compiled a curricula resources list for the 5-11 age group. This is available by email or post (see advert section). Is there someone who would produce something similar for the 11-16 age group? Even a small list to start with would soon have people adding things. Henrietta has a list of some materials she can give for a start but they need some comment on their usefulness. If you might be able to help, please contact Priscilla Park-Weir.  
[Priscilla.park-weir@racalgroup.co.uk](mailto:Priscilla.park-weir@racalgroup.co.uk)

### **Book now for a great day!**

**Education Otherwise Conference**

**Learning from home  
instead of in school.**

**York 26th August 2000**

**Speakers, workshops, stalls,  
children's activities and crèche.**

**Members £12, non-members £15,  
children £5, under-5's free**

**Send an SAE to 22, Rugby Rd,  
Newport, Gwent NP19 0BS**

## REGIONAL DIARY

EVENTS ORGANISERS PLEASE REMEMBER, WHEN GIVING FULL DETAILS OF ACTIVITIES, THAT THE NEWSLETTER CAN BE READ BY PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF EO.

**New members, attending their first meeting, should phone to check it has not been cancelled.**

*All regular meetings listed below will now be automatically included in every issue. Please notify changes or any meeting no longer taking place to:*

*Martine Archer, 3 Brookfield, Hampsthwaite, Harrogate HG3 2EF 01423 770396*

### **BATH**

**H.E.L.P. group meet regularly for outings and activities.**

*Contact: Louise Jensen 01225 840735*

*Louise Verran 01225 859852*

### **Bath Hedgehogs**

*Contact: Jo Ball & Andy Hannen 01225 427371*

### **BERKSHIRE**

**Mondays - Swimming at Rivermead, Reading 1.30pm. £1.85**

**Tuesdays - Swimming at Windsor Leisure Centre, noon onwards £2.80**

**Wednesdays - Ice skating at John Nike Leisure Centre, Bracknell, 2pm - 4pm £1.50 including lesson & skate hire. Show EO card at reception.**

*Contact: Pat Connor 0118 9662123*

**Local newsletter: Dawn Dingwall 01628 783107**

### **BIRMINGHAM**

**Last Wednesday of the month, Central Library 10.30-1.30pm, also ice-skating, indoor rock climbing, ecology and lots more.**

*Contact: Jackie or Alan 0121 243 8242*

### **BRISTOL**

**Alternate Mondays - Ice skating**

**Alternate Tuesdays - Swimming at Bishopsworth Pool, 1.30 - 2.30**

**Fridays, Totterdown YMCA, 10.45 - 2.00, term time only.**

*Contact: Kathy Nott 0117 966 8265*

### **BUCKS**

**Newsletter for Bucks/Northants,**

*Contact: Dawn Waddington 01908 569380*

*e-mail dawnwaddington@hotmail.com*

**Fortnightly meetings for crafts, activities, play, speakers, drama, trips to museums, theatre etc.**

*Contact: Jackie 01753 886924 or Dorothy 01494 782864*

**Group for young children** meeting for socialising, invite others to join.

Contact: *Alison or Nicholas 0170 3 283727*

### **HANTS/WEST SUSSEX**

**Teenager Day**, every 2nd Thursday of the month. Activities planned by the group, for any home educators 12+. Chichester area.

Contact: *Edward 01243 528508*

*ed@bevmat.demon.co.uk*

**Activities and support**, all welcome Solent Area EO (S.A.E.O.)

Contact: *Sally Andrews 01794 368821 or*

*Bernadette Bury 01243 264837*

### **ISLE OF WIGHT**

**Fridays** - picnics, BBQs, swimming, photography. All ages welcome.

Contact: *Jude 01983 531680*

*Jackie 01983 530378*

**Isle of Wight Learning Zone** has workshops and social events several times a week.

Contact: *Shara 01983 822965*

*Alison 01983 810862*

### **KENT**

**Regular meetings & activities:**

**Canterbury** -

Contact: *Irene Judd 01227 709570*

**Medway towns** -

Contact: *Bridget Becci 01634 234938*

**Tunbridge Wells** -

Contact: *Kim Dale 01892 863941*

For theatre outings and events listing send sae to: *Amanda Mackenzie 16, Brambletree Cott, Borstal Rochester, ME1 3TN.*

