

# education otherwise



June 2002      No. 146

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

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AND EO BUSINESS**

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*(NOT for back copies of NLS - see Publications Secretary, inside back cover)*

**SPECIAL SECTION (AUGUST)  
SILVER JUBILEE EDITION  
Reprint of NL No. 1**

(Volunteers/ideas urgently needed for  
SSs for October onwards)

**LETTERS AND ARTICLES**

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*(N.B. deadline 1st July 2002)*

**Please send contributions via the most appropriate section editor above**

**DEADLINE FOR THE AUGUST ISSUE IS 1<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2002**

Please mark material 'for publication' and include your name, address, phone number and email (if you have it) as we may need to contact you to discuss your contribution (though details may be withheld from publication on request).

Please also ensure your EO subscription is up to date.

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***(N.B. PLEASE SEND CONTRIBUTIONS VIA THE MOST APPROPRIATE SECTION EDITOR, ABOVE)***

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Thanks to Sue and Simon for cover picture

### Co-ordinatorial / Glossy Mag!

It's clear from the responses received (few in number but strong on content) that members' ideas and feelings about this are very polarised. Here are the (edited) main points raised:

... I am alarmed at the idea of the EO Newsletter becoming a glossy magazine. A glossy mag inevitably has pages to fill and advertisers to attract. This leads, as it has with 'Natural Parent', to a magazine full of page-filling junk and masses of adverts. Our newsletter is full of articles written by people who have something to say, rather than a commission to fulfil; it covers a wide range of views without being judgmental; there is no pressure to include articles just to pad it out to a certain number of pages. Please don't turn home educating into yet another marketing opportunity. Keep the message that there is nothing you have to buy to home educate...

... If our objective would be to put 'ourselves' or EO more in the public eye, I wonder if it would not be better to make our website much more extensive? To update that rather than enter into the 'glossy mag' world. As with Natural Parent, any mag we produce would not necessarily be available on all

mag stands anyway, as it would be specialist and not full of crap as most saleable mags are! Therefore many newsmagazines possibly wouldn't carry it - there are so many others that bring them money in! A website, however much we hate to submit to modern technology, would probably give us more coverage, as more and more folks come on line. If we're spending money on our development I do wonder if the website may be a better objective in the long term. We'll probably need to do it in the end - if we are to meet increasing demand, and promote ourselves as a contemporary and viable organisation...

...The Royal Astronomical Society moved from a b&w plain paper newsletter to a glossy mag a few years ago. There was of course doom and gloom from many of the more conservative Fellows, but in fact it works very well. There is still a lively correspondence between Fellows, reports from research meetings, society news, and so on. But there are also more general astronomy and geophysics articles, and important discussions of the way astronomy is going nationally and internationally. The original newsletter was very much aimed at the professional segment of the society, when in fact the RAS membership is far broader. My main point is that going glossy and aiming at a more general market does not prevent the magazine from retaining its immediacy and relevance to the more "serious" contributors. A second point is that I don't see it would be beyond the wit of any modern publisher to allow publication of an internal newsletter with some common content with the glossy mag. This would allow contributors who don't wish their contributions to have a broader exposure to remain within the EO community, but also let some of the vitality of the EO newsletter to shine through to the glossy and so hopefully help to inspire others. It might even be possible to reduce the work load of the volunteers who run the newsletter by tapping some of the resources of the professional publisher...

... I don't think it's a good idea to have a glossy mag. With few exceptions, Glossy mags lack quality and content. If people want an improvement to the newsletter, then improve the newsletter. A glossy mag might compromise the image of EO to appeal to a popular 'audience'. EO is a minority interest and that is a strength. We are all individuals and don't need to present our philosophy in a more conventional way. We shouldn't need to impress the general public. I am not impressed with glossy mags and when previous mags have gone glossy it is

usually a backward step. I would totally disagree with upgrading our newsletter to a glossy magazine. I like it just the way it is. Those glossies you get with the Sunday newspapers stink of cheap ink & are not nice to handle. Leave the newsletter the way it is & let those who want a glossy do it as a separate thing. It seems that it couldn't cater to everyone's taste as there are already comments as to what could not be advertised in it! Some of the contents of the newsletter as it is now are not suitable for the general public & I wouldn't want it to have to get secretive about names & addresses because it was on general sale. I'm sure many of us do hand on newsletters to those interested in home education & this gives them an overall view of what goes on, various methods, etc. Our LEA gives out our local meeting details to all who enquire about home ed in our area. Does the general public need bombarding with more information?

... GWS had this same debate often. They have just folded I think as they were not a membership group like EO so had no income except adverts. A glossy mag has to get its money from ads (subscribers are the icing on the cake). The trouble with that, is the people who want to put ads in: curriculum, 'experts on HE' who offer themselves at vast expense to 'help' those new to HE (instead of letting them learn for themselves and thereby getting the greatest education for the parents available!) are actually against the ethos of EO! I don't like those adverts and don't want them in any 'real' HE mag. The other big issue and the one that stopped GWS from going glossy and being sold on supermarket shelves (aside from the lack of numbers of subscribers for Smiths to take it on - I think you need to show 50,000 for Smiths) was the fact that once it goes on supermarket shelves it is open to anyone so no one can write in it that doesn't want to be known to authorities or crazies. In fact this would mean basically no articles or very few. The third issue was that it would become a mag for new HEers. It would have to have articles that attracted people who were new to it or 'thinking about it' and therefore would lose its relevance to long timers. I can see the attraction in theory of being glossy but I think in fact it would mean a death to the mag in the long run. The pressure to make it interesting every month (2 months, whatever) would mean it became less relevant and would make it less relevant to long term HEers; therefore in the end it might make money as a mag about alternatives but not be relevant to the people doing it. In the long run that would fail...

... I like the idea of an EO magazine a lot. It would be a good introduction for people who are just considering home ed and would help to dispel many of the misconceptions about us...

... I'd welcome a Glossy mag for EO. But I would not like to see such a publication replace the current newsletter which I see as a vital method of communication for members. I see the Glossy more as a publicity vehicle for EO specifically and for home education more generally. I think it would need professional input if it were to be successful. (The only other experience I have of such a publication is through NCT who launched a glossy many years ago now. That publication, however, was also intended to be the members' newsletter and I don't think it was able to fulfil that function properly. It was financed by sponsorship - a whole can of worms was opened there!) In summary - in principle I would welcome both a glossy and a members' newsletter.

... I almost jumped up and down with excitement when I opened the latest issue of EO. What a great idea to upgrade into a genuine magazine and "widening out". Sadly there are still many parents who do not know about EO and that school is not compulsory. Most schools' Anti-Bullying Policies are not worth the paper they are printed on. There must be desperately unhappy children and equally distraught parents who simply do not know who to turn to for advice and support. If I had known about EO I would never have inflicted school on my child in the first place. The availability of a magazine such as the one proposed might help many more families to take the opportunity to explore alternatives than the present school system. Learning about EO has been a life saver - literally. I do feel quite excited at the thought of a magazine that could be simply picked up at WH Smith...

Thank you to all who wrote to me with your views and reactions - ranging from alarm to excitement, via notes of caution and a mixture of case histories. Clearly a lot more thought and discussion will be needed to reach anywhere near consensus. The 'glossy' idea is on the agenda for the Council meeting on 26 May. Questions of publicity, the future direction of EO, etc. are raised elsewhere in this NL and will be discussed (*inter alia*) at the Silver Jubilee Gathering in August. All members are invited to put forward ideas and comments, and there will be further consultation later in the year.

Make your voice heard!

Anne - 17.5.2

## REVIEWS

### **Educating your Child at Home**

by Jane Lowe and Alan Thomas

Jane Lowe is a founder of HEAS (Home Education Advisory Service), an offshoot of EO, and this book is certainly packed with advice although it takes great care to avoid being prescriptive. It is comprehensive, balanced, clear and accessible. The standard of literacy is high, and I'd give it ten out of ten for readability. Throughout the book, there's an emphasis on the variety and individuality of learning styles and approaches to home education, stressing that there's no "right" way and that anyone can do it, with a variety of case histories in each chapter. It covers how to convince sceptical relatives as well as the LEA. There's a section on getting started in home education and an interesting detailed comparison of education at home and at school, which clearly shows the difference in ethos and practicalities while also providing reassurance for parents who may be worried as to whether their home education will be "efficient". It has masses of information on national curriculum subjects and ways they may be approached (again reminding us that we don't have to!) from primary through secondary levels and what happens thereafter (some very encouraging case histories here). I particularly like the authors' contribution to the "autonomy/structure" debate: they identify a range of approaches from formal (or "structured"), through semi-formal to informal; and make it clear that an autonomous education (where decisions on what/how to learn are with the learner) can take all of these forms at different times. There is one significant omission - although LEAs have no authority to insist upon home visits or on meeting/assessing the child, this is only briefly mentioned in the section on special needs; the general section on dealing with the LEA fails to explore fully the alternatives to home visits. However, it is made clear that help and support in dealing with LEAs is available locally from EO as well as HEAS. As a handbook for families new to home education it could be a valuable resource, and I would like to see it on library shelves.

Anne Rix

£14.99 ISBN 0 8264 5227 2 Continuum International

### **The Desperate Journey** by Kathleen Fidler

What an action-packed tale! Always going from one disaster to another! James, Kate, Davie and Kirsty Murray are thrown out of their croft in Scotland (1800s) and they decide to go to Glasgow, only to discover child labour and poverty! So, when they hear of a voyage to Canada, they jump at the chance! But the journey turns out to be perilous, and even life-threatening, although, this is nothing compared to what awaits them on reaching their destination. . .

I really enjoyed reading this book. I think it is suitable for anyone who likes an adventure story, combined with a little history.

Megan Whiteman (12)

£4.99 ISBN 0 86315 401 8 Floris Books

### **Love and Other F\*\*r Letter Words**

by Carolyn Mackler

This was a bit difficult to read at first but once you got into it I found I became very interested in Sammy's life and what happened to her. It is well written and made me 'feel' Sammy's emotions. I did not like some of the swear words in it but this may be all right for an older person. This book would probably suit any other girl or boy going through the experiences Sammy did. It is good value. Although the book deal with a sad subject (marriage break up) it makes you laugh too! My older sister (22) read this book as well and said it was good.

