

education otherwise



March 2001

No. 139

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

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SPECIAL SECTION:

Computers: love them or hate them?
Tips for others
C/o Christine Adey, address below

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EO BUSINESS**

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LOCAL NEWS (vacant)

HOME EDUCATION NEWS

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COORDINATOR**

CHRISTINE ADEY (as above)
(For information about volunteering for any
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 JUNE ISSUE IS 1ST MAY 2001

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OR IF YOUR NEWSLETTER DOES NOT ARRIVE, PLEASE CONTACT THE
DATABASE SECRETARY (see inside back cover).

From the Editors...

What a response! February's appeal for more contributions was a great success. So much so that, not only are there four extra pages in April's Newsletter, but there are still some contributions, which will of course be in the following issue. Thank you, and *please don't let that stop you writing*. And now we've made it even easier! Janet and Mark Wilkinson have set up an EO Newsletter address in conjunction with the EO website at newsletter@education-otherwise.org, so now you can e-mail the Newsletter with letters and articles! No stamps, no envelopes, no post boxes, no excuses.

Martine has edited the Special Section on LEA experiences, and the range of views is very interesting. As usual, there is a wide range of reviews on books and resources, including the newly-published *Free Range Education* and *Steve: A Story of Home Education*. In *Home Education in the News*, there is evidence that a mother is the best teacher, and news from Canada of the growing home education sector. The Archives cover editorial comments from the eighties, and another historical gem is Iris Harrison's excerpt from her family diary. The Harrisons are a special family historically, to whom we all owe a lot.

We continue our Council Members' profiles with Isobel. And we appear to have been remiss in not mentioning elsewhere the election of EO's new Chair, Jill Fisher, and three new Council Members, Penny Clarke, Garry Humphries and Ann Samuel-Till. Garry is EO's new Treasurer, taking over from Priscilla, whose calm and efficiency have been admired and appreciated. Sue Hutchin, too, has said goodbye to the Council, after working on the Newsletter for five years and successfully re-organising the editing just over a year ago.

There has been a brave volunteer for Letters and Articles editor: thank you to Linda Cutler in Cornwall, who will edit these sections for the next issue, and hopefully beyond. Please see Linda's address opposite. We are always in need of volunteers for Special Section and Children's Pages editors. Both editors are for one issue, so have a go! Children and adults, please include your telephone number when you contact Christine Adey.

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Please write in: next issue's Special Section is Computers and home education. How much do your children use them? What do you find particularly valuable about learning with computers? Please write in to address opposite.

Special Section Editors needed

Special Section for August. Send in your children's or your own poems. Be creative!
Children's Pages Editors also needed
please provide phone number.

Special Section: LEA experiences; good, bad or indifferent.

During January, because there was much discussion on the UK Home Ed List about the nature and variety of people's contact with LEAs Jill Fisher put together a brief questionnaire asking people what they had experienced and how it worked out and how they might like to be helped. Here are her results as basic statistics supplied by people from both the UK Home Ed List and the EO List.

42 people had had contact with their LEAs about their home-educating
21 people had not had contact (though it is not clear if they are all home educating)
7 people stated that they were not yet home educating

39 people provided their LEA with some form of information about their home-educating
1 person's LEA had not asked for information
1 person refused to provide information but did so when an SAO was threatened
1 person founded their LEA by criticising their behaviour and was never asked for information

25 people continue to provide information
1 stopped after 10 years with the LEAs agreement
1 didn't answer letters
1 promised to send a report and didn't
1 the LEA lost interest
5 moved
The rest had not yet been asked for more information

21 people had home visits and were happy with them though several people said that if the home visits became less comfortable they would change
5 had had home visits and hated them
4 had refused home visits from the start
1 stopped having home visits because the nature of the visits changed
1 stopped because there was no positive benefit from them
1 stopped because she felt the LEA had no right to visit
2 are thinking of stopping home visits

19 people made their choice because they thought it was the best thing for their family
4 made their choice because it was the least hassle
1 person had home visits because they didn't realise there was a choice, and several more did not realise there was a choice initially, although they are happy with home visits

2 people felt they would change their method of offering information with the right support
2 people felt that they would not offer any information if they had the right support

2 people thought they might change their method with more support.

(Advice from LEA contact discussion on the UK HOME ED LIST)

I can see the merit of sharing information and of having examples of kinds of evidence and responses etc. but I do think it has to be presented with great care. I know of two families in my own LEA, just a few streets from one another and both seen by the same visitor, yet one thought it was all lovely and helpful and the other thought it was very traumatic.

The problem is that trying to fit our evidence around the prevailing mood of an LEA or individual officer is inequitable. The law doesn't allow that in Cornwall, say, you can present evidence in any form, whilst in Worcester you must give it in one of two ways and somewhere else only three monthly home visits will do.

I think Sarah Lawrence made the excellent point some time ago that when we present evidence we shouldn't ever have an LEA in mind, but a judge - not because we should be scared that we will end up in front of one, but this enables us to focus on meeting the legal requirements of giving evidence rather than dancing to the whimsical tune of the officer of the moment.

Knowing the prevailing culture of an LEA, something about the personnel and something of their responses - preferably several responses to different kinds of family- even knowing that these differences in treatment from the same LEA and same officer exist - are all very useful tools in how we marshal the evidence and how much support we might need. But other people's experience also needs treating with caution.

Jan Fortune-Wood

Wot? - No Home Visit?

We had removed our two, very unhappy children from school following lengthy attempts to attain a statement for one of them, and endeavours to cope with the relentless bullying of the other. We were relieved at having discovered home education but were still in the process of "de-schooling".

Then the package from the LEA arrived through the front door with requests for timetables and curricula and notice of a prearranged date for a home visit.

Fortunately, we were aware by this time that the requests for timetables and curricula were out of order and started to question whether the home visit was really necessary. The LEA had only managed to deceive, humiliate and hinder us is the education of our children so far. What was the point in re-establishing this fruitless dialogue?

Well, yes, we knew that for legal reasons we had to present evidence that we were providing a suitable education for our children, since we had been asked. But how best to communicate with a group of people who already lacked all credibility in our eyes? Who were they to judge?

After a great deal of thought and many discussions with other home educating parents, we decided to attempt to satisfy the LEA with a minimum of contact and in a way that we thought would be least invasive. So, we cancelled the home visit, tore up the LEA's questionnaires and sat down to produce a report.

Our reasons for this decision were:

- a) We were in the process of gradually changing to an autonomous method of education. We didn't believe from our own experience and from talking with other HE families, that the LEA would understand this philosophy.
- b) We feared being misrepresented or misunderstood. 1-2 hours spent in one's home is not enough to understand what sort of education is going on there.
- c) We felt that if **we** wrote the report then at least the truth would be represented in our LEA file, not the snapshot impression of a poorly briefed LEA Advisor.
- d) We have one child with special educational needs and the LEA were not prepared to send someone to see us who had any knowledge of his needs unless we would agree to pay them. This was another reason why we felt the LEA Advisor was unlikely to give an accurate and meaningful account of our provision.
- e) We felt better, generally, about writing things down. This would give us more time to think carefully about what we wanted to say. We felt we could more accurately represent our attitude and philosophy by this means.
- f) The children had already spent the previous 12 months being "put through the mill" at school, so we didn't see how being face-to-face with another representative of the LEA would help them. Even if the children had not been present at a meeting, the knowledge that we were discussing their education in this way would have been disrespectful at this stage. With a report they would be able to read and discuss the contents.

The Format of the Report.

- a) Our Philosophy of Education.
- b) An account of the opportunities available to the children in terms of material resources, types of activities currently enjoyed etc. In order to satisfy Education Act 1996, S7, there is no need for a timetable or curriculum or to "teach" a "broad and balanced" range of subjects. However, we do believe that a wide range of opportunities needs to be made available within reason (i.e. within limits of budget, mobility, local availability etc.). So we made it clear that we provide these.
- c) Short account of how we ensure that we provide opportunities to learn that are suitable to age, ability and aptitude.
- d) We did not present any material that had been produced by the children. We believe that we are providing appropriate opportunities to learn. Since we also ensure that resources are available to suit their age, ability and aptitude, and any special educational needs, then progress will be made and each child will maximise their potential. Providing proof of standards reached or progress made would not have been in keeping with our autonomous education philosophy.
- e) List of examples of places visited and outings enjoyed.

Sally wrote the report over two evenings. She had kept a diary so had plenty of reference material to draw from. We had a few weeks to think about the content of the report so, to coin one of Bart Simpson's homework excuses "I did it in my head - I just didn't write it down". When the time was right, we simply did a "brain-dump" to the PC.

The report was sent to the LEA Advisor, together with a covering letter, explaining that this was our preferred method of satisfying their informal enquiry, and a copy of "Elective Home Education Legal Guidelines".

The reply from the LEA Advisor read:

"Thank you very much for your comprehensive report on the education you are providing for G and E. It was most thoughtful of you to include the booklet, "Elective Home Education - Legal Guidelines". As I already have a copy I have passed yours on to a colleague. I was glad to read that your children are enjoying a broad education and that learning is such an important part of life for the whole family. Your sons are fortunate that they have access to a multimedia computer and that you are able to provide such a wide range of materials and resources for their use. I believe that visits such as you have made to theme parks, museums, places of interest, beauty spots etc. are an excellent starting point or follow up to learning - there is nothing like seeing "the real thing", best of all if you can touch it! The flexibility that parents have, when home-educating their children is a great asset. It enables them to provide an education totally suited to each child's individual needs. I wish you, E and G every success in the future."

Needless to say, this letter has been carefully filed in a very safe place! We heard nothing further from this LEA (Surrey) and have since moved out of the area.

We hope that sharing this experience may encourage others who wish to provide evidence to their LEA in a similar way.

Sally and Trevor Lever. Somerset. goosewing@btinternet.com

* * * * *

I was talking to another local HEor today and we had the same experiences with our LEA advisor. My friend is a qualified teacher and I have a higher ed qualification. One thing which struck us both is that immediately the LEA were aware of our intentions we were sent a booklet outlining their terms and conditions for home ed and a questionnaire with such beauties as what curriculum do you intend to teach and what are your qualifications? The list went on and on. My reaction was to send a letter telling them that they were overstepping the mark and I did not return the questionnaire. My friend went further and told them just what she thought of their demands (she has HED before.)

When the advisor arrived, however, she was polite, knew about autonomous education (which was more than I did at that stage) and even apologised for the out-of-date literature. Whilst I can understand that some HEors object **on principle** to any scrutiny, I didn't find the actual visit too intrusive. The advisor asked if it was all right to come back in six months, or would I rather wait a year? I didn't have to come up with some wordy philosophy of education and I didn't promise to adhere to any kind of timetable /curriculum. As long as there is evidence of learning taking place the advisor seems to be satisfied. There is a shortage of school places locally and what is available is of poor quality, both at primary and secondary levels and this is a fairly large town. Perhaps if they were desperate to fill school places the situation might be different. I have agreed to another visit in April so I shall find out whether I still get the same reaction then.

Christine Stibbards

* * * * *

We received a letter out of the blue, informing us that they had heard we 'intended' to home educate our children. (They had never been to school, and Amy was twelve.) When we asked who had told them they refused to say, but we have always had a problem with local people and their negative attitude, which hasn't changed much in ten years. We were told that a truancy officer would call first, to inspect the house (not their words). When we finally agreed a date when we could both be at home, two people turned up. I think one was for moral support, which is hardly surprising considering the attitude of some parents. They appeared happy with our house (!), and went away. We were then contacted again to say the inspector would call. It seemed that we always received the letter just before the school holidays, so we could do nothing until they all returned to work. This was probably intended to let us calm down!

The (lady) inspector duly arrived, and went through our books etc. 'Could try harder' was our report, I think. At least, this was what was said to us. We requested a copy of the report, but were told we would have to attend the local office to view it. We have not heard anything since, (this was over a year ago) and we are keeping our fingers crossed!

Name and address supplied.

Although our experiences with the LEA have been limited to date I wanted to share our experiences of our dealings with the 'related others' i.e. school, psychologists and the EWO.

Our son is now 15 and has had problems at school since he started Year 7 at age 11. He started to become very anxious, eventually developing a phobia of vomiting, which resulted in panic attacks, both at school and at home. Because the phobia did not seem to be specifically to do with school we arranged first with our GP for him to have some time off and for him to see a psychologist. Eventually, after much work, he returned to school in Year 8. There appeared to be a calm period (although there seemed to be some bullying going on, but my son said he wasn't bothered, that they were just 'sad' people) until half way through Year 9 when the panic attacks became severe again. At this point my son refused to go to school.

There followed many visits from the EWO, although I had 'covered' us by taking him again to the GP who had agreed he needed some time off. I was told by the EWO that the child could not be off for more than 2 weeks without a 'specialist' sick note, which I questioned with another EWO that I knew. Having established that this wasn't the case we ignored it. The EWO put him on the register as 'educated off site' which considering that he did no school work at all due to none being sent home for him, was stretching the imagination a bit. We had another referral to a psychologist, who said my son was suffering from social anxiety (where did that come from I suppose?!), and MUST go back to school, or his future was bleak etc.

I can't explain that trauma of taking him to school. We would all get into the car, his brothers, him and me, and his brothers would have to witness his extreme distress and go off to school themselves with pinched, worried faces. Once he was in school I would drive to work sobbing my heart out. At no point did a professional say to us "Do you know you can home educate?" In fact I did know but I was bowing to pressure.

However, we could take it no more and de-registered him. The school had never come across the situation before and were concerned about his socialisation. As I pointed out,

he wouldn't socialise with the pupils in school anyway so being there would make not the slightest difference.

We parted on good terms however, and the SENCO said "let us know how he gets on, it may be a solution for others in the future", which I thought was encouraging. After just a few days we received a form from the LEA asking us about our intentions for his education and his social life. What strikes me is that for the last year my son had received NO education, because even if he was in school he couldn't work due to anxiety. This didn't matter though because he was following the system. As soon as we deviated from the 'norm' they wanted to know everything.

Also the school receives funds for a child's education - why can't parents who opt out of the system receive this for their child's education? It appears very one sided, we have to justify ourselves, but receive no help towards this at all from the LEA.

Of course, for us the next step is the visit. The letter said if they judge we aren't doing enough they 'give us a second chance' and if they still aren't satisfied we'll be made to send him back. Intimidating eh? Well, over my dead body.

Just to finish, if anyone has had similar problems please get in touch.

Jill Beardworth, Lancashire 01254 50277

My daughter Tanith, aged 12, left school just after SATs tests in June last year. They were the straw that broke the camel's back.

Within two weeks the dreaded letter from the LEA arrived. It instructed me to fill out the enclosed form, return it promptly and they would arrange for an inspector to visit. Thank goodness for EO and the numerous booklets and leaflets on the Law and Home Education. I read everything I could, talked to several inspiring people and took lots of deep breaths.

I returned the uncompleted form and told them I did not want a visit. Letters were exchanged. Tanith wrote to say why she did not want to see an inspector and I kept quoting the law!

It was a very stressful time for both of us and coming at a time of great change in our lives it made the de-schooling process even harder.

Eventually I agreed to a meeting at our local library, taking samples of Tanith's work but without her being present. This meeting happened in November after I had asked the LEA to leave us alone for a while. In the months before this meeting the cause of most of the arguments between Tanith and myself was my need to have her produce work to 'prove' I was educating her.

On the surface the meeting went very well and we received a good report but underneath was all game playing and pretence. Still **my** lessons with the LEA have been very growthful and I have finally discovered that officials are **not** gods.