**Bromley** New group starting the first Tuesday in September 12-3

Contact: *Claire Wade 0181 460 7347*

*claire@wadefamily99.freeserve.co.uk*

### **LANCASHIRE**

**Regular meeting, please ring.**

Contact: *Angelika Walter 01254 603 497*

**Meetings at Burnley Central Library Children's department**, first Monday of the month.

Contact: *Lorraine Jessop 01706 879424*

**Outings and Get-togethers**, for information

Contact: *Brenda or Diana 01254 389673*

### **LEICESTERSHIRE**

**Frequent meetings** for play, crafts, walks, hanging out, singing, swimming, science, skating and much more.

Contact: *Lise 0116 242 5802*

### **LINCOLNSHIRE**

**1st and 3rd Monday** of the month (including bank holidays and school holidays) 1pm -3pm. Meeting in Cleethorpes in church hall.

Contact: *Caroline: 01472 690738*

**Informal group** for chatting and playing, Boston/Spalding/Sleaford area.

Contact: *Chris Stevens 01205 821374*

### **LONDON**

**Tuesdays** - Clissold Park for socialising and support. Current ages 1-8 yrs but all welcome.

Contact: *Charlotte 0207 254 0419*

**Wednesdays** - Honor Oak playground.

Contact: *Keith Hertog 0181 776 859*

**SE London/West Kent**, new group being set up in Orpington, Sidcup, Bromley area. For workshops, fun and educational activities,

Contact: *Kate 01732 458804*

**NW London Otherwise Club**

Contact: *Leslie 0181 969 0893*

**Wandsworth HE Group**, Tuesdays fortnightly from 26th October. Meeting at 12.15, cost £3.50 per family, for directions

Contact: *Shan 0181 673 6307*

E-mail: *shan@hogonline.co.uk*

**Middlesex Harrow Leisure Centre** 1-2pm . probably fortnightly meetings.

Contact: *Karen Clarke 0181 907 7797*

### **MANCHESTER**

**Bi-weekly** at Peel Moat Sports Centre, Stockport. Sports, games, all ages welcome £1.40 per child. **Monthly** formal art classes at Stockport Art Gallery. £1 per child

Contact: *Gil Wilson 0161 442 8723*

**Anyone from 10+** age group wanting to get together for activities please, any suggestions?

Contact: *Gil Wilson 0161 442 8723*

**Computing Skills**, 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Sats at Moore family's home. Limited places.

Contact: *Karen 01204 573136*

**Firswood Social meeting** alternate weeks.

Contact: *Pam and Nick on 0161 862 9621*

**Manley Park Autonomous HE Group**, Wednesdays 11-3 Come and play at Manley Park Methodist Church, Cromwell Ave,

Whalley Range. **Cancelled for summer due to playscheme, outdoor meetings instead.**

Contact: *Sue Flindt 0161 881 4830*

**MADCOW news-sheet** Free. Send stamped addressed envelopes to *Gill Wilson, 20*

*BrookRoad, Heaton Chapel, Stockport SK4 5BZ.*

PLEASE INFORM ME OF ANY MEETING NO LONGER TAKING PLACE.

## CAMBRIDGESHIRE

**Cambridge** - Regular meetings and outings, Ring for a newsletter.

Contact: Penny 01223 526441

**Monthly at Alconbury**, activities run by Christian group. All welcome

Contact: Audrey Hill 01480 219881

**Peterborough** - Weekly visits and outings

Contact: Janet Wilkinson 01733 554436

## CHEESHIRE

**Cheshire/Stockport Area**: For event information.

Contact: Nicky Forster 01625 869719.