Francesca Houghton (12)

£4.99 ISBN 0 7445 9008 6 Walker Books

### **Three reviews from the 'Wallace Boys' Series**

by Duncan Watt

#### **Hostage in the Highlands**

This book is set in a remote part of North West Scotland. The story is about two Wallace brothers who have come up to Scotland to learn how to sail a boat named 'Silver Spray'. In the second chapter the Wallace brothers' boating teacher (and friend) called Richard Hannay tells the Wallaces about an island with a castle on it (both called Machray) which was contaminated with anthrax in the Second World War. I felt there were a lot of pointless chapters giving a lot of factual information unconnected with the story. This, I felt, let the book down a lot. This is a good book for anyone who likes adventures and has the patience to wade through the irrelevant stuff.

Matt Longmuir (12)

#### **Crash in the Caprivi**

There is a lot of factual information added to these fictitious adventure novels. This particular book is set in the Sahari Desert in Africa. By the time the book was finished we both knew where the Kalahari was and that it is unlike most other deserts. It is almost completely covered in grassland, yet it is as treacherous as any classic sand dune desert on the globe. We also learnt that the Okavango delta is actually an inland delta running into a dried up lake bed in the centre of the Kalahari. Each year, climate permitting, the lake refills for a short period, thereby sustaining life in the region. Our reading of this novel coincided with the publishing in the *Ecologist* magazine of a story highlighting the plight of the 'Bushmen of Kalahari' due to the actions of various

African governments (the borders of four countries meet in the Kalahari). We were able to discuss the issues around nomadic peoples using the factual footnotes in the book. So here, I believe, is where the author has attained his goal. He has provided an entertaining story within which he has woven a factual insight of the world and its people. What an excellent way to learn!

Keith Hall with Keith jnr (8)

#### **The Pagodas of Pahang**

This is an interesting and exciting story with the occasional funny bit in it. It's about four boys: Bruce, Nigel, Keng Peng and Zainal. They go into a jungle in Malaysia to find an ancient temple, which is called the Pagodas of Pahang, but are interrupted by a group of ex-communists and bandits who have kidnapped a world-famous rock star called Flavia from the Eastern and Oriental express train. Two of the boys are also captured by the bandits and are put in a cave with Flavia. Nigel and Kheng Peng, the two who were left, use a king cobra to distract the bandits to let them try and free the prisoners. They find, however, that the prisoners have disappeared. The story ends with all the boys and Flavia finding the Pagodas of Pahang and trapping the bandits. This book gives you a lot of information about plants, trees and animals in Malaysia. I enjoyed this book and I recommend it for boys and girls of 10 and over. There are lots of other titles (eighteen in all) in this series by Duncan Watt.

James Baker (10)

£4.99 each Gazelle Book Services

Visit [www.wallaceboys.com](http://www.wallaceboys.com)

#### **Usborne Stories From Around The World**

We all enjoyed these stories – coincidentally they fitted in with our Africa project – storytelling aspect, so we read them round a fire. It is a really nice idea, the stories are simply written so are easy to read out loud and can be retold by the children in their own style. Jem says "My favorite story in this is the magic lamp. I like the fact that the lamps got a door in it. I like having the stories read to me. I think lots of different ages of people would like them."

Joe's criticism of them was that although they are tales from around the world they are rather stripped bare of cultural flavour – apart from the odd sari or pair of moccasins. I'm inclined to agree, but then I felt the book was aimed at the under 9s and was in all other respects excellent. I particularly liked the device of different borders around the pages of each story, stylised patterns from the art of each country.

Joe (15) and Jem (7) Freiesieben

£12.99 9 780746 042076 Usborne

#### **The Invisible Boy by Hazel Townson**

This book is about a boy called Gary who suspects he is turning invisible so he decides to hide so people have to find him, proving that he isn't invisible.

I liked this book because of the funny way that it is written where nearly everything goes wrong. I really enjoyed reading this book and I recommend it for people aged 8 and above.

Kit Freiesieben (9)

£3.99 1 84270 105 3 Andersen Press

#### **Beyond the Deepwoods**

by Paul Stewart & Chris Riddell

This is the story of Treg who was abandoned at birth and brought up by a woodtroll family and sets off to find his uncle. He never reaches his uncle as he strays from the woodtroll path and encounters lots of dangers. I really enjoyed this book and found some of the scenes really exciting. They had me on the edge of my seat unable to put it down. I can't wait to read books two and three. I would recommend them to anybody over eight who reads fantasy stories.

George Donson (8)

*The Edge Chronicles, Book 1*

Corgi Books ISBN 0552 54592 9

#### **Let's Go Driving by Gus Clarke**

A very exciting book for most, with lots of hidden and clever tabs to slide and flaps to open. You actually get to adjust your seat, start the engine indicate etc. After driving past some obstacles that move, filling up the tank, changing the wheel and more, you arrive at the seaside. Sadly, however, it is not sturdy enough for little fingers. I think something was torn only the second time it was read. I think it is not suitable for anyone over three-ish. S0, a good idea that doesn't quite hit the mark.

Caroline with Amber (4) and Leo (2)

£7.99 ISBN 0 7445 81109 Walker Books

#### **Room for One More**

by Ingrid & Dieter Schubert

Beaver makes a boat but it is only big enough for one and he thinks it would be more fun with his friends so he makes a big raft and kicks his little boat away. One by one his delighted friends jump aboard and beaver beams with pride but as more and more crowd on it starts rocking and inevitably they all fall in. But that was fun too and they want another go but beaver has found his first boat and is happily setting off on his own. We all enjoyed the illustrations with unexpected creatures peeping out and it is all right to be on your own sometimes.

Susan Bain with Ceri (4)

£9.99 ISBN 1 84270 084 7 Andersen Press

#### **Reader Rabbit CD ROMS for PC or MAC Nursery Ages 3-5**

The player is asked to help when some pie-rats (rats dressed as pirates) cause problems in the land of Sparkalot. On completion of a task the player wins a Brillite. When the chest is full of Brillites they can be

placed at the bottom of Mount Brill to complete the challenge. There are six activities altogether. For example, Rush River Letters requires you to match the correct letter to the object on a raft, Lighting Insect Matchup wants you to choose the correct baby for the parent and Sparkle Rocket Maths needs the player to count the correct number of sparkle-nauts into the rocket. Anthea really enjoyed this CD ROM. She is a little too old for it though, and I would suggest that it is more likely to suit 3-4 year olds. There is far less in this adventure than other Reader Rabbit packages that we have tried and this one can be completed within an hour.

#### Junior Ages 4-6

The player joins Reader Rabbit and Sam the Lion in Balloon Town to solve puzzles and collect musical instruments. The music will wake up the Bulldozer so you can get to the Pointy Palace and back onto the Dreamship and return home. The skills practised range from continuing patterns, recognizing rhyming words and identifying sounds to reading, listening and simple addition. Navigating the site seems more awkward than on other Reader Rabbit adventures. Once a player has signed in there does not seem to be a way to move on to try another activity until one task is successfully completed. (Signing in is necessary in order to complete an adventure). Anthea enjoyed the activities when she did them in practice mode. (In Practice Mode a user can try out any activity but cannot collect musical instruments in order to complete the game.) Overall this is an enjoyable package.

Clare Crane with Anthea (5)

£19.99 each The Learning Company

#### Nell of the Seas

by Mark Scott

This beautifully illustrated book tells the story of Nell's travels and the people that she meets as she leaves her Scottish island home for a new life in Australia. Nell travels with her grandmother to join her parents in Australia. They journey by cruise liner stopping off at Madeira, the British Virgin Islands and other places on the way. This is suitable for age 7 and upward. Natasha and Anthea both enjoyed the story but there are some lengthy descriptions, which make it difficult for younger children. It is this extra detail, however, that makes the story all that more realistic and gives it its richness. I thought that some of the descriptive passages at the beginning are overly long and the story is hard to get into.

I feel that this book is certainly one that will be reread and enjoyed by older children.

Clare Crane with Natasha (7) and Anthea (5)

£16.95 ISBN 1 85776 680 6 The Book Guild

#### Lost in Africa

by Nick Warburton

Having seen the cover of this book, I was not looking forward to reading it. The cover was bright red with a big crocodile on it and it made me think it might be a sort of 'Jurassic Park' type story. I took the book with me to look at on my long journey down to Cornwall and having started reading it, I found I could not put it down. It is an adventure story about a girl called Natasha, her baby brother, and her father. They find themselves traveling through Africa with their possessions in a pram. The story gives a good description of how I would expect Africa to be. It is both a sad and a happy story and the author manages to describe situations so well that at times, my heart was thumping! The book is excellent value and I would recommend it to anyone to read, especially if you like real adventure.

Francesca Houghton (12)

£3.99 ISBN 0 7445 7830 2 Walker Books

#### The Set of Hysterical Historical Poems

These are great. I carry them everywhere I go and have been boring all my friends with the endless jokes! Having said that, although the poems set out to be really funny, they do give an insight of what life must have been like in the Victorian era, the Middle Ages, Roman times and Tudor times - so they can be termed as educational too. One poem I particularly liked:

*The Romans gave us aqueducts, fine buildings  
and straight roads,  
Where all those Roman legionaries marched  
with heavy loads.*

*They gave us central heating, good laws, a peaceful home ...  
then after just four centuries, they shuffled back to Rome.*

This is a funny poem but tells you what we got from the Romans. Each book is really good value when you see what fun and information you get from each one.

Francesca Houghton (12)

£2.99 each Macmillan Books

#### Quick Fixes for Bored Kids

by Tommy Donbavand

I was expecting this to be the sort of "Oh no, I have to put up with my children for half-term, how can I keep them quiet?" book. There's undoubtedly a small element of that behind the book, but I was pleasantly surprised. It's pocket-sized and divided into ten chapters of activities for children, ranging from "It's raining again" to "Abracadabra" (for budding magicians, whether adult or child).