Life is now much more relaxed and Tanith works because she wants to and does it in her own time. It is amazing how much more we have both learnt by Tanith leaving school.

Pauline Willingale, Dorset.

Our HE Experience with Walsall (in the West Midlands) LEA

We began HEing some 8 years ago when we withdrew our eldest son from school - he was rapidly followed out of school by his younger brother. They never returned to school and their youngest brother has never been to school.

In those days we had very little contact with other HERS locally or anywhere else and were relatively (compared to now) ignorant of the law regarding HE. So.... we thought we HAD to endure the termly visits by 2 educational inspectors from our LEA, as was their policy towards all HERS in the Borough. They came along to discuss timetable, resources and work covered since their last visit. This proved to be difficult as we had no timetable

and didn't do "school at home", used very few school type work books and I refused to keep the detailed notes, marks and progress reports that they required.

I absolutely hated these visits (partly because I dislike being told by anyone what I should do) and partly because I was worried that THEY would send the boys back to school where we really felt they had received a much more inferior education to the one we were providing. However, we never received anything in writing from the LEA regarding their dissatisfaction (or otherwise) and whilst I had been told verbally on several occasions they were not impressed as we were not replicating school at home I decided as time went by that they wouldn't have a foot to stand on regarding sending the boys back into school.

As the years passed the LEA gradually dropped the frequency of their visits to all HERS in the Borough until we were, after about 5 years, down to one visit a year. I still hated them but felt that seeing them once a year was worthwhile if it meant "getting them off our backs" for another year!! Then I gradually became aware of the fact that such visits were not legally required. A weight was lifted. When we received our next appointment letter we wrote back offering a written report on the basis that after so many visits the LEA knew us, our methods and aims etc. We received a phone call the next day saying, "Fine, send the report to.....," and that's the last we heard from them!

I have to confess that the report was never sent. I did write one, honest, but had a major computer (hard disc) failure before I'd even saved or printed it out. I just couldn't work up the enthusiasm to do it again and so I decided to wait until the LEA asked for the report before re-doing it. They never have. As a footnote to this. Other HERS in the Borough have recently received their appointment letters and will have their visits next week. We have STILL not heard from the LEA.....

Penny Clarke, West Midlands pennyclarke@blueyonder.co.uk

I voluntarily contacted the LEA when I moved to Staffordshire and had been "officially" schooling Imogen for almost a year. I felt I had a legal right and therefore nothing to fear or hide. They came out to see us virtually straight away. I was ready with my answers to the interrogation I thought I'd get as to why I had not put her into school. I was nervous, but the lady who visited was very nice. She never asked me the questions I thought she would. She was lovely with Imogen who talked most of the time about her work as she showed the inspector. she asked if I was happy to continue and did I intend to teach her at home throughout the whole of her school life then left after an hour.

Ten months later she came again and spent another hour going through Immi's crate of work. Imogen had done maps of the continents that she has drawn animals of that continent onto and she loved the attention of showing and explaining her work that when she was asked what the red line representing the equator was, she just answered correctly all about it and even why there wasn't one on the map of Australia. As I related this story to a fellow EO member because I was so proud Imogen knew the answers to the questions she was asked - she was only 6 - I was told I shouldn't allow the inspector to test Imogen and I was quite shocked at how anti-LEA inspection this person was. Some children may be shy or had bad school experiences but mine is fine with these questions and accepts it as a normal part of conversation. Imogen is very talkative and loves the inspector coming as I think it gives her a chance to show off.

The inspector has been again recently after a gap of over two years. She only stayed for an hour as usual despite there being so much of Imogen's work to look at. Immi was thoroughly disappointed she couldn't stay longer to be shown more of what she'd done. I played no part in the visit except to arrange all the work on the lounge floor. Again I was asked was I happy to continue teaching Immi at home and she left. All in all we have no problem with our LEA visits/inspections. Our inspector is very pleasant, has helped with the schools library, is not nosy or bossy and Imogen wants her to come again SOON.

Helen Donaldson, Staffordshire.

Joshua, (8), and Natasha, (7), finished school at the start of the summer holidays last year, and we received our first visit from a Derbyshire County Council LEA Adviser on 15th January this year. We are relaxing into a child led approach to education, and have very little, (or no), written 'evidence' of what we have been doing since they left school, or what they have learnt. This did concern us in the run up to the visit, but we were determined not to do anything different in preparation for the 15th, (except perhaps get up and dressed a bit earlier than usual on that day!).

On the morning of the visit I was quite anxious, and for a moment wished I had folders full of work the children had done to hide behind. However, my fears proved unfounded. Ann, (the adviser), arrived, took off her shoes, and settled down on the living room floor with the children who were making pictures. Within ten minutes we were chatting about the benefits of home education over our cups of tea, and sharing tales about travels in India, (we have both been to similar parts).

Ann did not ask for any formal evidence of what Joshua and Natasha had been doing, and avoided direct questions as much as possible. She obviously had an agenda of things she wanted to check that the children were experiencing, but she was so relaxed and easy to talk to that Joshua and Natasha were both happy to tell her almost anything she wanted to know.

Towards the end of the visit we completed a draft report form. Ann asked me what I wanted her to write and in what format. She noted down what I said, and we agreed that if I wanted to change or add anything I could do so on the final copies sent to me. No mention of formal plans for the coming years was made, (I had been concerned about committing us all to specific actions).

Ann left after about 3 hours, saying that she would like to return when Joshua is about 11 if that is OK - I said it was. Natasha was disappointed that Ann had to leave to do another visit, and Joshua said he enjoyed showing her his computer games. We were pleased the visit was such a positive one and hope Ann will still be around in three years time.

Karen, Gary, Joshua and Natasha, Derbyshire.

We have been home educating on and off for over twelve years now, and have had contact with three different LEAs.

The first one was Durham, way back when Lewis was five. He had been in school for two and a half terms before deciding it wasn't for him. Two inspectors came and sat in our house for a bit, didn't really know what they wanted to ask, listened to me talk about our plans and then left. They never sent a copy of the report and I never heard from them again, well we moved house a while after anyway.

The three older children then all proceeded to spend some time in school after moving house. It was a quiet time for me to be with a new baby. Then the twins, after a term of Reception, decided to leave again, swiftly followed by Lewis who was in Year 3 by this time. The Head Teacher asked me as we departed his office what I would change about school if I could alter one thing, and I was so astounded that I could not come up with an answer (well, so many things, so little time!). Some time later, I forget how long, Manchester LEA got in touch and arranged to come. Two inspectors came and sat in our house for a bit, didn't really know what they wanted to ask, listened to me talking about our plans and then left. It took three letters and eighteen months to get a copy of the report. I never heard from them again, well we moved house a while after anyway.

On arriving in our current home near Harrogate my older daughter announced she wanted to go to school. What a pain! I was thinking how nice it would be to finally be 'unknown', but she went anyway, and spent over a year at the village school. The Head Teacher took it upon himself to inform the LEA of our presence. Two inspectors came and sat in our house for a bit, they were marginally better informed than the other lots but claimed never to have met an unstructured family before (watch out for this tactic, it seems quite common, designed to make you feel like you are the only weird family around). They listened to me talk about our plans and then left. I wrote them a long report on our home education. I did get a copy of the report out of them, after a reminder. They contacted me again over a year later. This time I felt more confident of my rights and told them I felt there was no benefit from having visits and that I would be happy to send them something in writing again. They agreed. I wrote and have not heard from them since, who knows maybe we'll manage to move house again before they bother.

I hope this little sample of experiences has been of some interest and possibly help to anyone sitting there fearing what will happen when they are 'discovered'. Fear not! Help is always here at EO. Know your rights and stand up for them, get advice if you need it and always remember that home education is your LEGAL RIGHT.

Martine Archer (Special Section Editor), Harrogate. archer.family@btinternet.com

Book Reviews and Resources

Guess How Much I Love You by *Sam McBratney*

The cover of this book has a lovely waxy texture with a border of four pastel colours. The layout is attractive and features beautiful illustrations (by Anita Jeram) of a big and little hare. We were excited about this book before even opening it. The two hares take turns in describing how much they love each other. The ideas they come up with are fun and well reflected in the pictures. I have seen this book read well on a television programme, however, it is a story which is probably enjoyed best when shared by a parent or child(ren). It is a book worth lingering over.

Clare Crane with Natasha (6) and Anthea (4)
£4.99 ISBN 0 7445 5439X Walker Books (020 7396 2466)

Minibeast Magic by *Roma Oxford*

Just in time for summer and the emergence of a multitude of invertebrates, this book is a must for anyone wishing to capture creatures for further study or even short-term pets! Follow the instructions to capture your 'beasts' humanely and then use the book to identify what you have caught and find out more about it. Where does it live? What does it eat? Our senses are vital in any line of enquiry and some inexpensive equipment is sometimes required for 'bugnapping'. Easy to follow instructions and of course some important ground rules for the care and comfort of the animals captured.

Sally Hall
£4.95 ISBN 0 9509460 2 8 Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (01904 760422)

Jolly Grammar Book

A new edition to the excellent Jolly Phonics range. Jolly Phonics is an enjoyable literacy programme with an emphasis on 'fun'. This colourful addition accompanies the Jolly Grammar Handbook 1, reviewed in the June 2000 issue (No 134). The new book is 24 pages but it's huge - large format, beautifully illustrated with big bold lettering. It explains and gives clear examples of nouns (common and proper), short vowel sounds, plurals, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, compound words, adverbs and speech bubbles.

Keith Hall with Keith (7)
£12.50 ISBN 1 870946 979 Jolly Learning Ltd (020 8501 0405
www.jollylearning.co.uk)

Dear Venny, Dear Saffron

by *Gary Crew and Libby Hathorn*

Two very different children, from opposite sides of the world, become pen friends. From the safety of their letters they become closer to each other than could otherwise have ever happened. We found this book to be both interesting and enjoyable as it shows the foolishness of preconceptions,

and the importance of not making assumptions about other people. The main characters are likeable if not entirely believable and the ending is suitably intriguing as to the future of their relationship as they finally get to meet each other.

Ruth O'Donnell with Daniel (14) and Richard (10)
£4.99 ISBN 0 86315 331 3 Floris Books (0131 229 6800)

Mercy's Birds by *Linda Holeman*

A story for older teenagers, about a 15 year old girl called Mercy. Set in Canada, Mercy lives with her depressed mother and alcoholic aunt in a run-down house where she has made a bedroom for herself in an unconverted loft space. Emotionally neglected by her family, Mercy financially supports them by taking a job in a flower shop after school hours. She is a loner who dies her hair and wears black, avoids having friends but nevertheless is befriended by Andrea. Her other real friends are her employer Vince and his old mother. Mercy lives in fear of the imminent return of her aunt's predatory boyfriend, unable to confide in anyone about his advances before he left on a work trip some months previously. Linda Holeman paints a vividly emotional picture of Mercy's life and the story is compelling. The theme of abuse is explored discreetly and sensitively, and for Mercy, is resolved.

Christine Ads
£4.99 ISBN 0 86315 317 8 Floris Books (0131 229 6800)

The Mirror Image Ghost by *Catherine Storr*

This is the haunting tale of a girl, Lisa, trying to come to terms with a step-brother and step-sister and also with her growing realisation of what happened to Jewish families in Europe during the war. These two problems - seemingly unrelated - are linked through Lisa's Jewish grandfather and a mirror belonging to his family that witnessed terrible events in the past. As Lisa, travelling through the mirror, tries to help the children that lived through those events, she also finds an affinity with her step-siblings. Daniel thoroughly enjoyed this book.

Ruth O'Donnell with Daniel (14)
£4.99 ISBN 0 571 20217 9 Faber Children's Classics (0207 465 7573)

Tales from Magic Lands by *Marjorie Holstedal*

This book is lots of stories from strange places and they are quite unusual. There are lots of baddie witches who try to outwit the goodies but other goodies nearly always come to the rescue. My favourite story is where a gnome changes the station signs but is killed. After this he saves the train when he is a ghost but continues to play tricks. I think these stories are told in a simple but magical way. I think children my age would enjoy being read these stories as well as reading them themselves.

Kat Fensleben (8)
£12.95 ISBN 1 85776 500 1 The Book Guild (01273 472534)
www.bookguild.co.uk

How the Whale Became and Other Stories

by Ted Hughes

I have a feeling we will return to these 11 creation stories time and time again. They contain a lot of humour and seem to improve with each reading. Hazel and Kim both enjoyed them, especially Bombo the elephant, the crafty fox and Torto, the speedy tortoise (before he received his skin!). The stories average 800 words, so possibly too long for the very young, however the illustrations (on every page and some full page) may keep them entranced whilst you read to older children. The illustrations (by Jackie Morris) are flowing, elegant and yet exuberant, really capturing the feeling of the fables.

Sally Jarvis with Hazel (8) and Kim (5)

£17.99 ISBN 0 571 20280 4 Faber & Faber (020 7465 7573)

Gled's Revenge by Liam Robb

We thought this book sounded promising from the fly-leaf – secret tunnels, buried treasure, the magical powers of an ancient, evil Cornish king, a wizard However, for us it just didn't work – in fact I had to finish it alone as Hazel didn't want to listen after 100 pages (out of 161). Hazel's comment is 'boring'. My reaction is that the author had a good idea for a story but didn't manage to set it down in an enjoyable style. It didn't flow and sometimes there seemed a lot of words about irrelevant parts of the story, while more exciting sections were only briefly described.

Sally Jarvis with Hazel (8)

£12.95 ISBN 1 85776 4536 The Book Guild (01273 472534)
www.bookguild.co.uk

How to Dazzle at Information Technology

This is from the "How to Dazzle at" series. It is aimed at key stage 3 children who, I feel, have had a bit of experience of computers. The worksheets are well set out, although there are a lot more words and less pictures than we are used to from Brilliant Publications. I must admit we did not find it as enjoyable or as much fun. I also think that one has to have Microsoft Word or similar on the computer. I'm sure it would be good to try for those interested in moving towards CLAIT or other computer related exams. This is a try before you buy book.

Diane Cromie

£11.99 ISBN 1 897675 67 4 Brilliant Publications (01525 222844)

Understanding Materials

by Alan Jones, Roy Purnell and Janet O'Neill

A brilliant publication from the publishers who live up to their name. This is aimed at primary school children and is linked in with the national curriculum's idea of knowing about different materials and what they do. This is done here, linking written

observations down with the experiments with discussion points. All the experiments can be done in the kitchen with whatever is needed at hand. The only hassle I had was with the barbecue page which is only meant as a discussion point but the smaller people seemed to want to see it for real. Not a good idea in February! My mum and Tabitha enjoyed the book so much that one evening they covered 11 pages together, each gaining something from it. Tabitha's comment was 'When can I do it again'. Well worth it.

Diane Cromie with Tabitha (7)

£13.95 ISBN 1 897675 60 7 Brilliant Publications (01525 222844)

Captain Motley & The Pirate's Gold

by Margaret Ryan & Margaret Chamberlain

This fun hardback book is a new addition to the Rocket series, "enticing stories for children who have just launched into reading". It is divided into 4 short chapters and has cartoon style black and white drawings on every page which make it look easy to read (not many words at a time!). Captain Motley and his crew need to win the smartest ship competition because they haven't been paid for a while ("The pirate business has been a bit slow of late"); this means smartening up their ship, the Esmeralda, and keeping it clean in spite of the dirty tricks of Captain Horatio Thunderguts. There are some nice touches, such as the cheeky parrot who likes to talk in rhyme and the cook who makes porridge sandwiches. Phrases are repeated (as in a lot of learn-to-read books) and most of the language is easy but there are several words that a new reader might have trouble with. My BIG gripe is that the phrase "spick and span" is included three times without the "k" (spic and span) – someone please tell me if my dictionary is out-of-date and this is a modern spelling! Having said that it is a humorous book which probably will entice youngsters who have had enough of the Tom and Kate style books. This book is one of four Motley's Crew books. If you are not into pirates the other titles in the Rocket series include Mrs Magic, My Funny Family and Silly Sausage.