Or see Manchester.

## CLEVELAND & DURHAM

Anyone interested in setting up a new group

Contact: Pauline Butterworth 01642 899247

## CORNWALL

Twice weekly events all round the county. CHEERSS newsletter. To subscribe or for information:

Contact: Anna Wheeler, Cambrose Farm, Redruth, TR16 4HT 01209 890378

e-mail [anna@wheeler19.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:anna@wheeler19.fsnet.co.uk)

## CUMBRIA

**Informal gatherings** for socialising, support and activities.

**Kendal** - alternate Wednesdays Castle St. Youth Centre 12.30-3.30

**Penrith** - alternate Tuesdays Castletown Community Centre 1.30-3.30

Contact: Sarah Cook 01768 896019

## DEVON

Contact: Sammy & Nick Vidal-Hall 01548 830716

**Activities** - Rock-climbing, 10-pin bowling, 'Magic' sessions, bonfires, chatting, etc..

Contact: Belinda Harris-Reid 01364 643343

Email: [bline@compuserve.com](mailto:bline@compuserve.com)

**South Devon** new group now meeting weekly for activities/outings

Contact: Penny Cook 01626 836747

[penny.cook@virgin.net](mailto:penny.cook@virgin.net)

Maddie Lynfield 01364 73854

[maddie.connect@virgin.net](mailto:maddie.connect@virgin.net)

**Ice skating** at Plymouth Pavillions Wednesdays at 12pm.

Contact: Pat Stoolman 01626 854592

## DEVON EAST/DORSET WEST

**Fortnightly meetings** at Monkton Wyld Court.

Activities + grounds to play in. For events list

Contact: Habiba 01297 561070

Lisa 01297 445685

## DORSET

**Regular meetings**, keep in touch.

Contact: Christine Adey 01258 880355

Rosemary Newton 01747 853593

**Bournemouth/Pool/Christchurch**, 2nd Thursday 12.30-3 Parkstone Boys and Girls Club, Recreation Rd, Parkstone, Poole. Indoor area, basketball and playground. Also meeting other Thursdays for activities and outings

Contact: Sandra Innes 01258 450882

Wendy Irving 01202 438254

## ESSEX

**Colchester** - fortnightly meetings, Wednesdays. £2.50 per family.

Contact: Sue Johnston 01206 520284

35 Lethe Grove, Colchester, Essex CO2 8RG

Also monthly meetings in Chelmsford and weekly meetings in Southend.

**Essex Epicycle** gives details of all events and outings. £2.50 for 4 issues.

Contact: Sandie Cottee 01268 733259

17 South View Rd, Rettendon, Chelmsford CM3 8DX

## FIFE

**Outings & get togethers**

Contact: Karen Spy 01334 655361

## GLOUCESTERSHIRE

**1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday** in month at Twynning near Tewkesbury.

**Every Thursday** swimming and trampolining. Other outings every month- play areas, ice skating, bowling, climbing, picnics, crafts etc.

Contact: Rob or Fiona Brookes 01684 290087

[brookes@openhorizons.screaming.net](mailto:brookes@openhorizons.screaming.net)

## HAMPSHIRE

**Portsmouth EO** Play, Learn, Enjoy, Warm and welcoming group with kids 5-15 meet Fridays for art, craft, music and chat, also local outings.

Contact: Julie Chappell 01705 640242

**ACTIVEO** meet 3 times a week within 20 mile radius of Petersfield. All welcome.

For introductory newsletter send SAE:

**ACTIVEO** c/o 30 Spring Rd, Sarisbury Green, Hants SO30 7FH [kaydaywest@dircon.co.uk](mailto:kaydaywest@dircon.co.uk)

Chichester 01243 528508

**Fareham, Gosport, Winchester, Southampton area**. P.W.C. Home Education Group meet regularly for ten-pin bowling, swimming, and many other activities. All welcome.