As the author explains, most books have activities that sound great until you read what's needed (there's always one item you don't have). So he starts each chapter with specific things to go in a "boredom box" and says at the beginning that "every time you come across something that could have a use in the future, add it to the box".

Since most home educators are hoarders (or is it just me?) this instruction appeals! Some of the ideas have been around for a while (eg: the 'yes/no' game) but there are others that are distinctly modern (eg: write a radio or TV soap script), especially those in the chapter for "Young Techies". There are even activities involving a second-hand parachute! The author spent 15 years entertaining children and he gives plenty of hints and tips, plus it's all written with a sense of humour and funny cartoons.

Sue Onions

£5.95 ISBN 1 85703 711 How To Books Ltd

### Help Your 5-7 Year old Child Learn the Times Tables by Ken Adams

I have a couple of Ken Adams' books on helping your children with the usual subjects which I found quite useful. Even so, I did find his preface to this book rather patronising when he states that it has become a trend in the last few years for parents to want to help their children with schoolwork and being a teacher himself, he is going to show us how to do it correctly. Well, wake up Ken, its not such a new thing that parents want to help their children, its more like they are being pressurised by the system because of the workload being enforced on children who go to school. Anyway, getting back to the book, it does offer some useful tips and suggestions in helping children to visualise numbers, which is easier with small numbers but gets a bit tricky with bigger ones. Understanding numbers is the key and without that understanding maths becomes a difficult subject to follow. Yes, I agree that children need to be interested and motivated to learn about numbers, but it's a non-starter if they are not. You could also argue whether it is really necessary for children under 7 years old to be able to master the 2,3,4,5 and 10 times tables. I still have problems with my tables and I'm way past 7! However, for those children who like numbers and counting, Ken's book is quite useful and he explains things clearly, using simple diagrams. There are only 63 pages, so it's easy to read and quite helpful, overall.

Eileen Steenman-Clark

£4.99 ISBN 1 85703 647 6 How to Books Ltd

### Imagination Express - Destination: Ocean PC CD-ROM Ages 6 - 12

This CD-ROM is about the ocean, with all the different fish, animals, plants, people and other things you can find in and around it. There is a *Fact Book* section with information about ocean life and ideas about what to put in stories. We liked making up our own movie stories, putting fish and other stickers on the pages with sound effects. We also liked listening to the video ideas by other children for stories. We found it quite easy to do and liked making the pictures and writing that we put on the pages move by animation with sounds. There are options for adults to

set levels for children, with a 'Dear Parents' section for advice on how to encourage children to write. One problem was that the CD-ROM had to be run in 256 colours, with the Display settings on your PC needing to be reset before and after using it. Apart from that, we thought it was good and we would like to try visiting and learning about other Destinations with the Imagination Express.

Nick Steenman-Clark, with Freyja (9) and Eoghán (5)

£12.99 each The Learning Company

### The Odyssey

by Caspian Ashworth

This book is about white blood cells that travel round the body fighting viruses and bacteria. The book is like an adventure story, but based on biology of the human body. The person to whom the body belongs (they don't have a name) lives in London and so her body gets attacked by lots of diseases.

You can learn about different types of blood cells, including T-lymphocytes which fight diseases, macrophages which eat bacteria and red blood cells. There is information about lots of things like blood gathering oxygen from the lungs and how blood is pumped from the heart. It has a few illustrations of things in the book. It is aimed at inquisitive adults and children aged seven and over. The book might be a bit confusing because all the blood cells have been given characters and some words might be difficult for younger children.

I thought it was an interesting story and I learnt things from it.

Emma Whitehall aged (11)

£12.95 ISBN 1 85776 670 9 The Book Guild

### Real Romans (Digital Time Traveller)

This book is supposed to be about time travelling in Roman Britain. Some of the headings are written in Latin which is interesting. For example *Pueri, puella et ludi* which means *boys, girls and games* or *partes et fragmenta* which means *bits and pieces*.

There are five kinds of page which are: normal pages which are headed with a large heading, then there is an informative piece of writing. There are funny pieces of writing throughout these pages. On this kind of page there is also something to make such as a Roman writing tablet, sandals or Roman sweets, crop mark or excavation. There are pages with maps and interesting bits of writing, pages that go lengthways and have a heading like life in the country or the army or a Roman town, then they have a green bit in the middle with writing on and pictures all round the writing. Then there are pages that say at the top 'Focus On.....' These also have something to make on them. There is a focus on Wroxeter a Roman town and Housesteads a Roman fort for example. This book comes with a CD-ROM which is good, but not as good as the book. On the CD-ROM you can do

guided tours of the places that you focus on in the book. There is a grumbling man who reads out things from the book with some extra bits. On the CD-ROM there are activities like make a mosaic tile and do a jigsaw. There is some Roman clip art, some things about money and some recipes to print out. I liked the book and I will do some of the activities.

Molly Whitehall (8)

£14.99 1 902804 007 TAG Learning Ltd

### **The Sun is Laughing - A Collection of Poems**

*chosen by Sue Ellis*

A small collection of beautiful poems of old and new. Poets include: Percy Bysshe Shelly, Christina Rossetti, Thomas Hardy, James Berry, Grace Nichols, Michael Rosen, and Colin McNaughton. This collection is beautifully illustrated to reflect the subject matter of each poem. Hamzah particularly liked "Mammoth" by Richard Edwards and "Over My Toes" by Michael Rosen. This book will appeal to children of all ages - definitely a book to have on your bookshelf.

Aalyah Naqvi and Hamzah (4)

£4.99 ISBN 0 7445 6998 2 Walker Books

### **Letts Science Lessons CD ROMS ages 7-11**

Divides into 6 sections: *human beings, living things, electricity light and sound, forces and motion, earth in space, materials*. Each is then subdivided into investigation, briefing, tell me more, and test yourself.

This is a clear, well detailed CD-ROM, which has helped Oliver understand the basics of science without our spending a fortune on equipment. Whilst a computer can never match the laboratory experience, the graphics and clarity of explanation do bring a feeling of the environment to the PC. Oliver's favourite section was electricity, light, and sound. His reason? The experiments were 'brought to life'. He also cites the 'fact points' as helping his understanding: these are clear and straightforward presentations. As in all good educational CDs there are elements of humour, and Oliver got absorbed in many of the tasks which illustrate different aspects of science. The forces and motion section with bungee jumps, and water slide experiments illustrating things like elasticity, gravity, air and water resistance are a good example. The *test yourself* section can be set to different degrees of difficulty, and can be used in team quiz mode where, of course, the kids can take great joy in showing off their new found knowledge by beating their parents, which in turn enables you to check how much they've taken in without them feeling 'tested'. Overall, I would recommend this to any parent looking to introduce scientific concepts to their child, not just those seeking to follow the national curriculum.

Gill Humphreys with Oliver (7)

£12.99 from Brainworks (software club)

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

### **Castle Diary - The Journal of Tobias Burgess Page**

*by Richard Platt*

The book is structured as a diary kept by an eleven year old boy sent to a castle for a year to train as a page. It immediately puts the reader into the thoughts of a boy living in the middle ages, and cleverly works its way through the seasons, and how life often revolved around the calendar. The book works at two levels; both as a reading book for 7 to 12 year olds, (it is exciting and involving enough to stand as a story), and as a historical run through what life was like in the middle ages.

Oliver particularly enjoyed the section which detailed all the preparations for the joust, but I think it was Toby (the writer of the diary), and his progress through the year which he related to. Oliver felt some of the descriptions of 'the slaughter' of animals and the hunting were a bit 'gruesome', but he was left wondering how a boy growing up at the time would feel about these things. There were colourful illustrations and good humour throughout.

Toby's views on the visit of the doctor were amusing, but also began a conversation about all sorts of things from hospitals to herbal remedies. All in all, a book that showed history in an accessible and interesting way, which I am sure we will come back to.

Gill Humphreys with Oliver (7)

£6.99 ISBN 0 7445 8220 2 Walker Books

### **Usborne Library Of Myths And Legends - Tales Of The Trojan War**

*retold by Kamini Khanduri*

In this book there were nine chapters of *Greek Myths and Legends* to do with the city of Troy all put together to make one big story. I thought this was an ingenious way of writing a book! The most famous story in the book is probably the last chapter, which is called *The Wooden Horse* and tells the story of *The Wooden Horse Of Troy*. Another story in the book is *The Beauty Contest (Paris and the Golden Apple)*. This is the first chapter in the book and when I read it I thought it started a bit like the *Sleeping Beauty* story. The basic plot is that there is a wedding and Eris the Goddess of Spite had not been invited, so she throws a tantrum. She drops a golden apple. Inscribed on it is *For The Fairest*, so all the goddesses think they are the fairest and they ask Zeus who he thinks is the fairest. He then sends down his wife Hera, Athena and Aphrodite to Paris, a shepherd boy, for him to decide and... you will have to read it to find out what happens. At the end of the book there is a 'Who's Who' and 'Important Places' guide that tells the reader about the different characters and places in the book.

Simon Hoggarth (13)

£5.99 ISBN 0 7460 2735 4 Usborne Books

### **Asterix and the Actress**

by R.Gascinny and A.Underzo

Tabitha says "I thought it was really good because the actress dressed up as a Gaulish girl and tricked Asterix and Obelix into getting Obelix's big helmet and Asterix's big sword, which originally had belonged to a Roman leader. It's really cool because when the real Gaulish girl turns up they find out who the actress is and the Roman who took her to Gaul is really scared. And I thought it was really funny. I liked it when Obelix threw the menhir (huge stone) and it landed on the Roman guy and that was really funny."

Diane says "As a parent I found the story line interesting. In fact there was a bit of fight over who was going to read it first. It is my first Asterix book as an adult and I was very impressed at how much history there is in it. It has certainly made me, at least, want to read more about the history of that area at that time."

Diane Cromie with Tabitha (8)

£6.99 ISBN 0 75284 658 2 Orion Publishing

### **The Firing**

by Richard Macsween

Anna is intrigued by the new boy Wolf. However rumours about him abound and she discovers he has been accused of raping a girl in his last home. This, like any book, has bits in it that you would rather weren't there; however like any book *The Firing* more than makes up for those bits in other ways. The book has quite a complicated story-line but is easy to follow. The book is labelled as a teenage book and I can see why but don't let that put you off!