Sue Chaous with Thomas (5) and Tessa (8)

£7.99 ISBN 0 7136 5462 7 A & C Black (020 242 0946)

Without boundaries: consent-based, non-coercive parenting & autonomous learning

by Jan Fortune-Wood

The basis for this book is the 'Taking Children Seriously' (TCS) philosophy, which puts forward a theoretical basis for a non-coercive and consent-based approach to parenting. The TCS position is based on a rejection of what are identified as the opposite extremes in other theories of parenting; the authoritarian and the liberal, which are both identified as being coercive and oppressive in terms

of children's personal autonomy. Overall, I found the TCS approach outlined in this book unconvincing on a practical level. There is no development of the application further to autonomous learning in home education, but that appears to have been covered in the author's other book in this area *'Doing it their way'* (EHP 2000). As an introduction, this is the one to start with. It's quite short (just under 100 pages) considering the extent of its philosophical basis on the extensive works of Karl Popper, but that means it will be easy to read for yourself, then perhaps visit the TCS website (www.tcs.ac) and reach your own decision.

Nick Steenman-Clark

£9.95 ISBN 1-900219-17-4 Educational Heretics Press (0115 925 7261)
NB: The above is just an extract from Nick's more detailed review. If you would like the full version please contact Sally 01559 370908

Do it Yourself 3R's by Beryl Collinge

The title of this book is misleading, as it is primarily concerned with teaching children to form their letters and numbers correctly when learning to write. There is no arithmetic and just a brief section at the end about reading. I have worked through the book with Sophie. She enjoyed the start where she was required to draw a house and a cat. Writing numbers proved useful, as it taught her to recognise all of these. Writing small case letters was more arduous but Sophie has basically grasped how to write them correctly. As a parent I did not like the tone of the text directed at me. I found it condescending and quickly abandoned reading it. This book might well appeal to the methodical type of child, but certainly not all.

Ann Pope with Sophie (4)

£5 ISBN 0 907616 65 8 Able Publishing (01438 814316)
www.ablepublishing.co.uk

Steve: A Story of Home Education

by Elizabeth James

This is a very interesting story. It looks at how, after being bullied at school, Steve was educated at home, and how he comes out at the other end. A marked success! It is full of wonderful information about how to de-register a child from school, how to deal with a gifted child, how to organise GCSE's and how to adjust, after an awful school life, to become a well rounded, well educated person. But it is very much one person's view of home education. I do feel that it could put some people off home schooling who do not have much money and are not well educated. There is a lot of emphasis from Elizabeth and her husband towards tutors and outside help. It also implied that they could home teach because Elizabeth is an English professor. These are educated, professional, middle-class, middle income people who see exam success as very important. I think this story should be an inspiration to us all to get our stories down on paper to show what a variety there is to

home education. Thanks Elizabeth, it really inspired me.

Diane Connor

£5.50 from Margaret Stevens (01844 343928). Margaret also runs Open Way (language and literature) courses

Rock a Doodle Doo by Shoo Kayner

"I love this book because of all the speech bubbles but the words are a bit too hard to understand and I don't really like the songs. I don't know what its about. I like the picture of the grinning apple on the corners at the covers," says Jem. His mum, Kirsten, says *"Jem tried hard to find something positive to say about this book. It's written in American slang and is at least half rather silly songs. He enjoyed the pictures but had no clue what was going on (the story line is very simple) because of the language. Not one to recommend unless your child watches lots of American cartoons and phrases such as 'cool dude' and 'heart was well and truly smir' make sense to them!"*

Kirsten with Gem Freisleben (6)

£7.99 ISBN 1 84121 463 9 Orchard Books (part of Crunchie range) (0201 7739 2929) www.wantspub.co.uk

TITLES RECOMMENDED BY EO'sers

The Clue Finders Years 4-5 CD Rom For PC or Mac

It's set in Egypt. At first you have to do adding, fractions, reading, map work and at the end of the first level you have to make a boat with some parts that they have. You collect cartoglyphs and give them to an old man and he will give you clues so you can get to the next level. On the next level (2) instead of collecting cartoglyphs you collect gems from mice who give you puzzles like compass directions, sentence making, sentence correcting and adding decimals. You have to do all this 4 times. There are 4 doors that you have to open by putting the gems in order with the others. When you get in you have to answer questions to get further. At first I found it hard but now it's ok. Even though it's work it doesn't seem like it because it's such a good game.

Owen Williams (9)

£19.99 from software retailers. Mattel Interactive (01203 651 7110)
www.mattelinteractive.co.uk

Enter The Maths Zone - 'Numbers' and 'Algebra'

Scottish TV make these two videos for learning. They were broadcast early morning by Channel 4. We forgot to set the video so we ordered them through the Channel 4 web site. They both contain five 15 minute programmes about different aspects of 'numbers' and 'algebra' on the key stage 3 syllabus. Each programme starts with Lisa

being given a riddle by the guard in medieval costume who is by a gatehouse. To solve the riddle they have to do some mathematical calculations. Taking them into the Garden of Reason set in a stately home, the wizard helps them to solve the problems laid out on the ground. They also involve practical situations. It is very funny, particularly the episode with a talking machine. Near the end of the episode, they go through the basics of what has been learnt using the ancient book of mathematics. It is more fun and more educational than textbooks. It is a good way of learning keystone 3 maths. *Matthew Longmuir (11)*
£17.99 each from www.4learning.co.uk

Free Range Education; How Home Education Works

by Terri Dowty
If you have ever been curious about Home Education, are H-Eing or are considering H-Eing, then I recommend that you read this book. It is a wonderful collection of experiences, reminiscences, stories and information, interspersed with pithy quotes and witty cartoons of 'Archie' the famous (infamous) hero of Education Otherwise! It can be read from cover to cover, or can be dipped into if you want to pursue one aspect (eg Frequently Asked Questions). There is a section on the law regarding HE in England and Wales, presented in an easily digestible form, for those who want to be clear and confident about their legal rights. I found it fascinating, funny, sad, encouraging and ultimately immensely positive and hopeful about alternatives for our children's future. I have also found it invaluable to give to doubting/unconvinced relations, friends and neighbours. Home education is not for everybody: liking your children helps a lot, but as someone once remarked "a bad day at home is a lot better than a good day at school".

Charlotte Seate
£12.99 ISBN 1 903458 07 2 Hawthorne Press (01453 757040)

The Usborne First Book of the Piano

by Eileen O'Brien and John Miles
I like this book. It's easy to use and I can teach myself. It doesn't look boring because it has lots of colourful pictures in it. It shows you where the notes are on the keyboard and how many beats the notes are. There are lots of tunes to play. They start easy and get harder.

Owen Williams (9)
£9.99 with CD ISBN 07460 3713 9, £4.95 without CD. Usborne Publishing Ltd (01482 224626) www.usborne.com

First Moon; Celebrating the Onset of Menstruation, self published by Anke Mai

Highly recommended. This 60 page booklet is intended for young women aged 9 and over, and their mothers, guardians, mentors (could be especially useful in families with no female guardian). This is

an enchanting collection of how the onset of menstruation is celebrated in other cultures (often very publicly) together with ideas that will give inspiration to your own family in order to welcome, in your own way, this important occasion with joy. Lovely illustrations, clearly presented ideas and a good further reading list. Long overdue and a step forward to reclaim the pride from the shame still present in our culture. Thanks Anke! My 10 year old has said she would like to have her ears pierced as a commemoration, since she will probably be too young to be tattoo-ed!

Yvette Hartley
£4.50 plus 70p p&p from A Mai, PO Box 8, Llandefno, SA19 7XJ

Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andreae

"Gerald was a tall giraffe
Whose neck was long and slim
But his knees were awfully bumpy
And his legs were rather thin."

And so begins the story of Gerald who finds that he is different from other jungle animals, ridiculed for not being able to perform well at the jungle dance, until advised by a cricket that "Sometimes when you're different, you just need a different song". This book is basically a long poem, brilliantly written and a real joy to read. The story is complimented by Guy Parkjer-Rees's superb illustrations, capturing the very spirit of the story. Hamzah has thoroughly enjoyed listening to this book repeatedly and is also attracted by the pictures of the animals, often pointing them out to ask what each is. It has to be said that this is one of his favourite books

Aaliyah Nisqu with Hamzah (21)
£9.99 ISBN 1 8603 99185

Collin's Treasury of Poetry

A few months ago, when it snowed, I pulled out this Treasury of Poetry, sat my son by the window and read him 'Snow' by Walter de la Mare. He asked me to recite this poem 'again' and 'again' 'Windy Nights' by Robert Louis Stevenson had him galloping about the living room for weeks. This collection of verse (put together by Stephanie Nettell) represents over 50 poets of both classic and modern poetry. It is without a doubt beautifully illustrated (by Penny Dann) so that the reader's imagination is captured. Compiled and illustrated with the young in mind, I have found this to be an excellent introduction to the wonderful world of poetry for Hamzah. *Aaliyah Nisqu with Hamzah (21)*
£12.99 ISBN 0 00 1939 9467 Collins

PLEASE KEEP SENDING IN DETAILS OF YOUR FAVOURITE TITLES. Write to Sally Hall, Nant-y-Garreg Farm, Saron, Llandysul SA44 5EJ, e-mail sally@aeab.net or tel 01559 370908

HOME EDUCATION IN THE NEWS

Several people have contacted me after the last newsletter's feature about a small school which was established by a group of parents in Leeds. They requested more information about small schools in their area or how they would go about setting up something of their own. The organization to contact about this is

Human Scale Education (01275 332516). They have lists of alternative schools and lots of helpful advice and pamphlets on how to establish a school of your own. It is also worth noting that on June 16th of this year Human Scale Education will be running a workshop in London about starting up a learning centre or small school; please phone them for further details.

Every week the Times Educational Supplement runs an interview with a celebrity about their memories of a school teacher who was a positive presence in their life. Although the writer Leila Aboulela was educated in a variety of different schools and not, ostensibly at least, at home, her story about a mother who managed to combine her own work with a determination to help her children to learn and understand the process of learning makes heartening reading. Even though Leila Aboulela's mother was obviously a very accomplished woman in her own right, it is worth noting that it was not her expertise as a statistician that made the difference, but her willingness to take the interest and time necessary to become involved in her children's learning. In his excellent book *Family matters: Why homeschooling makes sense* (Harcourt Brace, 1992) David Guterson (who writes this book as a home-educating high school teacher in

his pre-famous- novelist days) quotes from the 1966 Coleman report that shows what most of us instinctively know: that the school a child attends makes much less difference than the level of parental involvement in that child's education.

My best teacher [by] Leila Aboulela

I went to an American school in Khartoum from seven to 11, where I learned my English and read a lot of American children's books such as *Little House on the Prairie* and *Harriet the Spy*. The books seemed very remote from my own world, but were more comforting than school where there weren't many Sudanese children and I was very aware of the culture shock.

It was my mother who taught me maths. My maths teacher said I was useless - he said I was retarded or something - and my mother was so furious she was determined to show this was not true. I remember her going through the multiplication tables, even when I was having a bath. And she used the stairs, too - going up you added one, and coming down you subtracted. I remember it as being a series of breakthroughs, getting over my block, rather than acquiring knowledge. My mother is a wonderful person, very open-minded and progressive, and she taught me a lot of things that I still use, even though literature is not her field at all.

I remember her sitting at her desk in the dining room - only it wasn't a desk, it was an awful sort of table - where she could hear everything that was going on in the kitchen, and see whoever came in through the door, and hear the phone

HOME EDUCATION IN THE NEWS

ringing: yet she was working at the same time. She's an expert in demography and specialises in statistics, but it was a struggle for her. She was one of the few women in Khartoum who worked, one of the few women who could drive.

When I was 13 she came to London to do a PhD at the London School of Economics and I spent the summer term living with her in the student hostel, which was wonderful. I saw student life, and she rented this black and white TV and I would sit and watch it.

From the American school I went to a private Catholic girls' school, where they said that if I passed the entrance test I could skip a year. My Mum loved this idea so she spent the whole summer teaching me. She also coached me for the baccalaureate. She took me out of school a couple of months before the exam and taught me how to make a time-table and study different things so I didn't get bored, and how to do a bit of a difficult subject and then a bit of a lighter one. When I read those books now about how to pass exams I think, Well, my mother taught me all that.

As a result I started at Khartoum university about two years earlier than the other students. I wanted to do arts, but I got very high marks in my baccalaureate and if that happened it was felt you should go and study the hardest thing, which was economics. I didn't much enjoy it, but I did enjoy the atmosphere of university.

When I came to London to do my MSc at the LSE my Mum came with me to do research there, and my brother was also doing an MSc, at Imperial. I was married by then so I had my baby with me and we all lived together (my husband works

in the oil industry and was off in the desert in Yemen). My brother and I would rush out in the morning and Mum would look after the baby, but at 11 o'clock she would have all her books out on the table - another dining-room table - and the water in the kettle ready to boil for coffee, so that she could use every minute when the baby was asleep for working. Now I do the same thing. I get everything sorted out and as soon as my youngest child sleeps, I run to my desk; only it's a proper desk with a computer so I suppose that's some progression.

THE STORY SO FAR

1964 Born in Egypt to an Egyptian mother and Sudanese father 1985 Graduates from the University of Khartoum, marries same year 1986 First of three children born 1987-1990 Post-graduate studies at the London School of Economics (MSc, followed by MPhil in statistics) 1990 Moves to Aberdeen 1991 Lecturing at Aberdeen College of Further Education, then working as a research assistant at University of Aberdeen 1992 Starts writing 1995 First short story published 2000 First novel, *The Translator*, appears on the longlist for the Orange Prize 2000 Wins the first Caine Prize for African Writing for a story, "The Museum", published in *Opening Spaces*, in the Heinemann African Writers Series (The Times Educational Supplement, 11 August 2000, (c)Times Supplements Limited)

HOME EDUCATION ABROAD

A report, again from the Times Educational Supplement, on the growth of home education in

HOME EDUCATION IN THE NEWS

Canada.

Canada: Boomtime for home-schoolers Nathan Greenfield

Home-schooling used to be limited to families living in Canada's Arctic region, but it is now the fastest-growing segment of primary and secondary education.

Since 1990, the number of home-schoolers has risen 10 per cent a year to at least 40,000 - about 1.5 per cent of the school-age population.

According to the Ontario Federation of Teaching Parents, only 15 per cent of home-schoolers live too far from a school. Fifty per cent are fundamentalist Protestants, withdrawn from school because their parents object to the secular humanist curriculum, and the remaining 35 per cent are **educated at home** because their parents do not believe that state schools would meet their children's needs.

Bertha Gaulke of the Ontario Federation of Teaching Parents, said: "Home schooling allows parents and families to customise education to their outlook and their interests as well as their child's pace and style of learning."

British Columbia, which has 4,539 home-schoolers, has the most organised system. Schools which have home-schooled children on their registers are given \$250 (£ 110) per child to cover the cost of materials such as chemistry supplies. The money is passed on to home-schoolers.