Contact: Gayle Joubert 01705 553842

Deborah Bull 01705 587868

PLEASE INFORM ME OF ANY MEETING NO LONGER TAKING PLACE.

## NORFOLK

**NEON** gives details of all events. £1.50 plus four large saes.

Contact: *Ali Willer 28 Cozens-Hardy Rd Sprowston, Norwich, NR7 8QF 01603 401020.*

## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

**Tuesdays & Fridays** weekly activities and visits including Kingsthorpe Community Centre, Museums, Parks, Wacky Warehouse, factories etc

Contact: *sae to Mr & Mrs F Benham 4 Pilgrim Way, Wellingborough, Northants NN8 2A*

## NOTTINGHAM

**Weekly meetings** for socialising, support and outings. For full list

Contact: *Wendy 0115 9114312*

*Louise 001773 780634*

**East Midlands Christian Home Educators 1st** Tuesday of the month 10am-2pm Stapleford Baptist Church, Stapleford, Nottingham. Fun, support and group activities.

Contact: *Jo Dunn 0115 8770281*

*Julia Terry 0115 8494083*

## OXFORD

**Weekly meetings** - 267 Marston Rd.

Classes in Art, (all ages) Philosophy (over 8's) German, (all ages). **Fortnightly**, Science Theory & Speakers Corner.

**Monthly**, parents meetings

Contact: *Wendy Pleded 01865 514973*

## SCOTLAND

**Central Scotland:** Sale of secondhand educational books for all ages. Great bargains!

Contact: *Penny Veitch 01786 825171 veitchfamily@compuserve.com*

## STAFFORDSHIRE/SOUTH

### CHESHIRE/NORTH SALOP

**Fortnightly** meetings in rural location for crafts, drama, music etc

Contact: *Patricia 01785 851150*

**Stafford: Every 2nd Tuesday** meeting in village hall for crafts, games etc. 12-3.30pm.

Contact: *Nicola 01785 612410 or Suzanna 01785 252518*

## SUFFOLK

**Meetings every 3 weeks** with professional workshops.

Contact: *Sarah Guthrie 01379 783678*

## SURREY

**Fridays** - Ice skating at Guildford Spectrum 1.30-4.00, £2.35 (+75p for group lesson).

**Tuesdays/Thursdays** - weekly meetings in and around Guildford.

Contact: *Lynne Sowden, 25 Tychbourne Drive, Guildford GU4 7DH (£1.50 for 3 events lists)*

## SUSSEX

**Monthly Newsletter/Events list** - £8 pa or £4 for 6 months, cheques payable to 'ESEO' please, to Sarah Raine, 6 The Diggers, Golf Drive, Brighton, BN1 7LB

We are planning a visit to the Gatwick Aviation Museum end of June or beginning of July.

Please send a SAE to Isobel Bogucki for details.

Contact: *Tanja Conway-Grim 01435 882623 (East Sussex)*

*Isobel Bogucki 01403 261178 (West Sussex)*

## **Friday EO Club** at Lindfield

Contact: *Liz Evans 01444 414058*

**There have been many teenagers** starting on home education in the area recently. What activity or event would appeal to you? Ring Jan 01273 514528 with your suggestions.

**Home Educators Hastings Area** New group meeting first Monday and third Thursday of the month, plus other outings and day trips.

Contact: *Ali Hudson 01424 814175*

## TYNESIDE

**Monthly meetings, visits, activities** etc

Contact: *Linda Robertson 01911 4567007*

## WALES

**Cardigan area** Social meetings and outings on Mondays.

Contact: *Yvette Hartley 01239 820 968*

**Swansea** monthly meetings in Llanelli/ area.

Contact: *Sue Haggerty 01269 861902*

**NE Wales / Borders** - gym/ trampolining in Wrexham (Thurs), meetings in Oswestry area (Tues), W.Cheshire/NE Wales (Mon or Fri)

Contact: *Jenny Bove 01978 757489 49 Westminster Rd, Moss Valley, Wrexham LL11 6DH £2 for a year's listing*

**North West Wales** has lots of members.

Anyone interested in hosting/organising an event contact Jenny Bove as above

**Glamorganshire** - Regular group meetings planned once or twice a month. Suggestions and new families,

Contact: *Celia McDonough 01633 669104*

**Gwent** - Regular group activities now being arranged. Suggestions and new families welcome.

Contact: *Dawn 01495 303468*

PLEASE INFORM ME OF ANY MEETING NO LONGER TAKING PLACE.