Amie Borthen (15)

£4.99 ISBN 1 8427 00553 Andersen Press

### **The Pursuit Of Love**

by Nancy Mitford

*The Pursuit of Love* is a comical, yet moving novel about two young women entering an upper-class world full of idleness, richness and sex. Linda (the main character) is a daughter of an eccentric Lord and the story of her exciting life is narrated by Fanny - her cousin. This is a fantastic book, it has all the main ingredients of a good read: humour, romance and sadness. It is written for adults but can easily be understood and appreciated by teenagers (particularly teenage girls).

Laura Hannam (14)

£5.99

### **River Of Secrets**

by Griselda Gifford.

This was a story with a complex tale to tell, but in the end, it all fell into place! Fran's gran died, in what seemed an accident. Fran then moved into her cottage, (with her new stepbrother and father!). After meeting Fay and Robin (two physically abused

children) and Denny, a mysterious girl who appears from time to time, Fran comes to the conclusion that her gran's death was more than just an accident! I really enjoyed this book and, because it wasn't very long, I read it quickly. I would recommend this, to boys and girls 10+, who like true life and mystery! Megan Whiteman (12)

£4.99 ISBN 1-84270-045-6 Andersen Press

### **Tabaluga and the Crystals of Time &**

#### **Tabaluga's Hall of Fame Games.**

#### **CD ROMs.**

These CD ROMs are good as they have lots of games to play. Tabaluga is a dragon who lives in Greenland. In *The Crystals of Time*, the weather machine crystals have been stolen by Arktos, an evil snowman, the ruler of Ice World. Tabaluga and his friends have to find them, in a series of fun games. The games are about things to do with weather and are fun, needing all sorts of skills, but some of them are more difficult. There are also activity worksheets to print off, with lots of information about weather topics. When you have found the crystals and put them back in the weather machine you can play your favourite games, or start the quest all over again. There are no different levels and no options to change player in the middle of a game without taking the CD out of the drive and putting it back in again. In the *Hall of Fame Games* you have to free Tabaluga's friends who have been frozen by Arktos. We got stuck after getting into the *Hall of Fame* at the start, without being able to work out how to free the frozen friends, and we were not able to move on with the quest and find out what the rest of the games are like, or find out about other activities on the disk. Just keeping on trying didn't seem to get us anywhere and it is very frustrating, with nothing to help us in working out how to finish the game and move on. There might be something wrong with it, or maybe we're just not used to the computer and CD ROMs enough to figure out ourselves how to work through the game and carry on, but otherwise, we enjoyed the games that worked.

Freyja (9) and Eoghan (5) Steenman-Clark (with Dad).

£12.99 *The Learning Company*

### **Bound to be free: home education as a positive alternative to paying the hidden costs of 'free' education**

by Jan Fortune-Wood

This is the latest and third in the series of books on home education and autonomous learning by Jan Fortune-Wood. It explores more specifically the issues of costs in comparing home education with the provision of schooling, but not just in terms of the financial costs. The introduction outlines the myth of free compulsory education through schools, questioning whether it is really 'free', given the consequences in the areas of other hidden welfare and

human costs, considering also the issues of expertise and the liberating factors of home education.

Following chapters review all the areas of those costs individually – financial, social and welfare, emotional and thinking skills. The final chapter presents home education as a positive alternative to all the negative factors outlined in the previous chapters.

Jan Fortune-Wood recommends no single educational approach, but presents a thorough review of the opportunities it provides to convert theory into practice in exercising philosophical control, particularly over educational content and style. Home education allows education with liberty and divergence, using the widest possible culture of resources, from purposeful conversation, all forms of communication media and the real world. They can be chosen and mixed, as preferred, to provide a learning system that reflects what she views as an event-driven and post-modern way of living. As expected, she proposes the autonomous approach to home education as the best way to achieve those aims. However, she does not advance it quite so insistently as in her previous books, acknowledging that many home educating families may wish to adopt approaches involving more degrees of structure.

The sources used and quoted from extensively range widely from those more familiar to most home educators, including John Taylor Gatto and John Holt, to others from libertarian and Taking Children Seriously (TCS) literature and internet resources. As in the previous books, there is the obligatory reference quote from her favourite philosopher, Karl Popper. She has also used copious extracts concerning autonomous learning and TCS from her own previous books and, keeping it in the family, from her husband's contributions to internet mailing lists and websites and a letter published in 'The Guardian' by her daughter.

In the area of financial costs, she deals with an issue that I have considered briefly, probably like many others, of possible financial support from the Government for home-educating families, but rightly dismisses it because of the probable element of intrusive controls that would accompany it. The bottom line is that for many there may be some element of monetary sacrifice, but the value of the rewards by many other, non-financial, terms is immeasurable.

Nick Steenman-Clark

£10.00 ISBN 1 900219 20 4 Educational Heretics

### **Ancient Greek Myths & Legends**

by Philip Ardagh

In this book there were thirteen myths and legends from Ancient Greece. Each story was very interesting although most of them were quite horrible and gory. I enjoyed them though. My favourite stories were *Midas and the Golden Touch*, which was about a man

who wished for everything he touched to turn to gold, but when he got his wish it was not as good as he thought it would be. *Medusa - The Snaked Haired Woman* is about a man named Perseus who had a quest to kill Medusa. In *The Twelve Labours Of Heracles*, Heracles was given twelve tasks to complete to become an immortal god. The name Heracles was changed later by the Romans to Hercules. *Odysseus and the One-eyed Giant* is about a man called Odysseus who had to kill Polyphemus the Cyclops giant who liked to eat people. While reading this book I realised two things. A lot of these stories have references or appearances in other stories in this book. Some of these Myths and Legends have been made into films. I borrowed this book from the library and I noticed that on the back there were other titles in this series. Some of them were: *Ancient Egyptian, Chinese, Celtic, Norse and North American*. I really enjoyed this book and I think it would be suitable for anyone 8+ because some stories might be frightening for younger children.

Simon Hoggarth (13)

£5.99 ISBN 1 85561 843 5 Belitha Press

### **What's Creepy & Crawly?**

by Claire Llewellyn

This book is full of facts, presented in a great format for very young children. It covers five creatures, first offering clues, which include a peephole into the next page and a picture of the creature. It's simply and clearly illustrated, with speech bubbles from children. Leo loves this book and never seems to tire from guessing who the clues are about. Easily absorbed facts for Amber too, but not so much of a challenge. If there are more in the series we would love to have them.

Caroline with Leo (2) and Amber (4)

£9.99 ISBN 0 7112 1703 3 Francis Lincoln

### **The Land of Doughbuddies CD ROM**

This CD-ROM is aimed at ages 3-6 and features "doughbuddy" characters who strike me as a cross between Mr Potato Head, Pingu and Wallace and Gromit! Children can "discover 14 educational activities in 4 magic worlds", such as remembering cake ingredients to make an identical one or choosing paint colours for a picture. We have to give this CD 11 out of 10 for entertainment value - Thomas loved it, played it for ages, and requested it at other times instead of usual favourites. But now come the reservations, and one of them is a BIG reservation. First, we tried it on a laptop which fulfilled all the technical requirements so far as we could tell - they are printed in the minutest font possible. On this laptop some graphics went AWOL on a few of the *Doughbuddies* screens - a little difficult to click on something if you can't see it; maybe that's down to that particular laptop because it worked fine on another

PC. Second, I noticed a grammatical error on the CD blurb: "...delicious when there soft and luscious". I could live with those two reservations, really, but then Thomas found an activity which showed him how to spell "rabit". Yes, "rabit" not "rabbit"! I now know my son recognises that "rabit" is not correct because he was indignant and insists I tell everyone about it. Great entertainment but not what I'd describe as educational and I wouldn't recommend it until TLC find a programmer who can spell Key Stage 1 words correctly!

Sue Onions (former programmer) and Thomas Onions (age 6)  
£19.99 ISBN 0 7630 6206 5 The Learning Company.

### **To Mum with Love** by Vivien French

This was a great hit with Grandma, and Celeste enjoyed the simple storyline and being 3<sup>rd</sup> youngest obviously empathized with Stanley. "I think it was so lovely it was mum's birthday and Stanley gave her a box of kisses. It's funny. Stanley is a kitten who wants to give his mum something special for her birthday, but finds his brothers and sisters have had all the good ideas first."

Aaalyah Naqui with Celeste (3)

£8.99 ISBN 0 7445 7572 9 Walker Books

### **I Love My Little Story Book**

by Anita Jeram

Travel with Bunny Rabbit as he takes you to all the magical places in his story book. There is Sleeping Beauty, a friendly lion, magic lakes and fairies... A very simple story about a bunny rabbit's relationship with his storybook and how he gets lost in its magic if he chooses, or simply just shades himself from the sun with it! Beautifully illustrated in the usual Anita Jeram style (also author of "Guess How Much I Love You"). Will appeal to very young children.

Aalyah Naqui with Hamzah (4) and Khuz Ali (2)

£9.99 ISBN 0 7445 9201 Walker Books

### **The Secret Diary of Prince Tutankhamun**

This is an interesting book. It has lots of things to do. It is laid out like a scrapbook and there are hidden pockets and small toys offering various insights into the times of the Pharaohs. There is a pop-up pyramid with map and two puzzles, a translation of the alphabet into Egyptian and lots of facts. I thought it was a bit thin though (only six double pages) when you consider the price.

Keith Hall (8)

£9.99 ISBN 0 7496 2969 X

### **NOTE**

Prices quoted are the publishers' recommended retail prices (rrp). Shop around for lower prices – try discount book shops, mail order discount book clubs and the internet. Contact details from publishers are set out below but many titles can be ordered from your local book shop. *The Book People* (tel 0870 6077780 or visit [www.thebookpeople.co.uk](http://www.thebookpeople.co.uk)) is a good, economical source for books. It is NOT a book club and you order what you like, when you like (at prices well below publisher's rrp). Postage / packing is usually free on order over £25 but if you are ordering less tell them you are home educating and you will be able to get a discount rate.