The school board on Vancouver Island supplies computers to home-schoolers following the established curriculum. In addition, some schools have made their

facilities available to home-schoolers and have allowed them to enrol in extra-curricular activities.

Critics argue that home-schooled children are short-changed by parents untrained in curriculum development and teaching, and because they miss out on socialising with their peers.

But Dick Baerendregt, chairman of the Home Education Corporation of Alberta, denies this. "The Internet affords parents access to hundreds of sites where they can find supplies and curricula from grade 1 to university level. **Home-educated kids** interact with people of all ages, because their families work together through support groups."

According to Professor Gary Knowles, of the Ontario institute for studies in education of the University of Toronto, home-schoolers may be better equipped for formal post-secondary education.

"When they move to college or university, these kids thrive on their individuality and on the self-directed nature of their previous learning experience," he said. "They know why they are in college or university, have their own agenda and are focused." "Home-schooled kids must be doing well," added Mr Baerendregt, "both Harvard and Yale put a premium on enrolling them."

For more information see:

www.ucanteach.com;

www.flora.org/oftp - Ontario Federation of Teaching Parents

(The Times Educational Supplement, 21st April 2000, (c)Times Supplements Limited)

Ann Kennedy Smith

(akennedysmith@yahoo.co.uk)

Keeping a Diary – Iris Harrison

Editor's note: The article below deserves some introduction, for those newer members of EO. The Harrison family was the subject of the landmark legal victory for home education in 1981 at Worcester Crown Court (*Harrison & Harrison v Stevenson, 1981*). It was in this appeal case that the judge defined many of the terms in the current Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act that enables us all to home-educate. He defined *education as the development of mental powers and character through the imparting of skills and learning by systematic instruction*, and described an *efficient education as one that achieves that which it sets out to achieve*. The well-known definition of *suitable education* was also set as

1. *to prepare the children for life in modern civilised society; and*
2. *to enable them to achieve their full potential.*

The Twentieth anniversary edition of the EO Newsletter (June 97), included an article from Iris Harrison, which left no doubt how much is owed to the early families that decided to home-educate their children. Here is one excerpt:

It may be difficult today for parents to understand the hostility encountered by many of us during those times. Because I felt so strongly that children should be in control of their own learning, certain members of our locality would often come up to me in the street and call me "a bloody anarchist". When I asked for support from Esmond Butler, our local MP, he arrived at our house with the Divisional Education Officer and Trevor Jellis, the Educational Psychologist, to tell me that a Care Order was being put upon our children. We were safer when going through the Courts as the publicity this engendered protected us.

The Diary today

Please, all you special parents out there, home-educating, do keep a diary. You will then, like me, be able to go back, years later, and relive some of those many precious moments.

I was forced to do this when we were in the hands of the Courts. Our Barrister, Lord Tony Gifford QC (known to the family as Tony) requested it and my diary became Evidence 114, Worcester Crown Court. Today it is an enormous source of joy, allowing me to step back into those incredible times. Here are some extracts, taken from the diary, that I would have forgotten:

Today has been interesting. Discussion was inspired after hearing a statement by a friend, "What's character building". There were deeper implications than this but too complex to relate here. We talked about society's attitude generally, and it was decided that work is an attitude and can be classed as play to us in many instances. And so our friend would possibly believe that because we enjoy what we do and it's not a chore then we lack character. Could we end up by seeing life as all play? We talked at length on this and we believe that it is possible, just by creating an attitude toward that end, to enjoy whatever one is doing. This left us invigorated.

Another piece that I love reading:

Grant was rather scathing of me when I looked a word up in the dictionary for a letter I was writing today. He thinks that I should spell as it sounds. He's going to, so he says. In discussion he informed me that I might lack confidence as I was obviously concerned about what people thought of me. He told me that he hoped to have sufficient confidence not to worry whether he could spell or not. (This has always been my hope that he could get this far, and hold such an attitude.)

I cherish the following excerpt:

I am finding it interesting to see how suddenly N begins to understand his numbers. This suddenly came to him after playing with a knitting machine row counter. It had broken and he had mended it with Grant's help, and HEY PRESTO, suddenly numbers now had meaning AT LAST! To many people this would have been a problem, a 10 year-old not understanding or even remembering his numbers. Until now, he would ask such a question, "What is a double tummy?" (an 8). (N., like Grant, is privileged to be a visual spatial learner – profoundly dyslexic).

Grant and N had a shot practice in the paddock using an air rifle and a whitened baked bean tin today. They came into the kitchen, sat at the table and discussed the possibility of filling balloons with hydrogen, letting them float up and using them as targets. They went on to discuss what happens during an explosion – what actually causes the bang, comparing a balloon, bullet, bomb and hand grenade. Is the bang to do with the speed of sound, say of the fragments of metal of the hand grenade? Their discussion included AJ and it went on for at least an hour, and to great depths.

This is also special to me:

Grant frequently comes to me to discuss things that he's been pondering. For instance, the expectancy that society will have upon him the moment that he reaches 16 years old. He had come to the conclusion that morning in bed that there was no problem until he made it into a problem by his own fears and that he would hold the idea strongly inside himself that he would work out his own future. I am wishing once again that I could fully recall all this as it left me speechless and in awe of this boy that Dr Morrison, the educational psychologist, judged at one time to be 'educationally subnormal'. His own conclusion of life, failure and success, happiness etc. is quite profound.

Iris Harrison, The Burntlands, Tenbury Wells WR15 8SH

Home Education and Travelling

Last summer we finally plucked up courage to go off travelling for six months with our four children (ages two to seven). It was a big decision because Steve had to give up his job, so we had no 'security' to return to. Our parents thought that we were mad, but as home educators we are used to that opinion and almost take it as praise these days!

We took our trailer tent through France, then around Spain and Portugal and had an amazing time. The children did no work that would be recognised as such, but during our time away our four year-old began to write. The children's best memory is catching a snake from a Portuguese river, but others high up there include watching bee-eaters at their nests, swimming in ice cold water under a waterfall, watching vultures, playing in rivers, jumping waves, wood turning.....the list is endless. We managed to visit so many beautiful cities (Barcelona, Granada, Seville, Lisbon, Madrid, Paris) and learnt a lot about history and architecture on the way. We did not meet many English-speaking people, but the children made lots of friends - they soon discovered that words were unnecessary providing the smile was big enough. We all picked up the basics words of the three languages and even our three year old could respond to 'What is your name?' asked in any language.

We learnt that Spanish people live very different lives to us (who else in the world lights up their BBQ to start cooking at 11pm??), that food is different everywhere (daddy ate a snail, yuk), that shops were closed in the day, but open at night, that summers can be hot and sunny, but above all of that we learnt that everybody is much the same - children everywhere play chase or some version of ring-a-roses.

Naturally, there were low points as well, but they are very hard to remember. We ended up camping through August and none of us enjoyed packed campsites. Temperatures in the south of Spain reached 43degrees, so we found it difficult without a fridge. However, our outstanding memories are of having fun, learning so much without ever meaning to but, most of all, just of all being together 24 hours a day, seven days a week for six whole months.

So, if you've been thinking about going off travelling for a while, then our advice would be 'just do it'. Would we do it again? You bet. Unfortunately it took us ten years to save up for this trip, so we may have to wait some time.

By the Daunt family

190 Dale Road, Matlock Bath, Derbyshire DE4 3PT

EO IS 25 IN 2002 !

AND WE WANT TO CELEBRATE

Anyone with any suggestions about how EO can mark its silver anniversary?

There's been a suggestion of a big party sometime in the summer, possibly connected to a camp, with inside accommodation for people who don't camp.

Do you think this is a good idea? Do you know a good place to do it? What should happen at the gathering? Do you have other ideas? Would you like to help organise?

We've volunteered to co-ordinate an event, but we want everyone in EO to contribute. If you have energy or ideas please contact us, or post something to the EO list.

*-Penny Clarke, Jill Fisher, Janet Wilkinson and Beverley Young
(see council member list for contact details)*

CAMPS FOR TEENAGERS, BERKSHIRE GROUP

Six camps have been arranged for 2001:

Caving in the Mendips, Somerset (26th Feb – 2nd March)

Gaming/role playing, Berkshire (13th – 15th March)

Cycling Trip, Cotswolds (5th & 6th April)

Static Camp, Berkshire (25th – 27th April)

Cycling Tour, France (3rd – 8th May)

Static Camp, S. Wales or Yorkshire (10th – 14th September)

The camps have been running for two years and each one has been a success, largely because they are led by two exceptional people who know how to relate to teenagers (and to all age groups) with respect and enthusiasm. They are resourceful role models who are able to foster co-operation and individual independence in the most natural way. Their approach is informed by the ethos of Forest School Camps, a voluntary organisation run along similar lines to Education Otherwise, and has been running camps for 6 – 18 year-olds since 1947. One of their beliefs is that you develop an affinity with nature only if you sit and sleep on the earth. Usually the camps do not have electricity or flushing toilets, and all participants share in cooking, washing up etc. Parents do not go on these camps.

Details from Pat Connor, 2 Whitegates Lane, Reading, Berkshire RG6 1ED (s.a.e. appreciated).
Tel: 0118 9662 123, e-mail: tjj.connor@virgin.net

Resurrecting Rituals

Living in a rural situation, bringing the children up ourselves (rather than expecting institutions and society to do that for us) and wishing to escape from the materialistic and consumerism of mass society, we've turned to the seasons and nature for our structure and rhythm throughout the year. It is very easy, and rather uninspiring, to buy an armful of presents (if you can afford it) at Christmas, decorate a tree and pull the crackers. Likewise, at Easter, shops are filled with chocolate eggs, and at Halloween, with plastic toys and masks. How many stop to ask why we partake in this, especially if we aren't religious? Looking at communities that are more in tune with their natural environments (tribal peoples, rural peasantry in less industrial countries), their rituals focus on the seasons, rites of passage, coming of age and spiritual thanksgiving. By looking at their traditions and comparing them with our own lives, it is easy to see ways in which we can invent our own rituals and celebrations. These can help make us more environmentally aware (in a habitat sense); just as in tribal societies, this is partly how the children learn about their environment and the adult world. I feel that by becoming intensely aware of the natural world, we and our children become more self-aware also, and therefore better educated.

Celebrations, for us provide structure to a year without terms and holidays, even workdays and weekends. They make us aware of the passing year and provide entertainment and an outlet for creativity, poetry etc. They are an excuse to bake, dress up, look things up in books, go outside and really look, if one were needed!

As part of our midwinter celebrations, we had

- a Christmas eve party with holly leaf ceremony (birthday candle fixed to holly leaf, make a wish out loud as you float the leaf on a dish of water, if it floats, the wish come true – you hope).
- a medieval banquet – no forks, but dressing up, candlelight, bread trenchers,
- lots of home made presents (+ tree and crackers too).

Below are some of our ideas for things to make as part of a spring celebration. Now go and invent your own! Better still, invite the children to come up with their own! Look up other countries' traditions and adapt them, bring in lots of baking, creative writing, model making, natural observations, music storytelling, mobiles and set aside a day to have a feast!

Nests

Decorate boiled eggs, make nests for them out of tissue paper, or better still, found materials - twigs, leaves etc - and discover how amazing it is that birds are so much better at it.

May Tree

Find a tree-like twig, 'plant' in a flower pot, decorate with tissue paper blossom, mini birds nests and tiny eggs - plasticine or chocolate?

May Flowers

Scatter yellow blossoms (buttercups, dandelions) on your doorstep to ensure May Day is warm and sunny, allowing blossom to set and provide a bountiful apple crop. (My children are well aware they can't really influence the weather, but love to do it anyway, and every year (3 years) we've done it, May Day has been sunny!)

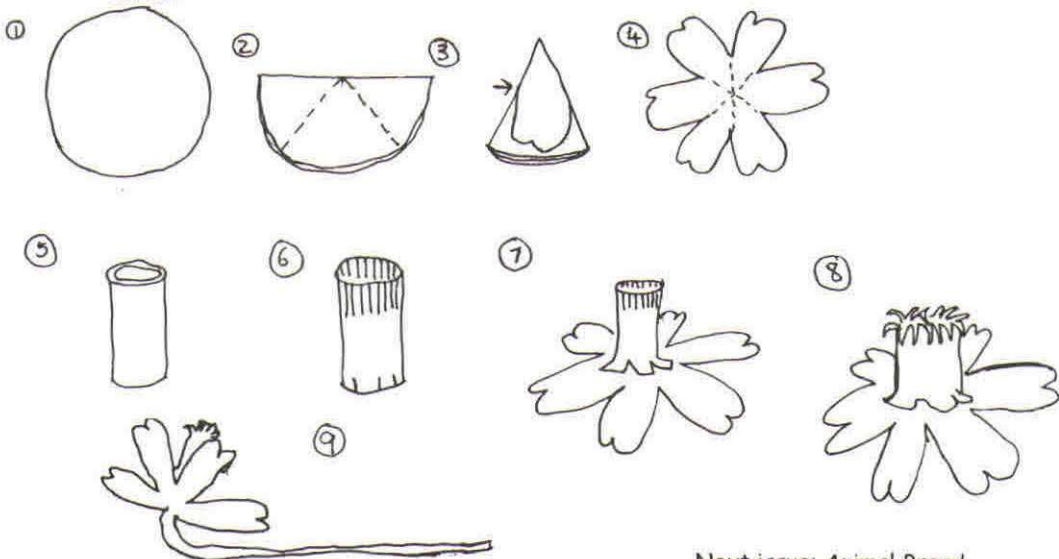
Bird Mobile

Make chicks or birds from card, cotton wool, feathers, pinecones etc and suspend from thread.

Spring Daffodils

You will need: yellow, orange, green card, scissors and glue.

1. Draw round a mug or biscuit tin lid onto thin yellow card. Cut it out.
2. Fold the circle in half, then fold the semi-circle in to thirds.
3. On the small fat wedge, now draw a petal shape, from about 1/3rd down from the point. Cut around the petal.
4. Open out your flower.
5. Cut a rectangle about 4 cm wide and 8 cm long from orange card. Roll it up and glue it.
6. Make lots of small snips at one end of the roll, and a few short snips at the other.
7. Open out short snips and glue onto the centre of the flower.
8. Ruffle the many snips.
9. Cut a long thin strip from green card. Glue on the back. You could use a green straw.



Next issue: Animal Bread
Kirsten Freiesleben, Worlington, Devon

FROM THE ARCHIVES...

Editorials from the 80s researched by Sarah Guthrie

A nightingale is singing its heart out in the trees outside. It's two o'clock in the morning, a warm night, and I think we've nearly cracked the Newsletter.

(Linda and Ivan Tyrrell, June 87)

I believe that all kids are entitled to 'education otherwise' than the state provides. Editing this newsletter has confirmed my view. We need more positive moves to set up alternative schools, which offer a coherent philosophy of life and most of all we need to persuade the government to support these alternatives. Surely there has never been a time when support was more likely to be forthcoming than at the present, with the imminent breakdown of the system?

(Diane Greenwell, August 1988)

Personally, I would like to have formal recognition of our commitment and our aims. I would like the government to be made aware of us and I would like monetary grants to be made available to us if necessary, and the rich facilities that there are in the education system to be at our disposal, so that we can take what is good and leave what is bad, instead of the 'all or nothing' attitude that is prevalent. There is no threat to the teaching profession in this for I think it unlikely that all parents would wish to take on this responsibility. However, we do, and not only is what we attempt not wrong but it is courageous and deserves recognition.