## WEST MIDLANDS

**Regular meetings and events** throughout the region. Full details in our newsletter, HELM £7.20 per year.

**Fortnightly meetings** at Coseley with a planned calendar of activities and workshops e.g. music & drama. Monthly Science Club (BAYS), resource centre, time for discussion, socialising and support. All home educators welcome.

Contact: Penny Clarke 01922 745465  
pennyclarke@homeschool.freeserve.co.uk  
Joy Beasley 0121 585 6450

JoyBeasley@b-bunch.freeserve.co.uk

## WILTS/DORSET/HAMPS

**Outings and visits** every Tuesday pm  
Lower Street Hall, off Netherhampton Rd,  
Salisbury. 2-5pm every 1st Tuesday.

Contact: Vicky Slater 01722 324863

Sam Moody 01794 342041

## WORCESTERSHIRE

**Regular activity meetings and outings** in the north Worcestershire area,

Contact: Gail Tatcher 01562 822034,  
email gail@tqmi.co.uk

**Weekly meetings** Worcestershire area

Contact: Pat 01527 876184

## YORKSHIRE - NORTH

**Regular meetings & visits** etc. Please send two second class stamps for quarterly news-sheet, or your e-mail address.

Contact: Meraylah Allwood 01904 448643  
e-mail jemmergram@zetnet.co.uk

## YORKSHIRE - EAST

**Regular meetings and visits** etc. Please send two second class stamps for quarterly news-sheet.

Contact: Alison Houston 01405 769902

**Hull**, informal meetings every Friday, 2pm  
Pearson Park (nr Conservatory entrance, or inside if cold)

Contact: Karen 01482 345655

## YORKSHIRE - SOUTH

**Tuesdays 12-3** term time at Highfield Adventure Playground. Outdoor equipment plus indoor room for crafts, table tennis etc.

Free entry, small contribution for materials only. Off London Rd/Abbeyle Rd. Turn up or  
Contact: Annette 0114 2583502

Fiona 0114 22751142

**Thursday** - weekly informal social meetings.  
All South Yorkshire members welcome.

Contact: Angie Targett 0114 2817466

**Swimming** fortnightly, 2nd Tuesday at Hillsborough Leisure Centre 12pm and 4th Wednesday at Barnsley Metrodome 12.30

Contact: Ian Bennett 0114 2817466

## YORKSHIRE - WEST

**Outings & activities.**

Contact: Eva 01535 274520

**Last Thursday** of each month 11.00 - 1.30 at the Civic Centre, Huddersfield.

Contact: Diane 01484 846946

**Second Friday** of the month, 1.00 - 4.00at Moortown Baptist Church, King Lane, Leeds. £2 .50 per family

Contact: Eva 01535 274520 Susan 0113 268 1137

**Swimming** (term time, occasionally, phone first), Tuesdays at Bradford

Contact: Eva 1535 274520

Huddersfield Sports Centre

Contact: Tracey 01484 317176

**Skating** Fridays (except the week of the Leeds meeting)

Contact: Francis 01274 884750

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## **ADVERTISEMENTS**

### **FROM THE E.O. POSTBOX**

#### **1. Soul in Education Conference 21-28 October 2000**

Contact: Conference Office, Findhorn Foundation, The Park, Findhorn Forres, Scotland IV36 3TZ

[www.findhorn.org/edu/sol](http://www.findhorn.org/edu/sol)