### **CONTACTS**

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## SPECIAL SECTION

*Please note that there will be no "Special Section" in the August issue, as we are reprinting the very first issue of the NL, to mark EO's Silver Jubilee. There has been a suggestion that we should revisit some of the subjects of earlier "specials" in order to make the information available to newer members, and Jo Borthen has offered to co-ordinate this. So perhaps if no-one's burning to do a new one on their own favourite subject, you could have a look at the pile of back issues in the bottom of the hall cupboard and let us have some suggestions as to what you would like to see or think would be interesting. Maybe we've outgrown "specials"? Or we don't need one every time? Let me know what you think.*

*Linda Cutler, who volunteered to collate the Special Section for this issue, reports that she received no contributions on the theme of "Home Education and Life"; however, something seems to have stimulated several members to write about "Home and School" - and there seems to be a good deal of "Life" in there as well. So although not quite as intended, here's the June SS - I think it's well worthy of our Silver Jubilee year! Anne (NL co-ord).*

## COMPARING HOME AND SCHOOL

### School Insights

Talking with other Home Educators, and reading our newsletter, it strikes me that some of our worst anxieties seem to come from comparisons we inevitably make between ourselves and school. Having worked in schools I have alternative ideas about those comparisons that I'd like to share with you in the hope they might bring some comfort!

- Prior to having a family I taught in primary schools for ten years. But the reason we're home educating now is not because I think my children will do better academically at home. It's because so much of what I saw going on in schools under the guise of education, *was in no way good for children!*
- Some maths I once did with some juniors was to calculate what we thought was the average amount of valuable teacher time (not necessarily individually) each child got per day. It was a staggering *seven minutes!* I bet your children at home with you get more attention than that!
- A typical school day is divided into subjects each lasting around an hour. The amount of work a teacher would expect children to achieve during one of these hours would take about *ten to fifteen minutes in an uninterrupted home environment with your full attention!* So don't worry your kids are not doing enough if they only keep going for ten minutes!
- It only takes a few seconds for an insight into something to register. Then a little more time to reinforce it. *Hours and hours of practice, in books, is not necessary to learn.* Children in schools spend hours and hours writing stuff they already know in books just so the teacher can show it to the parents, and the head, and the governors, and the inspectors, so that everyone thinks they're a wonderful school because they produce so much, and they get to the top of the league tables and get more pupils and get more money and so on . . . which doesn't have a lot to do with education - does it!

- From my experiences and research I now understand that meaningful learning takes place at *any time, without it being recorded*. For example a cuddle and a conversation with a book, going places, talking about stuff in your life. Whatever we're doing. If we talk *with* (not lecture) our kids about the things that interest them then they'll be learning from it. Writing about it *does not* mean learning is taking place. *Not* writing things down doesn't mean *no learning* has taken place! Kids in schools hardly ever have the opportunity to *talk with* - they're too busy writing down!
- As every teacher learns during their child psychology lectures a child will not learn if they are unhappy, uncomfortable, distressed, stressed, upset, disturbed by the environment, etc. From what I've seen many schools seem to have forgotten that important point! Yet all the home educating parents I've been lucky enough to meet were aware of that anyway!
- Many of us worry about 'socialisation' without school. About our children becoming sociable and meeting friends. From what I've learnt of schools I have concluded that, because of the unnatural clustering of children within these institutions, most of the interaction there is of a poor kind and sometimes does more harm than good! *Children do not learn to be sociable from other children!* And some of the contacts with the adults in schools leave a lot to be desired! Something like EO provides what we need to socialise and make friends - that, and life in the real world!
- Colleagues still in the business tell me that so much is forced onto primary school children these days that two things happen. Firstly, if they were too young to take it on board, the first two years in secondary are spent back-tracking. Secondly, if it did sink in, they spend their two years kicking their heels until GCSE options!
- By producing all these complicated strategies for learning, teachers, educationists and politicians would have us believe learning is difficult! And that you need teachers to achieve it. I have now learnt *that's not the case!* All you need is to feel happy in yourself, have the stimulation, motivation and interest, and be in the right environment. A caring home and an interested parent already provide those conditions! And that covers all the home educators I've ever met!

Long may you enjoy your home educating!

Ross Mountney, Boston, Lincs.

## Home versus School

I would like to take this opportunity to tell you my experience of home-educating my 9 year old son. My son was home-educated for a short time after being bullied at school. He is now in a new primary school and is doing OK. If at senior school he experiences similar problems I would consider taking him out again.

The first few weeks at home were suffused with relief that he was out of the bullying situation and were spent 'de-schooling' and generally pottering about. However, as I am a single parent doing a full-time degree, I knew it would not be easy. My situation also meant that my son's father would

have to take him off my hands more often. This resulted in much to-ing and fro-ing between our two homes with the effect that my son felt disorientated and insecure. This resulted in bad behaviour and began a downward spiral of tantrums and tears.

My son has a personality very unlike mine and we constantly clash. I am sure that many parents experience this but it is rarely mentioned in the home-ed literature. It is an essential pre-requisite of home-ed that you get on with your children! However, instead I find that accounts of home education give a 'rosy' image of family life and the tone is often rather smug and self-satisfied.

My son has a bright, boisterous personality which means that he is constantly pushing at boundaries and is hard work. He needs boundaries, routine and discipline which I find exhausting to have to keep reinforcing. Some aspects of home education were good for him: being able to think laterally, the 'snowball' effect of learning, no formal testing, less pressure and the freedom to focus on things he enjoyed. However, being obstinate, he often refused point blank to do work which I considered essential (such as telling the time). This wore me out.

I found it difficult to obtain support from a balanced perspective, as people's views on 'alternative' subjects such as home education are typically polarised. Home-edders are understandably defensive of their situation, having to put up with prejudice, ignorance and the LEA. However, this is not helpful when you need balanced, realistic advice.

It is my opinion that some children's personalities, their stage in life, or their relationships with their parents are incompatible with home education. I also think that a sizeable minority of parents choose home education for the wrong reasons - their own bad experiences of school, or other unresolved childhood issues. Coming from this negative standpoint is not good for the child. After all, the child may have a different personality from the parent, or a totally different experience of school. If they end up going to school, they carry that negative baggage with them.

It has to be said that a lot of home educated children come from middle class, two-parent families. It often results in one parent staying at home full-time. This is more often than not the child's mother. I feel this gives an unrealistic example of the diversity of families today. I experienced pressure from my son to conform to this role and obviously this caused friction. Being a single parent and living in a rather deprived region, I found few role models for us. EO does not seem to have an active single parent body; when I rang the single parent contact for EO she did not really offer much in the way of advice.

As a result of all these circumstances, I finally decided to put my son back into school. At his new primary school he is not being bullied, his behaviour has improved and he is quite happy. I think it is important for him to be with children from a wide range of backgrounds and to learn to get on with them. I am hoping that he carries on into senior school. If he has problems, then I hope that by then he will have the maturity and self-discipline to be able to learn successfully at home.

*Jane Foster, 120 Ella Street, Hull, HU5 3AX*

## Out of Utopia

We had a smallholding in Sussex: organic vegetables, miscellaneous beasties. Rising and sleeping late or early as required by the seasons, the weather, times of markets (getting ready the night before) - in control, choosing our level of structure according to the day's activities. Sometimes it was really difficult, and there was never much money, but we had the power to change how we did things and get it sorted out. If we happened to wake in the middle of the night, we'd have a cup of tea and a marmite sandwich, watch the stars and talk about life, the universe, the Babe ... she just joined in with whatever was going: helping Daddy plant onions or build a barn (little fingers so adept at fitting plastic washers onto roof-fixing screws), gathering radishes into bunches for the customers at Mum's stall, taking hay to the cow whose unpasteurised, unhomogenised milk formed much of her staple diet (along with bits of raw vegetables she'd help herself to when hungry out in the field, blackberries in season, bantam eggs ...).

Little Brother came along, the business developed and changed - not so many beasties now, and more of the vegetables sold through an organic wholesaler - two small people to help pick the beans, grow huge sunflowers. Babe number one would draw beautiful pictures while Little Brother slept the afternoon away sprawled naked on a rug under the apple trees. Evenings were for stories and singing. There were grandparents to visit ... Then for a few months, for some reason which now seems inexplicable, we moved onto a housing estate in a nearby market town. Ex-council property, end-of terrace, corner plot, almost opposite local primary school, surrounded by other families with young children. Ours were so shy, wanting to play but unsure how to go about it. Daddy went back to the smallholding every day, and the rest of us went for walks/shopping, read stories, drew, played in the garden ... We dug a sandpit - just a small one, and were promptly inundated with neighbours' children wanting to come and play. No-one else had a sandpit. In the end, I had to make a RULE - only two extra children at a time. They would queue at the garden gate to await their turn. We had forms from the LEA about the Babe starting primary school, it was just over the road ... we told them we were "making alternative arrangements for our daughter's education" and carried on as before. But our Babe wanted to be able to help Daddy, Little Brother really needed more space for tractors, I didn't feel comfortable as a suburban housewife and Hubby was bored with just lettuces for company all day, so we fled - back to the smallholding.

But the rot had set in. There were no other children to play with, back home. We had a bigger sandpit and plenty of space for tricycle races, Daddy was around to play with as well as to help, Mum could support a whole range of activities ... but there was no queue of little friends, and she missed them. Towards Christmas of that year, we (all of us) discussed how to solve this problem. It seemed that the only place where other five-year-olds were to be found was school. I asked if she would like to visit and see what school was like - she would, so I rang and requested a visit. At the Head's suggestion, this was arranged for a Friday afternoon. Class One were all dressing up, making things with craft materials, riding wheelies, playing in the Wendy house ... The Babe was hooked. Even so, we didn't "sign up" to the deal until she'd tried a whole week - after all, there's more to it than Friday afternoon. At the end of the week, she'd realised it wasn't all play but had decided that on balance it would be all right. The Head put her name on the register.

Now, we were committed. This was before the regulations changed in England, and if we wanted to take her out again we would have to seek permission from the LEA. Our lives had lost a chunk of autonomy.