(Brenda Holliday, Dec 1985)

An important innovation in this issue is Jean Lovius' introduction of an Agony column. Home education is not without its problems and sometimes EO parents dare not admit this for fear of calling into question the whole business of deschooling, considered by many to be wayward, perverse and downright wicked.

(Alan and Hazel Clawley, Dec 83)

By the way, I thoroughly recommend being taught at home, there is just no other way, especially if you hated school so much it made you ill. School phobia was no joke until I was taken out of that supposedly 'normal' environment of school. Just because you don't fit in doesn't make you some freak of nature, in fact I think it does the opposite, you're not as narrow-minded as the rest. You realise that parents have the right to carry on teaching their children after 5, not hand over to a stranger who hasn't the foggiest ideas how your child ticks.

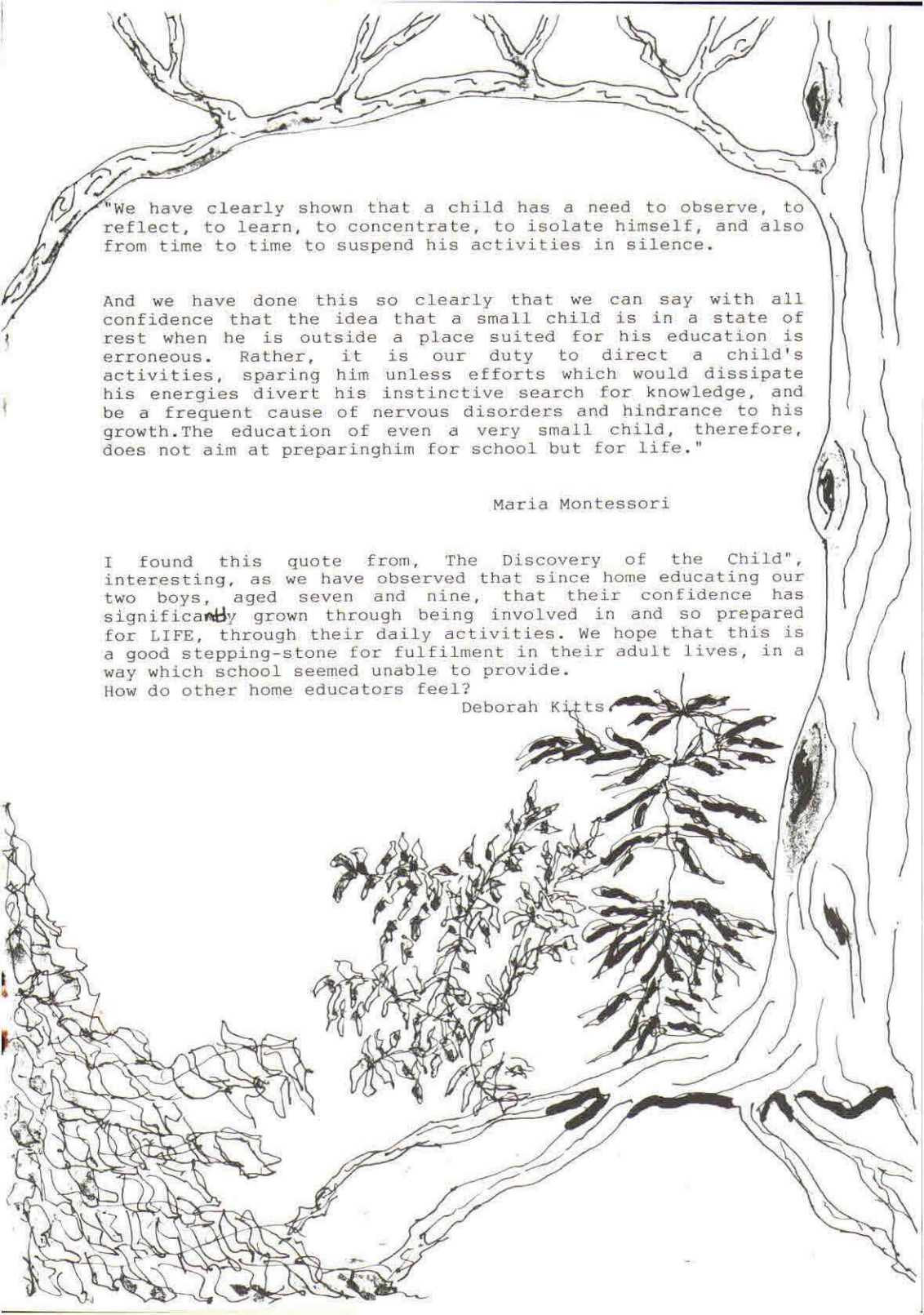
(Michelle, April 89)

We did this on our portable typewriter, so you don't need wonderful state of the art word processors to be an editor, just a gallon or so of Tippex.

(The McNamara family, April 1992)

The format of this newsletter is obviously an experiment. As we have a word processor and a printer it seemed a good idea to use it to produce the newsletter, if for no other reason that to save the treasurer an enormous expenses claim for Tippex!

(Joseph and Jill O'Connor, August 85)



"We have clearly shown that a child has a need to observe, to reflect, to learn, to concentrate, to isolate himself, and also from time to time to suspend his activities in silence.

And we have done this so clearly that we can say with all confidence that the idea that a small child is in a state of rest when he is outside a place suited for his education is erroneous. Rather, it is our duty to direct a child's activities, sparing him unless efforts which would dissipate his energies divert his instinctive search for knowledge, and be a frequent cause of nervous disorders and hindrance to his growth. The education of even a very small child, therefore, does not aim at preparing him for school but for life."

Maria Montessori

I found this quote from, "The Discovery of the Child", interesting, as we have observed that since home educating our two boys, aged seven and nine, that their confidence has significantly grown through being involved in and so prepared for LIFE, through their daily activities. We hope that this is a good stepping-stone for fulfilment in their adult lives, in a way which school seemed unable to provide.

How do other home educators feel?

Deborah Kitts,

Profile of a Council Member

My name is Isobel Bogucki. I have been a Council Member for 4(?) years. I live in Sussex with Bob and we have three children, (two living at home still) who have never been to school. I had two older brothers and was the afterthought, sent to boarding school at an early age. I went to a secondary school nearer home but too far to travel daily. I was bored and was not allowed to take the only subjects that I was slightly interested in, chemistry and physics. I started those subjects at 'A' level plus botany, zoology and later pure and applied maths. I worked in Cambridge then in Norwich at the Food Research Institute. After 3 years, I decided to go to university and did a joint Hons. in Chemistry and Microbiology at Nottingham. I had every intention of returning to a research job.

During my third year at Nottingham I felt dissatisfied with the way we were being taught. There was no space to come up with real questions; no one wanted to discuss ideas. It was still take notes, learn and regurgitate them in the exams. I discovered lots of things that I wanted to explore and questions I would have liked to have had answered but they were mostly outside my own course. I realised that I was not nor ever had been 'educated' within the system. (I still do not feel really 'educated'.) I eventually had a burning desire to enter schooling and change all of it from within!

During my Dip. Ed. Year, I clashed with my tutor about the way the course was structured and what we were expected to do. To my surprise I still passed and taught in a small Catholic school before becoming a Head of Chemistry, followed by being Head of Science. In spite of having total freedom to design our own science syllabus and ways of working, I became more and more frustrated by the constraints of the system. I walked the corridors looking into the small boxes and wondered what on earth we were trying to do to with these young human beings.

My biological clock then kicked in and suddenly being married and producing children became important to me. The joy of holding my first born was shadowed later on the same day by the thought of the schooling that would later be imposed on this totally perfect and wonderful baby. When he was old enough to be left for a short while, I joined what was then called the National Housewife's Register, (now the National Women's Register). We had weekly discussions on topics that were nothing to do with bringing up children, homes, cooking etc. So it was quite surprising that a few months later the group went to the home of someone who gave us a talk about how she home-educated her two children. I had been teaching for 11 years without being aware of the possibility. It was a revelation and I travelled home in a state of euphoria. I joined EO at the next Green gathering we went to.

It seemed like a very short time before we received an amazing letter from the local school informing us that they expected my son to start in the following Autumn term. He would have been 4 plus a couple of weeks. He did not go. We went instead to our first EO gathering. Since then, we have all lived following our interests as and when we have wanted to. The 3 children are very different and each is discovering what is important to them. Their lives are very different from my own. They have had lots of

time to be bored but the freedom to change things in their own chosen way. They have not wasted time doing meaningless busy work.

Besides spending a great deal of time helping anyone who needs information about home education, moral support, etc., I enjoy singing with two choirs and at folk clubs, learning the flute and playing with a wind-band, I am about half-way through a mediation training course to become a community mediator. I am a bookaholic, having a huge collection of books on almost every subject and I am addicted to cutting out newspaper articles*. (Anyone who would like to explore the collection and happy to be vegetarian in our home would be very welcome to visit)

I have given talks about home education to Quaker groups, National Women's Register and others. I have tried to increase the LEA's understanding of autonomous education in numerous telephone conversations. I have done several radio and press interviews. I have been to a number of educational conferences where I have tried to widen the understanding of teachers entrenched in schooling. Sometimes their looks of sheer disbelief at what initially seems like an outrageous comment by me are followed by a glimmer of understanding Many teachers admit that what they are doing is not ideal but feel that there is nothing they can do about it.

I have listened to the concerns of hundreds of home educators or prospective home educators, from the problems that they encountered in school, problems with the LEA, with their local group, their family, worries that their child does not appear to be doing anything, feeling lonely Often I cannot actually do anything but listen with empathy. Sometimes I feel that I have really done my best and given the caller all that I could and that feels great. Occasionally I have felt that I didn't pick up underlying concerns or that my mind was not fully engaged or even that the caller for some reason had put me in the wrong frame of mind – indignant, irritated, angry. I sometimes find it hard to accept myself as I actually am even though I can happily accept my children's mistakes and faults.

One thing that I find very odd is that when I was working in the system I was rarely aware that the LEA existed, they paid my salary but never interfered with my teaching or planning -- I was responsible for up to about 1200 children. Since rejecting schooling I seem to spend a huge proportion of my time trying to educate the LEAs, helping to write reports to satisfy them or just wondering what their next move will be in any situation.

I have mourned the absence of children in our household and am already dreading the absence of young adults. As it is, I see little of them and sometimes when I have a bit of spare time I feel lonely. I am wondering how the next phase of my life will emerge. I have many interests and may find it a problem deciding which way to go! Meanwhile I am still prepared to devote a lot of my time offering support to all home educators, to share my resources and to talk about my philosophy of education to anyone who is prepared to listen!

Isobel Bogucki

The Dreaded One-eyed Monster

Someone out there, help me! Please!

I wholeheartedly want to believe in autonomous education. I very much want to leave the girls, educated at home for over a year now, to their own devices, to explore, discover, invent, investigate, inquire, play, experience and practise, as all toddlers naturally do, and all children would continue to do if they weren't interrupted by the process of schooling. And watching them when they're engaged in those kinds of activities, I am quite confident learning is taking place. I'm happy that their brains, bodies, spirits and souls are developing, growing and becoming 'educated'.

What I've got a problem with is the danger of these activities all becoming completely annihilated by the destructive influence of the Dreaded One-eyed Monster. Once in its clutches, the children are distracted from any interest in their environment, lose their natural tendency to investigate their world, lose their curiosity about the potential and sheer wonder of it as they are sucked mercilessly into the world of the One-eyed Monster. It saps their energy, destroys their thought, atrophies their muscles, kills their motivation, switches off all adrenaline flow and generally robs them of their ability to do anything other than worship it! I am, of course, if you haven't guessed already, talking about television.

I used to think it was worthwhile watching some of the schools' programmes, especially in history and geography, where the images give such an insight. But now, I have changed my mind for several reasons: the sight of their glazed faces and slumped bodies, when I'd previously expended a lot of energy getting a buzz going; the continual fight to watch more and more, and the reluctance afterwards to get bums off cushions! But mostly I feel that any learning that takes place is far outweighed by the fact that they are about as motivated to get going again as a cow going to the slaughter house, and are mentally switched off (unless it is one of those really stimulating programmes – rare!).

So I've decided it's just not worth it. I know there are some brilliant schools' programmes. I know the children do get something from it. But is it worth all these adverse effects? How much is it worth? If I were to let them truly choose, I am convinced that they would watch all day. (I should point out here that I don't watch it much – it's not on all day by default!). And the time they weren't watching, they wouldn't have the motivation to do anything, because their adrenaline flow has dropped to their socks, and why make the effort to get it up again? It's easier not to.

It would be interesting to know what John Holt would have done with his belief in kids totally choosing their activities, because telly wouldn't have been such a major part of kids' lives at the time he wrote *How Children Learn*. His practical ideas about children being in charge of their own learning, most of which I agree

with, would not have been countermanded by the pull of box-watching. And children weren't nearly so confined indoors or to adult supervision as they are now. They could wander off, further afield, safely. We also didn't have nearly so much stuff to entertain them, like videos, games, play stations, computer programmes and so they had to use their brains to invent activities and play. Now telly and such like does all that for them. I'm beginning to believe that the more time children spend watching the box and being entertained, the more they lose their ability to think. And education surely is about one's ability to think, isn't it?

How much does everyone else watch? And does truly autonomous education mean we allow children to totally please themselves and watch all day if they want to? Or perhaps we only allow them to please themselves as long as it is not harmful. And watching too much, I definitely believe to be harmful. How does everyone else manage it?

Ross Mountney, Rose Cottage, Sea Lane, Old Leake, Boston, Lincs PE22 9JJ

HELP THE CAMPAIGN HELP THE CAMPAIGN
Funding for Pre-16's with college courses

As members will know from newsletter reports concerning EO's work with the DfEE, more flexible opportunities for pre-16's to use college courses, either through attendance at college or via Distance Learning, is high on our agenda. We still need your help to support this development. Have you:

Tried to get a place at college, or to use college Distance Learning materials, but found funding to be a problem (the FE Funding Council pays for post 16's, LEAs hold the purse strings for pre-16's but mainly provide schools...)?

Managed to get a place, or to use materials, with financial support to pay the costs?

Found the college wouldn't even consider offering a place to a pre-16 home-educated child, even though they may have students excluded from schools?

Found college would offer a place in exceptional circumstances?

In fact whatever your experience has been in this area, positive or negative, we would like to hear from you - likewise if you have any ideas, possible solutions or have a relevant work background. Confidentiality will be respected if you let me know this is your preference; otherwise it might be useful to be able to clearly show policy makers and 'purse string holders' that real people are encountering real problems.

The aim is to put together a file of case studies that can show the extent of the demand and need. In addition we expect to be able to highlight the unfairness of situations where families have been directed to Education Otherwise, for example, because clearly school is not working for a child, only to find there is no support if the student wishes to attend college later on. To this effect please write a concise summary of your experiences, perhaps with a letter from the student themselves and add photocopies of any communications with the college, your LEA, MP, the education committee etc., and address it to me (include your name and address). In view of the likely numbers of responses, a typed letter would be useful. Alternatively phone our College Contact: Kathy Chilton 01969 623707. PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE get out, or borrow, a typewriter and do this - every single letter counts! Thanks and best wishes.

Gwen Baldock, 6 Villa Grove, York YO31 7TB Email: gwen.baldock@cwcom.net

Why Support Education Otherwise?

A month or two ago, I was asked why it is worth supporting EO. My first reaction was to talk again about all the benefits of membership, and then I realised that these benefits have little to do with why I am an active member of EO.