#### **2. En Famille International**

Linguistic and cultural exchanges for children. Contact: 26, Savarias, 33240 Salignac, France. [www.enfamille.com](http://www.enfamille.com)

#### **3. The New Learning Centre**

Workshops, talks and audiotapes on parenting skills and topics. Contact: 211 Sumatra Rd, London, NW6 1PF  
020 7794 0321

[www.parenting-skills.dial.pipex.com](http://www.parenting-skills.dial.pipex.com)

#### **Does your child need help with English?**

Tuition available for any age, Primary to 'A' level, from an experienced tutor - specialist in 'A' level English Literature - dyslexic problems catered for.

**Gill Campbell (MA BA(hons) FAETC)**  
01767 682838 (Bedfordshire)

Services and products advertised on these pages are not endorsed by Education Otherwise

PLEASE INFORM ME OF ANY MEETING NO LONGER TAKING PLACE.

## ADVERTISEMENTS

The 'UK Home Education Support' e-mail list provides mutual support for UK-based home educators and those interested in home education, to allow the sharing of knowledge and experience between established and prospective home educators and providing a forum for free discussion of home education issues. **E-mail UK-HOME-ED-REQUEST@LISTSERV.AOL.COM** for info.

### TO BE FREE A RADICAL ALTERNATIVE

**Children. Women. Families. Freedom.**  
A journal addressing the difficult issues of freedom. How much we have ourselves, and how much we give away.

Subscription (3 issues A4 48+pp) Unwaged £6  
Average £11, Higher £15. Cheques to: To Be Free sent to: Vidal-Hall Family, Homecroft, Brownston Rd, Modbury, Devon PL21 0RQ  
Tel: 01548 830716

### Magnotherapy for Health and Fuel Conservation

Ethical, workable business opportunity  
Ideal for home educating family  
It's working for us!

Part time/Full time, flexible, no pressure  
Brilliant innovative products

**Helping people, animals and the planet!**  
Interested?

**Ring for free information pack**  
on products, business or both  
**Chris Ojari 0114 2348965**

### Teach Learn Create

New centre in Teignmouth offering a unique approach to the education of children between 6 and 12. Starting Saturdays in September 2000 but offering taster sessions during August for the reduced price of £5. For more details and information contact:

**The Teach Learn Create Centre**  
18 Brunswick St. Teignmouth, Devon  
TQ14 8AF

**Colette Lyons 01626 774512 or**  
**Clare Griffiths 01626 852 750**

### RESOURCES BOOKLET

50 page booklet giving information on different curriculum materials available to home educators who are interested in a more structured approach. For a copy please send a 1 coin to cover printing and postage, with your address to: H. Turnbull, Hall Lodge, Biddenden Rd, Headcorn, Ashford, Kent, TN27 9JD.

Free electronic rtf. copy, e-mail me at: [julian.turnbullbtinternet.com](mailto:julian.turnbullbtinternet.com)  
Comments about it include "very useful indeed"; "what a lot of information"; "we really enjoyed reading your booklet"

Alternatives in Education Fair 2000  
Saturday 30th September  
10.30 - 5.00  
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square,  
London WC1  
(nearest tube: Holborn)

what are the alternatives to mainstream education? come along and find out! stalls, seminars, cafe, displays, books, resources, creche and more  
Entrance £2 (voluntary donation)  
tel/fax 01275 332516

### Human Scale Education New Publications

'Setting up a small school information pack'  
by Fiona Carnie (£7.50 + £3 p&p)  
'15 Small Schools' report by Rosalyn Spencer  
(£3.50 + £1 p&p)  
Special Offer:  
both books for £10 + £3.50 p&p  
(cheques payable to Human Scale Education)  
**Human Scale Education, 96 Carlingcott,  
Bath BA2 8AW**

Rural Housing Co-op (Scotland)  
Members with interests including self-sufficiency/permaculture/home education/creative arts contact us.  
[www.freehomepages.com/tools/](http://www.freehomepages.com/tools/)  
01506 444301

## ADVERTISEMENTS

### Wise Owl Educational Software

PO Box 334 Abingdon OX14 2YB  
01235 - 529808 [wiseowlsw@aol.com](mailto:wiseowlsw@aol.com)

UK's only children's shareware library,  
specialising in educational programs  
and games. Ages 2-16+. 900+ titles  
(DOS, Windows 3.1 & 95/98). 3½" and 5¼"  
media. £3 per disk. Free catalogue & advice.