The ramifications of having a daughter who went to school were enormous. We had to make sure our mornings were geared to arriving at the school gate around 8.55 am, as did all the other parents. We had morning panics, rushed breakfasts, nagging to get dressed, hunts for missing socks or indoor shoes, complaints from Little Brother, dramas about the car not starting (it was January). Afternoon activities or snoozes had to be interrupted in order to make sure I was waiting in line with all the other mums by 3.32 pm so that my child didn't feel abandoned - it was impossible to get on with anything after lunch in case I forgot to watch the clock. Our lives were ruled by this rigid, external, THING. But, she began to make friends, go and play, have others round after school ... and then, the guilt wore off the gingerbread.

I never found out quite what it was, but a few weeks into term something happened which tipped the balance for my little girl. She became reluctant to go in the mornings. She wouldn't take her coat off when we got there, clung to me at the classroom door, complained that the food was boring, the day was too long (I tried to negotiate a half day, but the system wouldn't allow it: when you're five-and-a-half it's all day or nothing) and "whenever I'm really interested in something we have to stop because it's time to do something else!" Mornings had to include extra time for bribery and cajoling, nagging became more frenzied, Daddy looked disapproving, teachers denied all responsibility (mothers will fuss so, you know!) and assured me she would settle down.

It got worse. She refused to get dressed, to get into the car, to get out of the car. I became strict, hissing threats through tight lips. Even, for a while - oh my god! did I really sink so low? - physically dragging my screaming child into the school corridor and running away. Yes, I did those things. It hurts to say this now, and I need to allow it to hurt. I was scared - how would I cope with the LEA if I "let her get away with it" as everyone was telling me I was doing when I gave her - and myself - the occasional day off. I couldn't allow that to happen, and I was bigger than she was, so I won. She gave up struggling, became compliant and glum, and (after a brief respite for half term) her battle went inside. The eczema started on her hands - red, itchy, scaly patches. There was a visit from the school doctor. Oh, he said, lots of children get that, nothing to do with school, she'll grow out of it. It spread up her arms. Instead of a bright, happy, creative little person I had a miserable, cowed, suffering and insufferable monster. Dr Frankenstein had good intentions, too, and as little success.

Eventually, I woke up. Whatever the consequences, I wasn't going to go on destroying my child. I told the school I was removing her at the end of term. The Head was displeased, and made vague threats about EWOs. By a happy coincidence, we had just bought another smallholding, so I took the easy way out - I wrote a letter saying we were moving, but neglected to provide a new address. We only went five miles away, and were still in the same LEA area - but it was enough to set us free.

January to Easter - one term, and so much angst. The eczema soon disappeared. It was months before she wanted to pick up a pencil to write again (for a Birthday List!), but she soon got on with life (growing herbs and selling them on a little stall next to mine, making daisy chains, looking after chickens, drawing maps of the smallholding and working out treasure trails ...), we joined EO and the rest is history ... she got A\* GCSE maths from home aged 15 and went on to college for more GCSEs and 'A' levels ...

Home education didn't change our lives - school did.

*"Myrtle" (Name and address supplied)*

## Further News of the Albrecht Family

In the newsletter last March (No. 139) I explained why we had just taken our children out of school: Max, then aged 7, had been suffering a lot of anxiety over work (although he is highly intelligent) and over the amount of time he felt that school was stealing from him, and his younger sister, Helen, was upset by the transition from the cosiness of her half-day nursery class to the more business-like atmosphere of Reception. We did enjoy our first months of home schooling once the two of them had become used to spending all day in each other's company - on occasions they could be a combustible mixture. I didn't push the formal work, although privately, like most new home schoolers, I was apprehensive about what the LEA would consider to be "effective provision". We enjoyed the freedom and Max was able to see his old school friends occasionally though the frequency of meetings dwindled as they and their parents became busier with school and out-of-school activities.

In June everything went pear-shaped. Max got up one Saturday morning and said that he couldn't put his weight on his right leg. He hopped around all weekend - not in any great pain, so we assumed, as most would, that he had twisted his knee on the climbing frame or something similar. He was still hopping on Monday morning so I called our GP's surgery. She wasn't in, so the receptionist advised us to go straight to A&E. After some prodding, questioning and X-raying we were sent home with a request to come back in three days. A consultant from the orthopaedic department showed us the films and told us, with admirable candour, the bad news: there could be a tumour in the lower half of Max's thighbone. By Sunday we were at the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital in Birmingham putting Max through a four-day programme of tests.

It was a tumour, and a nasty one. He embarked on a six-course chemotherapy regime at St James' in Leeds and, in the middle of that, surgeons in Birmingham operated to remove the diseased part of the bone and replace it with a titanium prosthesis. We spent more time in hospital than out of it and, of course, one of us had to be with Max all the time: he didn't want us to be out of his sight for more than an hour or two. The balance in sick children's nursing has shifted radically from the old days when families were only allowed short visits - parents now "live in", coaxing patients to eat or take pills, changing beds, dealing with bottles and bedpans, and being available at all times for consultation on aspects of treatment. It's good for the patient, but hard on the family: we found ourselves commuting between Harrogate and Leeds, taking turns to sleep on the ward, the other one taking Helen home every night so that she could feed her hamster, sleep in her own bed and have a taste of normality. Every morning Helen would be back on the ward where I would look after them both while Toby went to the office to do a few hours' work (his colleagues were wonderfully supportive). When Max was so ill that he couldn't bear any sort of disturbance in his room, the hospital playleaders would keep Helen busy in the playground - she brought home a staggering number of cardboard models, paintings and drawings, and watched a great number of films!

Education as such was a sketchy affair through all this but we were glad that we didn't have to keep accounting for the children's absences from school. We couldn't have kept Helen there anyway, as we had no relatives or reliable friends living locally enough to drop her off and pick her up every day. Max didn't even have the energy to read; his constant companion was Cartoon Network, piped in by way of the 24-hour a day bedside TV. The teacher at St James' was much less friendly and forthcoming than her counterpart at the Royal Orthopaedic, who always made a point of coming to chat to Max and Helen and find them interesting things to do. Helen blossomed on a steady diet of art, craft and baking projects, helped by the playleaders at Jimmy's: she became very good at jigsaw puzzles and at testing herself on the GeoSafari set.

Max finished his chemotherapy at the end of November, earlier than anticipated: we decided, with his consultant, to stop after five courses because the drugs had caused a degree of damage to his hearing and his heart. He bounced back with surprising speed and was pretty much his old self by Christmas.

We had a visit from the LEA advisor and, yes, it was like being called to see the Head. A stiff and formal type in a dark suit, he announced straight away that he was not here to advise but to make a judgement - not an approach calculated to put families at their ease. He ran through a list of subjects, jotted down my comments on how we were tackling them and when he came to "Personal Development", expressed the opinion that Max probably wouldn't have achieved much in that direction this year because of his illness. I was flabbergasted. Children with cancer have no option but to develop: they are thrust into a very adult world, their condition, with all its uncertainties, is discussed in front of them, they know the stakes for which they are playing, and they have a lot of time to think about the intangibles of life and death. The LEA man seemed a bit less judgmental after half an hour's conversation with Max and after watching Helen tackle one of her favourite activities on the PC. A month later we received his report, which contained not one-tenth of the information we had given him, but which, nevertheless, conceded that our provision was "effective" and that Max was "way ahead" of his contemporaries in numerous areas.

Through the period of his recovery Max had begun to think somewhat wistfully of school - not the one he had left, as the two teachers he disliked the most were still there, and it was too far from home for his current state of mobility. We had been investigating, instead, the C.E. primary school around the corner which had a very pleasant new headmaster and a smaller population. I had mixed feelings but I had to concede that the children really hadn't made any local friends during their year at home. It seemed worth a try. So, in the New Year, off they trotted. They quite liked their teachers, who were both young and keen, and things were reasonably calm for a while. I was elected chairman of the PTA: nobody else volunteered so I chipped in explaining, of course, that I was new to the ways of the school and would have to call on the experience of other committee members. It was a good way to break the ice for me at least: parents, who had hitherto ignored me, came to introduce themselves.

The honeymoon did not last long. Max enjoyed the topic work on Egypt and Judaism but he didn't enjoy being jostled on stairs and in corridors, or feeling conspicuous because he couldn't charge around like the other boys. Soon he started to panic because he couldn't finish his work in the allotted time to his own standard of neatness, and we realised that history was repeating itself. As for Helen, she became very clingy and tearful by half-term, and after that she started to refuse to go in. When we sat down to discuss the situation she was very clear in her six-year-old mind: she didn't want to go to school any more. Max had more of an internal conflict to wrestle with, but by Easter he had come to the same conclusion. I told the headmaster, who had been sympathetic throughout (he had a chronically sick wife, so he understood), but I offered to carry on with my PTA work for the rest of the year, as long as there was nothing in the constitution to prohibit it.

So that's how things stand: we'll be dropping into the school regularly, photocopying and disseminating newsletters, baking cakes for the cake stall, organising events and keeping up with people we've met as far as we can. I have also posted a notice in Harrogate Library, hoping to attract local home-schoolers who would rather not travel to Leeds or York for all their social activities. I feel that, if we could establish some sort of crossover community, we could broaden the horizons of the traditional thinkers, make schools a little more pleasant for the children who still have to go there, and lay a little groundwork for the evolution of schools into resource centres which all can use, without the prison bars.

*Kay Albrecht, 4 Robert Street, Harrogate, N Yorks. Tel 01423 531196 email: kay\_albrecht@hotmail.com*

## THE DAVIS DYSELXIA CORRECTION METHOD

### EVERY PERSON WITH DYSLEXIA SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THIS!

I have found out about something that I feel compelled to share.

When our son William was 7, he had an assessment done by an Educational Psychologist. It concluded that William has 'a specific learning difficulty' (commonly referred to as dyslexia). I had noticed that although William is very bright, intelligent and quick to learn, he found reading really difficult. Each word he saw, it was as if he'd never seen it before.

We followed the recommendations from his assessment and these included using a phonetic reading scheme. We have since discovered that this was not a helpful thing to do. I really wish that we hadn't bothered following this route. It felt very negative.