My reasons for supporting EO are largely because of the information and support it has provided and still provides for me and many others. This work is often unseen and hard to quantify, but I did a little research, and I think we can all be proud of what EO did last year.

In the year 2000:

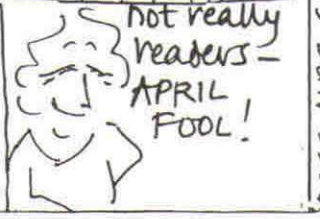
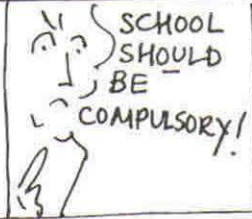
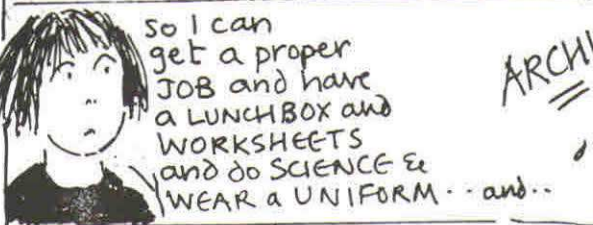
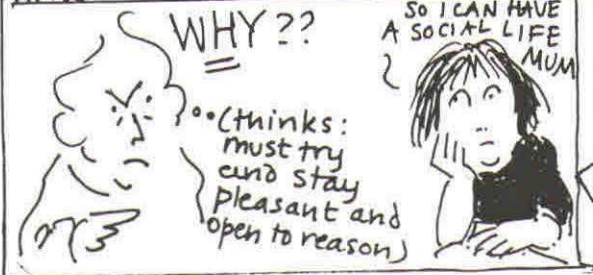
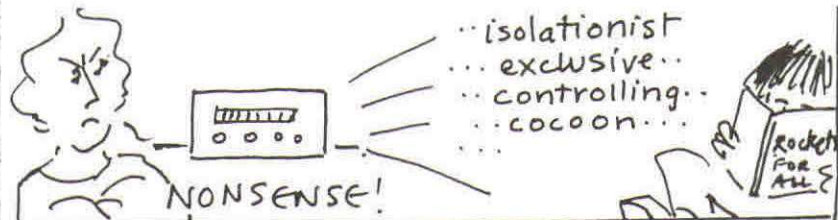
- The EO enquiries phone line received over 7000 calls from people wanting to know more about home education.
- EO distributed over 4000 information packs free to enquirers.
- In addition EO distributed about 4000 copies of the new leaflet "Home Education - a real option" free to the public.
- EO distributed over 3000 copies of the Summary of the Law free of charge (this does not include 2400 copies originally sent to LEAs in 1999).
- The EO website received over 50,000 hits.
- EO sold nearly 1000 books and nearly 2000 information leaflets about home education (without taking any profit), as well as distributing School Is Not Compulsory and other information free to new members.
- EO sent information about home education to all 640 Citizens Advice Bureaux in England and Wales.
- The EO media team dealt with about 150 requests from the media.
- Various specialist contacts took hundreds of phone calls from both members and non-members.
- A network of over 80 Local Contacts supported home educating families in their areas. This support ranged from promoting social contact and supplying information to helping people deal with their LEAs. Some of these Local Contacts also worked proactively with LEAs to try to improve their procedures for dealing with home educators.
- EO members supported home educators in court as expert witnesses, provided written statements for solicitors, and worked to educate family court welfare officers.
- Representatives from EO met with various people from the DfEE to discuss matters of interest to home educators.
- Nearly 1500 people joined EO.
- All the work was done by unpaid volunteers and funded by your membership money.

Jill Fisher, Leicestershire

Educating Archie

by *SEJ* 2001

Mrs G and Archie listen to a programme about home education.....



DOES MRS G MEAN IT OR NOT? SEND £1 TO FIND OUT!

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.

A TRIBUTE TO LOUISE VERRAN
11th Jan 1956 – 14th Feb 2001

Some readers will have known Louise Verran personally, and some through *Home Education UK* on the internet, and some from her contribution to *Free Range Education*, recently published by Hawthorn Press. It was a sad shock to us all to hear that she had died so suddenly and unexpectedly.

Louise was a very active member of the home education community. When she returned to the UK and came to Bath in 1998, she was disappointed to find no active homeschool community. Instead of leaving it at that, she set about creating one, gathering home-educators out of the woodwork and organising meetings. Her vision was to set up a local group, "with the express purpose of encouraging and supporting home education as a viable alternative to school in this area ... to create a community which facilitates the sharing of resources, information, which fosters friendships, provides support and the all-important social contact of our children". It was a vision she went a long way towards realising: there is a large and active home-education group in Bath now, with many friendships and much support. This was Louise's gift to us.

Although Louise did a great deal on a practical, organisational level, she did

more than that: she drew people together because of the person she was. She was a vibrant, energetic, fun-loving individual, and very generous with her time and energy. Generous to her children, of whom she was justly proud, and generous to her friends and acquaintances. She was always able and willing to offer advice or support when needed, though never imposing it. Louise was a good friend to many. I feel privileged to have known her and will miss her. Louise leaves husband Mick and her 3 sons, Tom (18), Sam (13), and Joe (9). Our thoughts are with them at this sad time.

In order to honour Louise's important contributions to home-education, her co-writers on *Free Range Education* have set up a fund, to become a trust fund. The intention is to provide modest grants to low-income home-educating families to help them purchase books and materials etc. Donations can be made to The Louise Verran Fund, 62 Wallwood Rd, London E11 1A2

Louise Jensen, Bath (01225 840735)

WHAT IS AN EDUCATED PERSON?

I would like to say how much I appreciated Isobel Bogucki's article in last month's edition of the EO Newsletter, entitled *What is an educated person?* It was so refreshing to see the wider ideals of education, that are so sadly neglected by schools with their emphasis on short term testing, competition and normative standard, actually articulated in print. I agreed with them all.

Letters

It was particularly inspirational to me because I have just been through the painful experience of having to withdraw my child from school after a term of secondary school education. I intended to send him back to school in January. He had done his homework, his blazer and games kit had been duly cleaned, but as the day to start back at school approached, he became increasingly tearful, both when he was awake and asleep. In the end, it was the fear expressed in his face that argued louder than a thousand rationalisations.

We were very apprehensive about the prospect of taking over sole responsibility for his education, yet it now seems the most natural thing to do. We had supported his education when he was at school, so it seems to be a logical extension of what we were doing before, but without the hassle of having to liaise with third parties. There is a palpable sense of relief that has spread across the family as we see our son so appreciative, relaxed and healing from the harmful experiences school bullying and the passive attitude towards learning, which school seems to engender. We appreciate too the freedom to experiment and work in the way that is most constructive for us.

Isobel's article has articulated and reinforced my own criteria for providing a suitable education for my child. For school to become non-threatening to him, he needs the inner resources to maintain and respect his own position and those of others in the face of its acquisition. Unfortunately, the school system with its emphasis on

uniformity and assessment does nothing to engender these vital qualities. Without them, a child risks entering a damaging downward spiral, frustrating the ultimate educational objective of producing citizens 'open to all life's possibilities' with 'the self-knowledge and self-confidence to select what is appropriate'. Until my son has acquired these vital qualities, effective education must be an "education otherwise".

Anne Longmuir, 29 Woodcote Green,
Fleet, Hants GU13 8EY

EO OR NOT EO

I was moved by Martine Archer's article *EO or not EO* in the February Newsletter. I agree with her that one of the aims of EO should be to remain "open and welcoming to all comers", because the decision to home-educate is not always easily or quickly made, and because most people live in such a climate of fear and pressure to conform that they cannot make radical decisions without knowing that support is out there.

Our son, aged 7, has been in a state school for 3 years; although very chatty, he is sensitive and introspective, with a rather individual learning style which doesn't fit into the school's system of chopping the day into arbitrary segments for different activities. This has made him anxious, negative about his own potential and personality, and painfully aware of how little time he has in the day to do things which genuinely motivate him. However, because he is doing the work extremely well and is not disruptive, many people fail to see

Letters

that there is a problem. It has taken us this long to arrive at the decision to take him out, largely because he has a sister, aged almost 5, whose personality is quite different and who has a more robust, optimistic approach to life. She started reception class in January but, by half-term, was already feeling the strain of the long hours and the rules. Over the holiday, after consultation with both children, we made the decision to take them out, and wrote to their head teacher. The first few days have been encouraging in some ways, a bit of an anticlimax in others; I know it will take time for the children to adjust to the absence of artificial structure from their lives.

I have been concerned about the social aspects of home-schooling, because Max has already suffered one bereavement of sorts; his best friend moved away last year to Doncaster and has not been in touch since, despite efforts on our part to keep up the contact. We have plans to keep in touch with his main school friends, but whether they can get together at weekends or holidays will depend on their parents' time and goodwill. Obviously we will make new friends, and perhaps the children will have the energy to join clubs, etc... If we make a go of this, a lot of the credit will go to our EO contacts, who have been helpful and friendly since I first approached the organisation (before Max was born).

I would therefore like to say to all concerned: keep up the good work, and keep a high profile so that more and more parents will know that there is a

viable alternative to incarcerating their children. I hope that I shall now be able to give something back to EO, and I am encouraging members in Harrogate/York to make contact with a view to share conversation, skills and opinions.

*Kay Albrecht, 4 Robert St, Harrogate
kay_albrecht@hotmail.com*

LATIN COURSE, ANYONE?

We have been happily home-educating since 1997. Robbie is 14 years old now, and has expressed an interest in learning Latin. I would love to learn Latin too. We wondered if any EO member might be able to lend or sell us (cheaply) a beginner's Latin course. I am a single parent on state benefits, so cannot pay a great deal, but would be only too happy to reimburse any postage costs should anyone be able to lend us a Latin course. If anyone could spare any GCSE materials in art, sociology, French, history or geography we would be able to make very good use of them. Thanks, everyone.

*Pauline Gallagher, 14 Bakers Lane,
Woodston, Peterborough PE2 9QW*

4 UNDER 5: ANY ADVICE?

I have recently joined EO with the intention of home-educating my children (my eldest having just turned 4 years). I have told various members of my family about my plans and, as expected, some have not been too enthusiastic! However, it was my mother who asked me these questions:

As we live in a small village, won't my children be singled out for being "odd", because they do not attend school? Is it

Letters

not possible that they could be bullied in the village because they are educated differently? Are we going to make life harder for them by singling them out in this manner?

I personally think that if they make friends with children who attend the local school, they will be envied, but I would like to hear from anyone who has encountered this sort of problem of being "different".

I have 3 children, aged 4, 2 and 10 months, and a baby due in August, and would like to hear from other large families with advice about how to juggle the demands of a large home-educating family! My husband works long hours and I have no other help from my family.

*Janet Kocan, Finlandia, Mill Crescent, Govilon, Abergavenny NP7 9SB
Janetkocan@aol.com*

HOUSE IN NORFOLK?

We are a family of six: two 4 year-olds, one 6 year-old a 15 year-old and two adults, plus a few well-behaved animal companions. We are looking for a property to rent within cycling distance (up to 15 minutes in a car) to Quidenham and Eccles in Norfolk, unfurnished, with a large garden/veg. plot, open fire places, away from main roads and if it would be near a wood and had its own water supply, I'd be overjoyed! We would like to move in late Spring or early Summer. If you have a property that sounds like what we may be interested in, or even know

of someone else that has, could you please contact us at:

1 Bythynod Crogan, Llandrillo, Corwen, Clwyd, or call on 01490 440560 (Rowenna Williams)

SEEKING CONTACT

I am a single parent mum to my son, Sunny, who is 9 ½. Sunny has been out of school since September 2000. We would like to make contact with other families in our area that have children of a similar age.

*Christina Clack, 451 Hatton Road, Bedford, Middlesex TW14 9QP
Tel: 020 8844 2494*

CONTACT WITH OTHER TEENS

I am a 13 year-old girl and looking for contact with other teen girls who live in the Essex area and are aged between 12-14 years, who are home-educated and would like to write and maybe meet up. My hobbies are shopping, going to the pictures, watching TV and listening to music. Please write to:

Lisa Gough, 18 St Clair Close, Clayhill, Ilford, Essex IG5 0PA

LATTER DAY SAINT

I have recently started home-educating and am also LDS (Latter Day Saint). There are 2 excellent LDS homeschool websites with lists of members. I have been unable to find a list of home-schoolers who are also LDS in the UK. I would like contact, support and to organise maybe a camp or get together.

Jo Atkinson, 40 Mendip Cres, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex SS0 0HN 01702 525040

EO WORKING WITH LEAs - The Way Forward?

At present EO representatives interact with LEAs in a number of ways to inform LEAs about home education and to support families who are contacted by their LEA. Interaction between EO representatives and LEAs can be roughly divided into three areas:

- Proactive work with LEAs to help them to widen their understanding of home education and to ensure that their procedures relating to home educators are both legal and user-friendly.
- Support for members in their routine contacts with LEAs. This can include (among other things) commenting on drafts of letters and reports, providing information on the law, and supporting families at meetings with LEA officials.
- Support for members who are experiencing difficulties with their LEAs. As well as all of the above, this may extend to direct intervention with the LEAs, and, exceptionally, to providing expert witness statements for use in court.

These three types of LEA/member support work are often done by the same person, usually the Local Contact, with support from other members with specialised experience. However, at the moment, the work is done on an ad-hoc basis and different forms of support are being provided in different areas. The EO council is now looking for ways to encourage this work, and to provide better information and support to those people who are involved with it. Various ideas have been proposed, and one such proposal (LEAP) is included in this newsletter.

We would very much like to hear from members who have any thoughts about the best information and support structures for this work. There are many issues which need to be addressed including:

- who should provide support for those doing the work
- would it be best to provide support on a regional or national level or both
- should all three types of work be integrated, or do we need different structures to support the different areas
- should this work be done by Local Contacts or by others?

Please let us know your views about this work, especially if you have experience of working with LEAs on these issues. All contributions are very welcome.

We will try and have an open discussion about LEA work on the EO list, so please e-mail your ideas to the EO list (see education-otherwise.org website to join this list). If you don't have access to e-mail you can write to Martine Archer to have your views posted on the EO list, or contact one of the following: Jill Fisher, Christine Adey, Jude Ashley Walker, or Isobel Bogucki.

Views will be collated and presented to the next council meeting in May, at Featherstone.

Jill Fisher, Leicestershire

LEAP NETWORK

In many areas where there has been ongoing face to face personal contact between a representative of EO and the LEA, there has been a real improvement in the attitude and behaviour of LEA personnel towards home education.

Following much discussion the LEA Positive-contact (LEAP) initiating group was formed to explore the idea of a LEAP network.

Those involved in the LEAP network (LEAP Contacts) would mutually support each other with the objective of developing, encouraging and nurturing positive communication between EO and the LEA's. (The intention would not be to either encourage or discourage individual families' interactions with their LEA's.)

In many cases the LEAP Contact would also be the Local Contact, but where Local Contacts do not wish to or are unable to have that direct interaction, a local or regional LEAP Contact would be nominated. All Leap Contacts would go through the usual acting/ratification procedure.

The initiating group recognises and values the range of qualities, skills and experience that individual Local Contacts have shown in work with LEA's and appreciate that there is not just one correct approach to this work.

The LEAP Network would focus on enabling and empowering individual LEAP Contacts who would gather and share relevant ideas, information, knowledge and experience and be willing to have ongoing contact with LEA's.