No membership fees.

[http://members.aol.com/wiseowlsw/  
index.html](http://members.aol.com/wiseowlsw/index.html)

**HE Resource List:** <http://members.aol.com/wiseowlsw/resource.htm>

### Home Ed Holidays in the Hebrides September 30th - October 6th 2000

#### Dervaig, Isle of Mull

Variety of accommodation, central gathering  
place for coffee, workshops etc.

For details contact Vicki 01688 400101  
(fax 400109) [vicki@mullsoft.co.uk](mailto:vicki@mullsoft.co.uk)

[www.mullsoft.co.uk/hehol](http://www.mullsoft.co.uk/hehol)

### Modern Traditional Highland Cottage

Log fire, sleeps 6, near woodlands, River  
Spey and Cairngorm mountains, Aviemore  
and seaside. Great views, over 100  
attractions. Very reasonable rates. Mention  
this ad when booking and EO will get a  
£10 donation.

Tel: 0181 5820729 or 01895 677576

### Steiner in Suffolk

If you live in Suffolk or a 30 mile radius of  
Ipswich and are interested in being involved  
in a Steiner-influenced parent and young  
child group, please write to:

Suzanne Fox, 2 Castle Lane, Offton,  
Ipswich, IP8 4RM

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### IMPORTANT NOTICE: ADVERTISERS

Due to the recently increasing  
demands on space for advertising in  
the Newsletter, we have had to find a  
way to restrict repeat adverts:

1. all long running (ie currently permanent) adverts will now only appear in alternate issues, space permitting;
2. adverts of a 'seasonal' nature (for holidays etc) can appear in up to three consecutive issues, space permitting;
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## ADVERTISEMENTS

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01692 652115

### **To place an advert...**

*Advertising in the newsletter is free, but if you are running a business or hoping to profit from your advert, please send an appropriate donation. Cheques should be made payable to "Education Otherwise". Remember that EO is run entirely by volunteers and has no income except members' subscriptions. Adverts should be limited to 1/8th page or 50 words and sent (with any donation) to the advertising editor.*

### **'Celebrating the onset of Menstruation'**

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[claregriffiths@tinyonline.co.uk](mailto:claregriffiths@tinyonline.co.uk)

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### **BACK PAGE PART TWO**

**Get involved and join a Small Group.**

Finance - Priscilla, Lynda

Enquiries - Gary, Janet, Pam and Priscilla

Publications - Jill, Gary

Newsletter - Christine, Sue

Media - Janet, Jude and Beverley

Business Practice - Jill, Priscilla

DfEE Team - Anne, Jill

Membership Support - Isobel and Christine

LEAP (local authority positive contact) - Isobel,

**Jude, Jill, Beverley, Ann**

Local Groups - Janet, Priscilla

Communications - Janet, Jill, Priscilla

New volunteers for any of the groups most welcome, with expertise or just an interest. For more information contact any of the council members listed or Janet Wilkinson (General Secretary).