Thankfully we heard about Ron Davis & his book, 'The Gift of Dyslexia'. What a different approach to hear dyslexia referred to as a gift. 'Dyslexia is the result of an individual becoming disorientated when trying to read or write. Ironically, individuals use this disorientation when they are being highly creative, intuitive and insightful. The Davis approach is to help the individual recognise and control this disorientation, and thereby learn to achieve their academic promise, without losing the ability to be creative and imaginative'.

The week-long course is just simply amazing! It has a 97% success rate and for us it was a miracle. William has now been taught special techniques to enable him to read. The parent is given 2-day training to enable us to continue the techniques at home. The course is individualised and I cannot recommend it enough.

There is so much to tell, so if you would like more information please 'phone me (Alison Banister) on 01442 380497 or email me at [geoff.banister@ntfworld.com](mailto:geoff.banister@ntfworld.com) or look up the website [www.dyslexia.btinternet.co.uk](http://www.dyslexia.btinternet.co.uk) or email Jane Heywood (our course facilitator) at [dyslexia@btinternet.com](mailto:dyslexia@btinternet.com) or 'phone Jane on 01344 622115. Jane has copies of 'The Gift of Dyslexia' and will send one as requested.

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### BBC COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE

The BBC is launching a community resource centre in central London to support home learning and developing technologies with software for learning journeys.

I am devising activities and workshops for the centre and am very keen to make contact with home educators in London. The centre will offer free access, drop-in sessions and multi-sensory learning experiences with workshop facilitators, and provides an ideal resource for home-learning support and a place for sharing new pedagogical approaches using technology.

If there is a network of local groups in London that I would be able to contact, or meet with a key contact I'd be very grateful. Thank you, and I look forward to hearing from you.

*Erin Barnes, Manager, Children's Education, BBC White City, Wood Lane, W12 7TS  
Tel: 020 8752 5433 (direct line)*

## PRODUCING THE EO NEWSLETTER

**Anne Rix (NL Co-ordinator) says:** This is my sixth issue, and in many ways has been the hardest so far. I struggled at first to tighten up all the deadlines because I wanted to ensure that each issue reached members by the first day of the month. At first, I had no idea what I was taking on, and it took 4 issues before everything was running smoothly. Now, there's an expectation to live up to!

It's a co-operative enterprise. In order for the printers to get the NL printed and stuffed (with all the extra flyers, etc.) into labelled envelopes, they need to get the final copy by about the middle of the month before it's published. They also need the envelope labels from the EO database. I have to get all the material fitted in, the pages arranged (in multiples of 4) and everything printed out - but before that can happen I proof-read the whole thing to check for spelling, accuracy, grammar, typographical slips, possible conflicts, etc. Sometimes I need to contact a contributor to agree amendments, or someone else to give an additional view. To give me time for all that, the section editors need to get material to me by about 10th of the month before, so they only have about a week to get their material typed up and emailed to me, and I have about another week to get it together. The people who edit the Letters and Articles sections also need to check that everyone who writes in is a *bona fide* home educator (and an EO member if appropriate). Everything has to be run past the publications secretary (Penny Clarke) which also takes extra time - I burn a lot of midnight oil! I hope this will give you an idea of why we need to ask you to comply with the various procedures outlined inside the front cover. In particular, it's really helpful if you can make sure you send your contribution to the appropriate editor, and include your full contact details (making clear whether you wish these to be published or not). Some of the section editors have added their 'job descriptions' below:

**Sally Hall (Reviews Editor) says:** I offered to take on the role of Reviews Editor as I wanted to contribute something to EO and I knew this was work I could fit in fairly easily as for some years now I have been doing similar work for another organisation I am involved with. When I first took on the job a couple of years ago I wrote to around 50 publishers for information and catalogues so now I am on several mailing lists and receive information on new titles regularly. I also regularly check out other sources for useful contacts and possibilities. I either specifically request a title or sometimes titles just arrive.

I have an expanding team of EOers who are happy to do the reviews and before sending anything out I try to ensure I read it or try out software myself (utilising the help of my 8 year old son when I can) to assess suitability and to enable me to direct them to the most appropriate person to review. I send each new reviewer a letter which they return to me indicating their preferences. The review team are very enthusiastic and most are very good at getting their reviews in on time - this makes my job much easier! I usually send out the material to be reviewed every two months in one batch - around 20 items each time. I pay the postage costs myself although I understand I could claim for this as an expense.

I receive the reviews back by post, email (this method is easier as it saves work in typing) or fax. I am also particularly pleased to receive any reviews from members who have found any particular resource useful, interesting etc. I then type them all up, format and edit the pages before I email them to Anne, the newsletter co-ordinator. When the newsletter is published I send a copy off to all the publishers who have contributed books for that issue. I am always surprised at the amount of time it takes to get the pages ready. I do lead a fairly hectic life (I help run our 130 acre farm, grow all our own vegetables, do all the admin work for another organisation I am involved with, give time to my son etc, etc!). Some times of the year are particularly busy and then I have to burn the midnight oil or get up at dawn to ensure I meet the deadline! Having been used to working to tight deadlines for the last 20 or so years this is not too much of a problem!! However, I am always

willing to make time for a worthwhile job. My son, too, gets a lot out of all the books and software which he can read or try out before each is sent on.

*Sarah Guthrie (Archie & Archives) says:* My newsletter job is probably the easiest. I sit down at the very last minute with any jottings and memos about the more farcical aspects of our home educating, then draw the ARCHIE strip. Now - thanks to technology, I send the artwork by email to the printer which is better than running down to the postbox and finding I've left some bit of the cartoon at home stuck to the kitchen table. The other nice bit of my job is compiling the Archives: musing over old newsletters and saying things like "whatever happened to THEM?" or "Oh dear, why did I ever say that?" etc. and then recycling the bits I think are still relevant 25 years on.

*Hi, I'm Jo Borthen.* I have edited special sections in the past and hope I get a chance to do so again in the future. Having thought of a subject and sent that to the newsletter co-ordinator in time for the deadline I have a couple of months to wait for contributions and wonder how I'll link them together. As always, time runs very quickly when you need to think. It is not until the contributions start to come in that reality hits home and I try to shift my writers block before the deadline arrives. It is fantastic when other people respond and send in articles but these cannot be printed unless the writer includes their name and address; we do not need to publish these if a person wishes to remain anonymous. Personally I prefer articles to come in by email (with your full name and address please) as it is easier for me transfer an email to a word document on the computer than it is for me to type an article in, although, having said that, I would rather receive more articles than have people feel they cannot send something in if it is typed hard-copy or legibly hand written. The deadline for contributions means that I have a week, maybe two, to put things together, spell check and check contributors membership before emailing the completed special section on to Anne, the newsletter co-ordinator, who then has to fit everything together and get it all off to the printer in another 10 days or so. I can then relax and hope that the special section is informative, thought provoking and just maybe appreciated!

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### **To employ or not to employ?**

Firstly, I need to say this is a personal view. I am a council member, but this is not a council view. It is my view as a member, influenced somewhat, it has to be said, by my role as Treasurer.

With the recent changes in the administration of EO, has come the question, should we become employers, or should we use outside agencies? I am told this is the debate between outsourcing and in-house, but I'll stick to words I understand! We have used an agency to handle mail from the PO box for some time now, and have recently appointed an agency to handle the management of the membership database. In both cases, this was prompted by the fact that volunteers from within EO couldn't cope with the increasing amounts of work involved. As EO grows, there will come other areas of work which will develop beyond the capacity of volunteers.

Whilst the two agencies we currently use have proved conscientious and caring, (and this article carries no criticism of them), I am worried about increasing the amount of work done outside our organisation.

I wonder if we actually employed people to do these jobs whether it would give us more control over our own destiny? Agencies have other clients with competing needs. They are not home educators, and so have no particular commitment to our cause. If we employed someone, they would be dependent on us for their livelihood. Surely, this is likely to bring more commitment? We can choose someone who shares our goals, who understands our methodology.

Ah, I hear you cry. Can we afford it? Isn't it cheaper to pay an agency? Not necessarily so: we could include an element of fund raising in the job description, such that the post could at least be partly dependant on the employee's own efforts. It could even be self-funding in time. An agency will always be a cost. There are no fund raising possibilities with an agency.

There is another argument: that 'wages' tie us up in red tape, involve more time in supervision. True, there are rules: we would have to become knowledgeable of equal opportunities legislation, minimum wages, tax and national insurance payments, and so on - but employers have nothing to fear if they act reasonably. These laws are to protect all of us from employers who seek to exploit. We don't want EO to be an exploitative employer, so why fear such laws?

I have also heard it said that an employee could 'take over' EO. For me, this is about getting our management right. An employee would always be judged on merit. There are systems by which someone unsuitable could be dismissed so long as legislation is adhered to. Much more likely, I would argue that a well chosen employee would become part of the decision-making process, becoming more knowledgeable and valuable as time wore on. It wouldn't change the consensual approach, or the role of EO's Trustees.

Let us compare that to an agency. It is of no concern to an agency to make things more cost-effective for us, or to look at wider issues and consequences within home education. They simply carry out our wishes.

The third sector (that is, charities) is becoming more professional all the time. If we are to compete in that world, we need to look at ourselves carefully. I have spent time this year approaching various trusts with a view to funding. I have found myself in competition with the paid fundraisers and appeals officers of other charities, with their glossy brochures and slick marketing. There is always a chance of course, and had we been in the market of 'job creation' I could well have succeeded despite the odds. Trusts seem to see that as more meritorious than funding an agency.

At the moment, we are almost entirely funded by ourselves, as members; in fees, donations, gift aid, the phone co-op. Whether we are going to use agencies or have an employee, this will need to change. Being an employer would give us a more professional image, it would give a message of confidence. If we are to find support from external funds and advertising, we want trusts (and private companies/ sponsors) to take us seriously as a forward-looking 21<sup>st</sup> century charity.

The alternatives look a lot less attractive to me: employing more agencies, putting more and more 'jobs' outside our direct control. To make EO smaller, perhaps, regionalising in order that jobs could again be managed by volunteers (and in the process lose EO's position as the nationally recognised representative of the home education community?).

Other charities have been in similar positions. They have come through it with souls and hearts intact, often coming out stronger than before. We have nothing to fear but ourselves.