This structure would not necessarily be the answer to the problem of supporting individual families who need more than their Local Contacts help. We invite further contributions, especially from people with experience of working with LEA's but would appreciate input from ALL home educators on the best way to promote an LEA initiative.

Please send feedback to the EO list, (see education-otherwise.org website to join this list, write to Martine Archer to have your views posted on the EO list, or contact one of the following: Jill Fisher, Christine Adey, Jude Ashley Walker, or Isobel Bogucki.

Christine Adey, Jude Ashley Walker, and Isobel Bogucki

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**

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 Alan Thomas.

EO Car Stickers

Help us spread the word, please send 50p and a reasonably large new SAE for your sticker to **Ali Willer, 28 Cozens-Hardy Road, Sprowston, Norwich NR7 8QF**.

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: henrietta.turnbull@ntlworld.com

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 (M, L, XL)

£3.50 (3/4, 5/6, 7/8, 9/11, 12/13)

P&P: up to 6 shirts £2, 7 or more £4

Cheques payable to "E.O. Trading LTD"

Pat Connor, 2 Whitegates Lane, Reading, Berks RG6 1ED

Resources Booklet Lost Address

Will Karen from Wiltshire who sent Henrietta £1 for a resources booklet please contact her, she has mislaid your address.

Volunteer needed to take over the job of checking the museums concessions list in the Contact List, just to keep it up to date each time it is reprinted. **Contact Janet Wilkinson 01733 554436**

LOCAL CONTACT UPDATE

Resignations

Hampshire Anita Langham

New Acting Local Contacts

South Gloucestershire	Sue Summerhayes
Worcestershire	Rachel Pearson
Bristol	Carla McGregor
North Yorkshire	Janet Jacobs and
Mason Grant	

Areas needing a Local Contact

A new area North Kent/Outer SE London

Carmarthanshire, Channel Islands, Cheshire, Dorset, Grampian, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Isle of Man, Lincolnshire, North Manchester, Powys, Strathclyde, Tayside,

Isobel Bogucki 01403 261178

E-mail: isobelb@cheerful.com

ANNOUNCEMENT

The next E.O. Council Meeting will take place on 10 am Saturday 26th May at the National Gathering at Featherstone Castle. All members are welcome to attend.

If you have anything for the agenda please send it to Janet Wilkinson (General Secretary) at least 3 weeks in advance. Thank you.



The spider's web

*As a fly flies towards a spider's web,
The spider lies in wait,
As the spider sits there,
It knows the fly's fate.*

*The fly hits the spider's web.
Fear goes through its head.
For as it lies there panting,
It's on its deathbed.*

Elinor Tuffrell, 11 Norfolk



Robbie Brockhurst,
6, East Sussex



Heidi Benham, 9,
Northamptonshire

*My black cat
Is very fat
She creeps around
All day and night
To catch the mice
That taste so nice!*

Sherie Manning, 13, Kent



The Fire Beast

The fire beast is like no other for he will never burn.
Cats run as he walks down dark alleys late at night,

They keep away
do not come near,

they do not dare and if they did they'd soon learn,
for the fire beast has a devil glint in his eyes
like a candle dancing on an open wind.

He is devil but never sinned.

His fur made of velvet flame.

His eyes look out through a burning mane.

He is wild.

He is tame.

His world is ever changing.

His world is never the same.

Yet in all this madness the fire beast is sane

Jac Flynn, 13, Yorkshire

Notes for Contributors. Drawings should be in **black and white only**. Please include your full name, age, and county with each contribution. If you would like to edit the children's pages, contact the newsletter co-ordinator. The editor of the next issue is:

Penpals

Hi, My name is Kirsty. I am 14 years old and I would like a penpal aged 14+. I enjoy listening to music (Eminem, steps, *nync and Billie). I like Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Angel. I like reading horror and thriller books. You can e-mail me at kirstylou86@hotmail.com.

Hiya, My name is Stacey. I am 11 years old. I would like a penpal aged 11 to 13. I like Angel and Buffy the Vampire Slayer. I love animals, especially dogs and cats! I enjoy listening to music by Britney Spears, Scub 7 and Eminem. So please e-mail me at maricestacey19@hotmail.com

Hi, My name is Kimberley. I am 16 years old. I would like a penpal aged 15+. I like Angel, Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Eastenders. I enjoy swimming, reading and listening to Billie, Britney Spears, and Westlife. I am currently studying for my GCSEs. Email me at kayjay04@hotmail.com

Or write to any of the Brownes at 24 Kirton Close, Tilehurst, Reading, Berks. RG30 2NS.

Hello, My name is Beth. I am 14. I would like a penpal for my imaginary friend. She is 7 feet tall with green hair and green skin and lives in the pond. She is about 200 years old and can turn into a frog. Her name is Tellan. She would like a male imaginary penpal, preferably blue, of around 200. Write to Tellan, c/o Beth Fisher, 54 Ratcliffe Rd, Leicester, LE2 3TD or e-mail her at elf.hilsinger@ntlworld.com.

Hey everyone! My name's Jo and I'm 13 years old. I am looking for a m/f penpal of 11 to 14 years old. I am interested in: animals, art, English and pop music such as Spiller, Eminem, Kylie M and R&B acts such as Destiny's Child, All Saints, and TLC! I hate most sports apart from swimming and I am a Wiccan-in-training. If you are interested in the same things as me or you are aged 11 to 14 then write to me at: Jo Anderton, 10 Tracks Lane, Billinge, Wigan, Lancs. WN5 7BL or e-mail me on: sleepykrome@aol.com.

Hi, My name is Lora, I'm 13 and looking 4 some male or female pen-friends from anywhere aged between 12 - 14, my hobbies are: writing letters and e-mails & dogs (I have two dogs) and I love Ireland. My fave pop groups are Scub 7 (especially Jon), Limp Bizkit ar OK and also Samantha Mumba. I have brown/blond hair and greeny/brown eyes. Write to : Lora Dawson, 72 High St., Codford, Wiltshire, BA12 0ND.

Hi my name is Sherie Manning! I am 13 years old. I love animals and also watching eastenders!!! I have a got a cat and a puppy. I like reading, writing, watching TV, music and dancing. I like Robbie Williams, Westlife, Steps, and loads more. I would like anybody from 10+. I will write back to all my replies. Please write to me at: Sherie Manning, 10, The Avenue, Tollgate, Borough Green, nr Sevenoaks, Kent, TN 15 8 EA. Also if there is anybody in Kent I would like to get in touch with them too.

Hi, My name is Ben Latham. I am 10 years old and I like drawing, painting, and reading. I am interested in WW2 aircraft and enjoy Airfix models. Anybody like to write to me at 21 Ashcroft Rd, Porthill, Newcastle, Staffs, ST5 8EZ.

Hi, My name is Oliver. I am 6 ¾ years old. I like K'nex and computer games and horse riding and CITV. I would like children to write to me. I promise to write back. Oliver Humphreys, 3 Stacks, Wicken Lane, Old Leake, nr. Boston PE22 9QE.

Hi, My name is Rachel and I am 8 years old. I would like a penpal aged 7-9 years old. I like dancing, gymnastics, swimming and lots more. I have got a hamster called Biscuit and a rabbit called Fluff. I have got two brothers, Jake who is 6 and Josh who is one. Write to me at 125, Belvoir Rd, Coalville, Leics, LE67 3PJ.

Hello! My name is Livia. I am 6 1/2. I like watching tele and cooking and playing games on my own. I like sweets and going to the shop to buy sweets. I like playing with my paper dolls. Livia Peterkin, April Cottage, 22 West St, Abbotsbury, Dorset, DT3 4JT.

Hi, My name is Ollie and I am 6 years old. I love Playstation Games. I like Tony Hawkes, Spiro, Croc, and 007 and Bugs Life and I love cartoons. If you like the same things please write back. Ollie Gregory, 23 Archway Close, Wallington, Surrey, SM6 7LH.

Hi, My name is Jake and I am 6 years old. I would like a penpal aged 5-7. I like gymnastics, swimming and lots more. I have got a hamster called Biscuit and a rabbit called Fluff. I have got sister Rachel who is 8 and brother Josh who is one. Write to me at 125, Belvoir Rd, Coalville, Leics, LE67 3PJ.

Hello my name is George. I am 4 1/2 years old and would love some penpals. I love drawing/painting, playing with my pets, and go-karting. Please contact! George Osgerby, 2, Westgarth Gardens, Cayton, Scarborough, N. Yorkshire, YO11 3SF. Thank

My name is Bethia, I am 4 years old. I like riding my bike. I like playing with dolls. I like listening to stories. I asked for pen friends last time and no one wrote to me. My sister got lots of letters. Please will someone be my penfriend? Bethia, 9 Orion Way, Grimsby, DN34 5TZ.

Pet Pals

Hi, my name is Samuel. I am 14 weeks. I am a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel. I am very cute and happy. I love eating, playing, and going outside. I like nibbling things too. If you want to write to me write to: Samuel, Sherie Manning, 10, The Avenue, Tollgate, Burough Green, nr Sevenoaks, Kent, TN 15 8 EA I would like dogs just to write.

Hi, my name is Lucky. I am two years old. I like sleeping, sleeping and sleeping. I am 1/2 Bombay and 1/2 Burmese. I am black, My owners say that I remind them of a mini black panther. I like eating but I don't like to go outside. In the summer I sit on the doorstep sunbathing but in the winter I hog the radiator. Please write to me at Lucky, at the address above. I would like cats just to write.

*** Carnival ***

A magazine for eight - twelve year olds.

Stories* Craft* Baking* Competitions* Puzzles*Art

Only 50p Non-profit - (Money pays for photocopying only).

To buy a copy, send 50p and your name and address to:
Carnival, Olivia L Blake, 16 Ochil St., Alloa, FK10 2DS

***All contributions are welcome ***

TALKING WALL

Hi to Laura and Sam my best friends, and Hi to all my other pen-pals all over the U.K. keep writing!
From Sherie

This wall is for any E.O. child to use. You can send messages (for example to people you don't know how to contact otherwise.), make suggestions (for example, Anthea Axten suggested this wall.), Ask questions, state facts or just say hello to your friends. To put something on the talking wall just send it to the next editor (address & details in the current children's pages)

Q. What do vampires wear instead of Sun cream?
A. Moon cream!
Blake Windle Coates

To Rachel who is 8 and has a little brother called David. Please send me your address you didn't put it in your letter, Kezzie.
9, Orion way,
Grimsby,
DN34 5TZ

What has happened to Cally Cameron smith? How are you? Please write back to me. Deven
Kishore Thakkar

KIDSCAPE -
020 77303300 (London)
01273 557 133 (Brighton)

Hi Daisy! My name is Elinor Tuffnell. Your guinea pig Nadine wrote to my guinea pig Buttercup. You forgot to put your address on the letter so I was unable to contact you. Please contact me at The Vicarage, →

Low Road, Wretton,
King's Lynn, Norfolk
PE33 9QN
elinor@tuffnell.free-
on-line.co.uk

Hello to all my friends esp. Stephanie Norton & Talula Hutton! Thanks for writing back real quick (Stephanie esp).
Jo Anderton

Hi my name is Beth Fisher I am looking for people who play or are interested in warhammer and/or role playing in Leicestershire or near by. Send me an Email at: elf.hilsinger@ntlworld.com
Or phone: 0116 212 8120

CHILDLINE 0800 1111

Petrazy website address
For e.o. animal crazy children to get involve with. www.users.totalise.co.uk/~petrazy

EDUCATION OTHERWISE BUSINESS

Help Wanted

Are you wanting to help with the work of EO? Are you interested in our publications? If you are then you might like to join the publications group who really could do with some more help.

The publications group has defined it's brief as:

1. reviewing all of EO's publications including books, leaflets for both external and internal use, lists (resource etc), web site content, merchandise and the contact list
2. considering whether what we have is what we need, what purposes we need it for, who should distribute it, and what information should be available where (website, contact list, leaflets etc.)
3. looking at how we go about printing and reprinting material.
4. making sure material is revised and reprinted in a timely manner

We are currently, and rather slowly, reviewing the series of information leaflets which needs updating. We then plan to move on to other publications. All of EO's publications need checking for correct and up to date content, spelling, grammar etc. If this is something you would like to be involved with then please contact: Gary Podmore (S Yorkshire - 0114 258 5702)

Yorkshire Regional Gathering

Saturday 21st April 2001

9.30 am - 5 pm

**West Park Centre, Spenn Lane at
Butcher Hill (off A6120)
Leeds LS16**

Speakers (Terri Dowty and Alan Thomas), discussions and workshops, children's activities, book and supplies stalls, raffle, refreshments provided.

Child care is available but must be pre-booked.

ALL WELCOME

**BOOK IN ADVANCE OR JUST TURN UP
ON THE DAY**

(free raffle ticket with advance booking)

Contact: Eva O'Rourke, 33

**Wellington Rd, Wilsden,
Bradford BD15 0LP**

01535 274520

**Gary Podmore 52 Rupert Road,
Sheffield S7 1RP.**

0114 2585702 *

*gwernyll Dewi sant
st Davids camp
advance notice of the
pembrokeshire eo
camp
10th to 25th
september 2001
Booking info in the
next newsletter
yvette 0845 458 9251*

***NB YORKSHIRE REGIONAL GATHERING PRICES:**

Adults £3.00

Children £2.50

More than 2 children £1 per child

**E.O. GATHERING AT
FEATHERSTONE CASTLE**

Near Haltwhistle,
Northumberland
24th - 31st May, 2001

**HOLIDAY
IN A CASTLE
BY A RIVER
IN GLORIOUS COUNTRYSIDE
IN THE GOOD COMPANY OF
OTHER E.O. FAMILIES**

It's for good reasons that Featherstone Castle is E.O.'s longest-running venue for National Gatherings. We've been going there for 14 years. No other venue has the space of this one: inside, big communal rooms, log fires, huge warm kitchen where we sit and chat; outside acres of beautiful parkland, trees, the river South Tyne. Activities, outings, workshops, discussions, barn dance, bonfire on the river bank.

Come for a few nights or the whole week. Special offer: book for 7 nights and pay for 6!

For more information and booking form send a s.a.e. to

**Keith Charlton
2, Wistow Road,
Newton Harcourt
Leics.
LE8 9FT**

PEAK CAMP 2000

30th June - 9th July

The camp is open to all EO members and to those interested in home-education.

Two large fields for tents and touring caravans; showers, toilets, wash basins and small shop.

Charges: per person per night

Adults: 1.20

Children: 0.80

Cars: 1.00

Caravans: 4.50

There is no need to book - families can make their stay as long or as short as they wish. Fees are payable direct to the farm, not to EO. In the past walks, cycle rides, rock climbing, circle dancing and shared meals have been popular activities. There is always plenty of time to share experiences of home educating with other families, and for families and children to socialise freely.

The site is Barracks Farm, Beresford Dale, near Hartington (grid reference 123 586).

Hartington is approached by the A515 either from the north, via Buxton, or from the south, via Ashbourne

From the A515 take the B5054, signed to **Hartington**. Follow the road through and out of the village.

Just under two miles out of the village, and shortly after entering Staffordshire, turn left, following signs for **Beresford Dale**.

Keep following Beresford Dale signs until you near the end of the road. Barracks Farm is on the left.