## Council Members

*If you have a problem contact your nearest council member:*

**Geraldine Adams** (North London) 0171 2634922

**Christine Adey** (Dorset) 01258 880355

**Jude Ashley-Walker** (Isle of Wight) 01983 531680

**Pam Bellinger** (Northants) 01604 686521

**Isobel Bogucki** (West Sussex) 01403 261178

**Lynda Hitchman** (Berkshire) 0118 961 4466

**Jill Fisher** (Leics) 0116 2128120

**Sue Hutchin** (Kent) 01233 820008

**Priscilla Park-Weir** (Surrey) 01276 22735

**Gary Podmore** (Yorks) 0114 2585702

**Eleanor Stapleton** (London-North) 0181 8841368

**Jenny Stevens** (West Sussex) 01243 783 469

**Anne Wade** (London Middx) 0181 904 7155

**Bruce Wallace** (Highlands)

**Janet Wilkinson** (Cambs) 01733 554436

**Beverley Young** (Lancs) 01772 492245

## Membership

Membership and newsletter subscription queries, membership cards, and address changes.

**Lynda Hitchman**, 31 Audley St., Reading, Berks RG30 1BP Tel: 0118 961 4466  
database@education-otherwise.org

## Stationery

Leaflets, posters, membership forms, and car stickers:

**Ali Willer**, 28, Cozens-Hardy Road, Sprowston, Norwich NR7 8QF (*Donations towards postage and printing welcomed, reuse labels £2.50 per 100 -free for EO business use*)

## Publications

Books, information leaflets and back issues of newsletters. For a full list send an SAE to:

**Chris Harper**, Badgers Holt, Birchwood, Storridge, Malvern Worcs WR13 5HA  
Tel: 01886 884740

*(If you have had your publications list for a while ring Chris to check availability of the item you want before ordering.)*

## Contact with LEA

If you need information to help in dealing with your LEA ring your Local Contact or any council member.

## Small Jobs

If you have a little time to help EO contact  
**Angela Smith** 01434 322372

## Useful Contacts

**Single Parent Family Contact: Sarah Martin**, Lammas, 34 Cowslip Drive, Little Thetford, Ely, Cambs CB6 3JD

**Special Needs: Christine Waterman**  
85 Elfrida Road, Watford, Herts WD1 8AT  
Tel: 01923 464773

**School Phobia: Geraldine Adams**  
Tel: 0171 263 4922

**Autonomous Education Support and Advice: Sammy and Nick Vidal-Hall**, Home Croft, Brownston St, Modbury, Devon PL21 0QR.  
Tel: 01548 830 716

**GCSE Contact: Wendy Pleded**  
Tel: 01865 514973

**College Contact: Kathy Chilton**  
Tel: 01969 623707

**EO Stalls: Lucy Charlton**  
2, Wistow Road, Newton Harcourt, Leics LE8 0FT Tel: 0116 2592118

**Research Contact: (vacant)**

**Chair: (vacant)**

**Vice Chair: (vacant)**

**General Secretary (acting): Janet Wilkinson**, 31 Framlingham Road, Peterborough PE2 8UG Tel: 01733 554436

**Treasurer: Priscilla Park-Weir**  
212 Gordon Avenue, Camberley, Surrey GU15 2NT Tel: 01276 22735

**Media Coordinator: (vacant)**

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20 Rusper Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 4BD Tel: 01403 261178

**Enquiries Secretaries Coordinator: Edwina Theunissen**, Pum Rhyd, Marchwiell, Wrexham, Clwyd LL13 0TS  
Tel: 01978 661 882

**Membership Secretaries Coordinator: Pam Bellinger**, 9 Main Road, Kelmarsh, Northampton NN6 9LY Tel: 01604 686521

# education otherwise

Education Otherwise is a membership organisation which provides support and information for families whose children are being educated outside school, and for those who wish to uphold the freedom of families to take proper responsibility for the education of their children.

Our principal aims are to:

- encourage learning outside the school system;
- reaffirm that parents have the primary responsibility for their children's education and that they have the right to exercise this responsibility by educating them out of school;
- establish the primary right of children to have full consideration given to their wishes and feelings about their education.

For further information send an A5 s.a.e. to:  
P.O. BOX 7420  
LONDON N9 9SG

HELPLINE 0870 7300074

<<http://www.education-otherwise.org>>

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