Gary Podmore, 52 Rupert Road,
Sheffield S7 1RP. 0114 2585702

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

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

Heros Club Holyport Maidenhead. Mondays 10-3 Regular sports, dancing, pottery crafts and cooking workshops. £25 per month membership or £10 per family per day

Contact: Dawn Dingwall 01628 783107

Local newsletter: Dawn Dingwall 01628 783107
www.zednetdemo.co.uk/zeddin

BIRMINGHAM

Last Wednesday of the month, Central Library 10.30-1.30 Free monthly newsletter (send SAE).

Contact: Jackie or Alan Hurley 0121 243 8242
22, Danzey Grove, Kings Heath, Birmingham B14 6JY birminghameo@lineone.net
<http://websites.lineone.net/~birminghameo>

BRISTOL

Tuesdays: trampolining with coach am followed by workshops pm Totterdown YMCA.

Fridays: ice-skating am

Contact: Kathy Nott 0117 966 8265

Thursdays: meeting at St Pauls Adventure Playground 1-3 pm
(all above term time only)

Contact: Carla Macgregor 9354389

BUCKS

Newsletter for Bucks/Northants,

Contact: Dawn Waddington 01908 569380

e-mail dawnwaddington@hotmail.com

South Bucks: Fortnightly meetings for crafts, activities, play, speakers, drama, trips to museums, theatre etc.

Contact: Jackie 01753 886924 or

Dorothy 01494 782864

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

CHESHIRE

Contact: Gill Wilson 0161 442 8723 for North

Cheshire/Stockport

Meetings 1st Weds of month for crafts, games and activities.

Contact: Carrie 01270 875 633

Sue 01270 883 978 for South Cheshire

CLEVELAND & DURHAM

Anyone interested in setting up a new group

Contact: Pauline Buttersworth 01642 899247

CORNWALL

Twice weekly events all round the county.

CHEERSS newsletter. To subscribe or for info:

Contact: Anna Wheeler, Cambrose Farm, Redruth,

TR16 4HT 01209 890378

e-mail 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

DERBYSHIRE

Chesterfield - new group meets every

Wednesday morning for socialising, support and activities.

Contact: Karen Bradley 01246 865532

Kaz Undrell 01246 205463

Yvonne Witham 01246 555645

DEVON

Contact: *Sammy & Nick Vidal-Hall 01548 830716*

Ice skating at Plymouth Pavilions Wednesdays at 12pm.

Contact: *Pat Stoolman 01626 854592*

South Devon: meetings every Wednesday

Contact: *Corine 01626 361856*

Penny 01626 360640

Carole 01364 643956

Exeter area :

Fortnightly at Crediton Family Centre.

Contact: *Ashen 01363 775478*

Jo Borthen 01392 679499

Also fortnightly in Exeter

Contact: *Becca 01404 549479*

Jo 01392 679499

Brixham regular meetings

Contact: *Sally Fisher-Smith 01803 856 862*

Totnes EARTH group meetings & outings

Totnes area every Monday.

Contact: *Bridget 01548 550917*

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, weekly meeting regrouping.

Contact: *Wendy 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 newsletter gives details of all

groups, events and meetings in Essex.

Contact: *Corinne 07802 630693*

epicycle@wavy.org

FIFE

Outings & get togethers

Contact: *Karen Spy 01334 655361*

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

1st 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

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 023 92 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*

Chichester 01243 528508

Christian Group Fareham, Gosport area

Contact: *Gayle Joubert 023 92 553842*

email gaylie@htinternet.com

Southampton: New club for teenagers and older kids. Friendly and welcoming. Fortnightly, next meeting Fri. 13th October 10am-1pm.

Contact: *Anita 023 8049 8840*

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@hevmat.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, social events and regular newsletter.

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: *Amunda 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.freereserve.co.uk

LANCASHIRE

Regular meeting, please ring.

Contact: Angelika Walter 01254 603 497

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

Every Monday 1pm onwards.

Meeting in Cleethorpes in church hall.

Contact: Caroline: 01472 690738

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

If this group is still happening could Chris Stevens contact me with current phone number, thanks.

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: Steve 8680 2933

Thursdays - Lee 11am- 1pm

Contact: Clare 8333 9455

Thursdays Fortnightly rollerblading Kidbrooke.

Contact: Fiona 8852 9756

Fridays fortnightly Sydenham 11.30 - 2.30

Bring an activity 1st and 15th Dec +12th Jan.

Contact: Chrystia and Keith 8776 8597

Fridays alternate fortnight Forest Hill Nature Reserve 11.30am

Contact: Dave 8692 4080

NEW Bromley group Fridays once a month.

Contact: Claire 8460 7347

NW London Otherwise Club

Contact: Leslie 0181 969 0893

Harrow, every other Friday plus swimming

Thursdays and other stuff.

Contact: Sue Foote 0771 802 2677

Livienne Sharkey TIMSHARKEY@aol.com

W.London HE Group - every Tuesday in

Ealing/Richmond area for fun and activities.

Contact: Naomi & Stephen 0208 567 7589

Lewisham EO meeting: All ages. Thursdays weekly

Contact: Clare Troy 8333 9455

MANCHESTER

Monthly formal art lessons at Stockport Art Gallery £1.50 per participant.

Monthly meeting at Stockport Library (contribution towards room rental)

E-mail Young Writers Group - contact Ed Wilson for details wilson-net@lineone.net

MADCOW news-sheet. Free. Send stamped addressed envelopes to Gill Wilson, 20 Brook Road, Heaton Chapel, Stockport, SK4 5BZ. Or get the newsletter via e-mail by sending a request via the MADCOW website at www.wilson-net@freereserve.co.uk/madcow_index.htm

Computing Skills, 1st & 2nd Sats at Moore family's home. Limited places.

Contact: Karen 01204 573136

Manley Park Autonomous Ed Group meeting wednesday once a month, to be arranged.

Contact: Julie 0161 860 7589

Also monthly reading group for over 10's

Contact: Julie 0161 860 7589

NORFOLK

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

Contact: Steve Williams, North Cottage, Crosswack, Norwich NR12 7BD

Workshops/social meetings every 1st and 3rd Thursday plus many other activities.

Contact: Sue Robinson 01603 738 494

NORFOLK/SUFFOLK BORDER

Diss area - new group aiming to meet bi-monthly.

Contact: Judith Tooth 01379 890622

Lowestoft area -meeting to start new group

Contact: Lin Walker 01502 741097

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

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

Contact: see to Mr & Mrs F Benham 4 Pilgrim Way, Wellingborough, Northants NN8 2J

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.

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

Irvine: weekly drama workshops Fridays, for
ages 5-9 and 9+.

Contact: Rhona 01294 273644

Ayr: Bead craft workshop, over 10's
Contact: Anne 01292 441060

Monthly activities at Eglinton Country Park,
Wednesday afternoons under 10's
Contact: Shirley 01563 540063

Kilmarnock/Irvine Geology indoor activities in
February.

Kelburn 'Mythology of Trees' walk in April
Contact: Rhona Catheart 01294 273644

Contact: Vivien 01563 537428

**Other visits coming up in the new year so
watch this space or**

Contact: Vivien 01563 537428

SHROPSHIRE

Visits: Royal Airforce Museum 18th January,
Jackfield Tile Museum (tile decorating
workshop) 15th February,

Hoo Farm Animal Kingdom 29th March.

For more details and other activities

Contact: Val Higgins 01952 502225

STAFFORDSHIRE/SOUTH CHESHIRE/NORTH SALOP

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

Contact: Patricia 01785 851150

Stafford: Every 2nd and 4th Wednesday
meeting in village hall for crafts, games etc.

12-3.30pm.

Contact: Nicola 01785 612410

Alsager: 1st Wednesday of month at Y.P.C.C
for crafts, music, drama, games and chat.

Contact: Carolline 01270 875 633

Sue 01270 88 39 78 Suedavies@tesco.net

SUFFOLK

Regular meetings every third Friday, either at
Wetherden or Stowupland village hall. Parents
and all ages of children welcome for

socialising and focused activities, 10.30-2.30 or
so. £2.50 per family, shared buffet lunch.

Contact: Sarah Guthrie 01379 783 678.

See also: details of new satellite groups listed
under Norfolk/Suffolk border areas.

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)

1st and 3rd Thursdays - Board games for all
ages in Dorking

Contact: Lindsay Wheeler 01306 501229

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

Contact: Bo Howard 01580 201681 (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

Eastbourne Home Educators Club alternate
Fridays, 9.30 - 11.30 Shinewater Community
Centre. 75p per child

Contact: Angehique 01323 509702

TYNESIDE

Monthly meetings, visits, activities etc

Contact: Linda Robertson 01911 4567007

For regular outings and monthly get-togethers

Contact: Wendy Field 0191 5489 470

WALES

Cardigan area Social meetings and outings on
Mondays.

Contact: Yvette Hartley 0845 458 9251

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 L.L.I.
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.

Contact: Celia McDonough 01633 669104

Gwent - Regular group activities. Suggestions
and new families welcome.

Contact: Dawn 01495 303468

Gwynedd - Mondays swimming at Bangor

Contact: Lousia 01248 361254

Friday swimming at Porth Madog

Monthly meetings at Tremadog

Contact: Jo Tuffnell 01766 512330

Pembrokeshire EO swim and sauna:

every last Saturday of the month. 12pm

Haverfordwest pool. Family ticket (2+2) £4.95

Contact: Yvette 0845 458 9251

WARWICKSHIRE

Coventry and Warwickshire area meetings
usually 2 Thursdays a month. Activity meetings
at Binley Woods and variety of outings

Contact: Sue Cardus 024 7654 3801

suecardus@aol.com

WEST MIDLANDS

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.freemove.co.uk

Joy Beasley 0121 585 6450

JoyBeasley@h-bunch.freemove.co.uk

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

New regular meeting Halesowen library 2nd

Thursday meet in the coffee lounge 11-3pm

Contact: Joy Beasley 0121 585 6450

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: Sarah Mellord-Wollny 01904 750324

e-mail sarah@wollny.org.uk

YORKSHIRE - EAST

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

Contact: Alison Houston 01405 769902

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/Abbeylee 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: Tracey 01484 317176

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

Please help to keep this diary
reliable and phone me with any
changes or meetings no longer
taking place. Thanks, Martine
01423 770396

ADVERTISEMENTS

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8643 7277 rvm@zoom.co.uk

Willow House, 19 Downs Side, Sutton,
SM2 7EH

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hse@clara.net www.hse.org.uk

ADVERTISEMENTS

Anyone interested in setting up a small school?

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editor Terri Dowty

foreword by Dr Alan Thomas

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www.free-range-education.co.uk

Saturday April 28th

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Write: Etain Addey & Martin Lanz, Pratale, Vallingegno, 06020 Scritto, PG, Italy.

En Famille International

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Contact Renny Gye 01865 552 204
infos@enfamille.com
www.enfamille.com

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.

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BACK PAGE PART TWO

Get involved and join a Small Group.

Finance

Priscilla Park Weir, Lynda Hitchman, Celia McDonagh, Ann Samuel Till, Ken Grindley

Enquiries

Gary Podmore, Pam Bellinger, Janet Wilkinson, Priscilla Park Weir

Publications

Jill Fisher, Gary Podmore, Lucy Charlton, Chris Harper, Ali Willer

Media

Liz Alderdice, Beverley Young, Eva O'Rorke, Fiona Brookes, Celia McDonagh, Janet Wilkinson, Belinda Harris-Reid

Business Practice Group

Jill Fisher, Priscilla Park Weir, Martine Archer, Gwen Baldock

DfEE Team

Anne Wade, Jill Fisher, Gwen Baldock,

Membership Support

Isobel Bogucki, Christine Adey,

LEAP (LEA Positive Contact)

Isobel Bogucki, Jude Ashley-Walker, Jill Fisher, Beverley Young, Anne Wade

Local Groups

Janet Wilkinson, Priscilla Park Weir, Julie Eaton, Julie Ridley, Penny Clarke

Communications

Janet Wilkinson, Jill Fisher, Priscilla Park Weir, Richard Eaton, Penny Clarke

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 (in bold) or Janet Wilkinson (General Secretary).

Media Contacts

Please contact one of the following people if you would like to volunteer to be interviewed or are contacted by the media and would like help/advice/support on giving an interview.

Scotland: Liz Alderdice 01464841489

ejid@alders99.freesevice.co.uk

North West: Beverley Young 01772 734314

beverley.young@btinternet.com

North East: Eva O'Rorke 01535 274520

evaandmary@aol.com

Midlands: Fiona Brookes 01684290087

brookes@openhorizons.screaming.net

Wales: Celia McDonagh 01633 669104

East Anglia: Janet Wilkinson 01733554436

eo_database@ndirect.co.uk

South West: Belinda Harris-Reid 01364

643343

bline@compuserve.com

South East: Vacant

London (1): Vacant

London (2): Vacant

Ireland: Vacant

(Volunteers needed for these areas)

More Useful Contacts

Complaints (acting): Celia McDonagh, 169

Habershon St. Splott, Cardiff Tel: 029 2021

8160 or Beverley Young 01772 734314

beverley.young@btinternet.com

Council Members

If you have a problem contact your nearest council member:

Geraldine Adams (North London) 0207 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

Penny Clarke (West Midlands) 01922 745465

pennyclarke@blueyonder.co.uk

Lynda Hitchman (Berkshire) 0118 961 4466

Jill Fisher (Leics) 0116 2128120

Garry Humphries (Lincs) 01205 871 399

Gary Podmore (Yorks) 0114 2585702

Eleanor Stapleton (London-North) 0208 8841368

Jenny Stevens (West Sussex) 01243 783 469

Anne Wade (London Middx) 0208 904 7155

Dawn Waddington (Bucks) 01908 569380

Janet Wilkinson (Cams) 01733 554436

Beverley Young (Lancs) 01772 734314

beverley.young@btinternet.com

Ann Samuel Till (Scotland)

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, 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:

Hazel Hutton, 39 Millfield Gardens, Keswick

Cumbria CA12 4PD Tel: 017687 72546

hhutton422@aol.com

(If you have had your publications list for a while ring 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
(Vacant)

Useful Contacts

Single Parent Family Contact: Sarah

Martin, Lammas, 34 Cowslip Drive, Little Thetford, Ely, Cambs CB6 3JD Tel: 01353 648 716

Special Needs: Christine Waterman

85 Elfrida Road, Watford, Herts WD1 8AT

Tel: 01923 464773

School Phobia: Geraldine Adams Tel: 0207

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: (Vacant)

College Contact: Kathy Chilton

Tel: 01969 623707

Teenage Support: Geraldine Adams

Tel: 0207 263 4922

EO Stalls: Lucy Charlton

2, Wistow Road, Newton Harcourt, Leics

LE8 0FT Tel: 0116 2592118

Research Contact: (vacant)

General Secretary: Janet Wilkinson, 31

Framlingham Road, Peterborough PE2 8UG Tel: 01733 554436

Treasurer (acting): Garry Humphries,

Three Stacks, Wicken Lane, Old Leake,

Boston, Lincs PE22 9QE Tel: 01205 871 399

Newsletter Coordinator (acting):

Christine Adey, 1 Dunbury Cottages, Milton

Abbas, Dorset DT11 0DH Tel: 01258 880355

Local Contact Coordinator: Isobel Bogucki

20 Rusper Road, Horsham, West Sussex

RH12 4BD Tel: 01403 261178

Enquiries Secretaries Coordinator:

Edwina Theunissen Tel: 01978 661 882

Membership Secretaries Coordinator:

Pam Bellinger, 9 Main Road, Kelmarsh,

Northampton NN6 9LY Tel: 01604 686521

ANN RICKS SUSSEX

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.

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