Let us know what you think: Agency, employee, or something else? Where do you see EO's future?

*Garry Humphreys, Treasurer.*

*I understand that there has been debate on Council about the issues raised by Garry's article, and I hope that another Council member will come forward to present an alternative view for publication in the next issue. Contributions from all members are also welcome: please write/email the NL co-ordinator if you have points to add to the discussion.*

*Anne Rix*

## LETTERS PAGES

### Anybody out there in King's Lynn?

I am a fairly new member of EO with a son, Joe, who is 4 and will NOT be starting school in September. I would like to make contact with anyone who is home-educating in my area, and elsewhere, for some moral support and to know that I'm not really mad for doing this!

*Marie Withers, 3 Groveside, East Rudhorn, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE31 8RL*

### Parent Group - Hampshire/Surrey area

I would like to start a support group for home educating parents and would welcome contact from anyone who would be interested in the idea. The form it would take depends on what people want/would find useful but could involve a regular but informal evening meeting to enable parents to get together with others in a similar situation. Whether you have been home educating for years, months or days, please contact me on 01420 84616 or jackie.epps@ntlworld.com

### Advice please for new home-educator

My husband and I are planning to start home-educating our son, Jack, who will be 5 in August. At present he is in mainstream school but will leave in the summer. Jack is a bright, happy, sociable child who is great fun to be with and always laughing. However, Jack is autistic and finds large crowds of people frightening, especially as he is sensitive to sound and light.

I am wondering if anyone who may be home-educating a child of a similar age (autistic or not) can offer support and advice about how to cope and what they feel works best for their child. I would also be interested in hearing from any families in the West Yorkshire area who may be interested in meeting up on a regular basis to provide Jack (and myself!) with much-needed social interaction and a few laughs.

*Joanne Milnes, 17 Braithwaite Crescent, Keighley, W. Yorks BD22 6EX*

### HE/New Friends

William (nearly 15) and Catherine (12) came out of school last October and would like to socialise with some other home educated children on an informal basis - to meet up, say, once a month for chat, music, book swaps etc rather than for a specific activity. I wonder if there are any other HE parents/children within a reasonable distance of us who would be interested in doing the same thing? If so, we would love to hear from you.

*Jackie Epps, 4 Goodyers, Alton, Hants GU34 2SH Tel 01420 84616*

### Wanted...

Does any member have Level I and/or Level II of the BBC Language course for children, "Muzzy" which they have finished with and would like to sell? Must be in good and complete condition.

*Susan Baker, Tel. 01775 750588 email:*

*susanbrill@tiscali.com*

*The Conifers, 152 Siltside, Gosberton Rise, Spalding, Lincs.*

### Reply to Jo Borthen's special section

I was quite disturbed by the last paragraph of Jo Borthen's introduction to April's Special Section, "Educational Philosophy III". Twice in a row "success (in life)" is defined as being "rich and famous". Although there is a qualification later on, the message has been sent: wealth and notoriety is the ultimate measure of success.

How sad for our children!

*Gina Purrmann, 38 Lamas Green, London SE26 6LT Tel 020 8299 1135*

*Jo says: I am sorry if my article upset anyone. The only point I was trying to make was that success, how ever we see that, can be achieved whether we excel academically or not.*

## LETTERS PAGES

### The other HE?

Following up from several of the articles and letters in the April issue, I have a question about the other HE (higher education - there is an elitist term to struggle with!) In particular I wondered if anyone had any experience enrolling on courses without the straight-jacket A-level requirements. I know that many Universities are accepting "mature" students without "traditional" qualifications. What about "traditional" students with "mature" education (i.e. 18 year-olds with experiential knowledge instead of examinational qualifications)? This is both a professional and a personal interest.

Stewart Eyres [s.eyres@goldserve.net](mailto:s.eyres@goldserve.net)  
(address supplied)

### Funding for home-educators?

I am currently attempting to obtain relief on our domestic council tax for the portion of our home which we use exclusively for home-educating our three children. Local authorities are obliged to give relief on business rates to charities or non-profitmaking organisations (schools etc) and I have put it to my local authority that home-educated children should qualify in a similar manner.

I wonder if there are other home-educating families who have tried similarly and who would be willing to exchange ideas, etc.

I would also be interested in communicating with parents of home-educated children who are interested in pursuing the idea of equality in entitlement to state funding between home-educated and school-educated children, that funding should be provided on the basis of need not dogma.

I have been writing to both local and national government on this subject for some years and I feel that now, with education authorities being turned into private companies, home education has a stronger case to argue for payment of education funding directly to parents to spend in the manner they feel to be most appropriate in pursuance of their children's education.

Stephen McPartland, School House, Thelveton, Norfolk, IP21 4EL

### THIRD STUDLAND BAY CAMP, DORSET

26th July - 4th August

*Chrystia and Keith warmly welcome all home-educating families and friends*

Area of great natural beauty - pine forests, lowland heath, heather-filled dunes. 4 miles from sea, nature reserve, bird sanctuary (pheasants, deer, buzzards ...)

Dorest Steam railway nearby - to beach at Swanage. Free outings to nearby Corfe Castle. Cycleways and paths through woods and to sea. Camping in large field backed by pinewoods, stream, access to full facilities at adjoining Burnbake campsite.

We provide canoes, cargo nets, rope swings, craft materials, marquee, benders, fire-barrels (off-ground) and separate teen area & fire. Bring cycles, drums and other instruments.

Camp theme: Healing (skills sharing). There will be a quiet bender.

Cost for whole camp (8/9 nights) £90/family (concessions available, also half-camp rate) for more information and booking 'phone Chrystia & Keith 020 8776 8597, 75 Kent House Road, Sydenham, London SE26 5LJ

*We can join with Spirit of Youth Camp, opposite field (see April NL) for peacedancing, and joint workshops at Branscombe Adventure Centre, at extra cost.*

*(Or you are welcome to attend the S.O.Y.C. and visit us instead)*

## Scotland

It's the 'calm after the storm' so to speak, as the Scottish Executive ploughs its way through the responses from home educators to the draft guidance on home education.

There was in the end, we hear, a substantial response and we have been assured that discussion with home educators will follow. You can see a copy of EO's response on the EO website : < [www.education-otherwise.org](http://www.education-otherwise.org)>

The actual responses can be viewed in person: "Copies of responses to all Scottish Executive consultations are lodged with the Scottish Executive Library, where members of the public can see them (unless the respondent has asked for their submission to remain confidential). The Library is located in Saughton House, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh. If anyone wishes to see any consultation papers, I understand they must call ahead to make an appointment on 0131 244 4552 so that the papers can be located."

The responses we have seen (including several excellent substantial responses from individuals) are largely of one voice in their criticisms of the draft guidance but of course vary in approach and tone.

EO's response aimed to encourage the Executive to achieve guidance which was both compliant with statute and acceptable to both home educators and local authorities, which of course is essential if it is to work in practice. The response consisted of three parts: a commentary, an amended version of the executive's draft and appendices of supporting information. The amended version of the guidance is not what EO would have written from scratch but rather is a drawing over of the original Executive draft to the point of acceptability and statutory compliance. That's how bridges are built: work from both ends. The version tests well against the various approaches to home education, even the most autonomous approaches, but of course we all know that most education officers need to be educated in autonomous education methods anyway. Whether we like it or not families choosing very autonomous methods are always likely to have to give more justification of the effectiveness of their approach (at least until we have influenced enough education authorities) than those choosing a more structured approach but this version of the guidance at least makes room for them and acknowledges their validity.

EO's response has as expected stimulated some debate, with some saying we have been too accommodating of the Executive's draft in at least a couple of sections. However by and large the majority of the feedback is applauding of the constructive approach which has been variously described as "helpful", "bridge-building" and - my favourite - "it's done a good cauterising job on the draft".

Why not read it and see what you think, and please as always, feel free to send your constructive comments and criticisms to me. They are all heard and will inform further discussion.

EO is concerned by news from some members that some local authorities may be acting as if the draft guidance is already a guidance to be followed. Local authorities in the absence of previous guidance may be seizing it as justification for practices which are unacceptable to home educators. EO is writing to the Scottish executive to express concern over this and asking that local authorities are reminded that there is no statutory guidance as yet.

We have also sent all 32 directors of education a copy of EO's response in the hope both of balancing the influence of the original draft and of countering some of the entrenched prejudice of some local authorities against home educators, thereby improving the likelihood of constructive dialogue rather than argument.

Thank you to all who have and are contributing. Keep it up and stay in touch and a big thank you to all who contributed their stories ... pure gold (also on the website).

... and a big welcome to the "many" recent new members in Scotland. Get in touch to join Lothian and Borders group outings!

*Ann Samuel Till*

NB new email address: <[ann.samueltil@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:ann.samueltil@blueyonder.co.uk)>

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## Silver Jubilee

EO is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the end of August this year. There will be a large gathering at Beaumanor Hall in Leicestershire with a programme of talks and discussion sessions on EO's past and future. There will also be a full programme of activities for children and young people. Camping and dormitory accommodation are available on site and there is a list available of other accommodation in the area.

Come to Beaumanor from the 29<sup>th</sup> of August to the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September!  
Celebrate 25 years of EO!

For further information and bookings send an SAE to Janet Wilkinson, 31 Framlingham Road, Peterborough, PE2 8UG or e-mail [thewilkinsons@ntworld.com](mailto:thewilkinsons@ntworld.com)

Details are also available on the EO website at [www.education-otherwise.org](http://www.education-otherwise.org)

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## HOME EDUCATION IN THE NEWS

### Home Education Abroad

I have received quite a few requests recently for information about home education in Europe and further afield. Usually the news as far as the legal situation for home educators goes is fairly good, and sometimes even where there are more restrictive policies in place, non-native home educators seem able to get around them. If you are thinking of spending time abroad it is worth checking out these websites which are updated regularly (and the people who run them welcome any reports back from you of direct experience of home education in the featured countries):

For the best information on the legal situation for home educators in Europe and beyond, see Amanda Petrie's excellent website: [www.worldzone.net/lifestyles/homeeducation/index2.html](http://www.worldzone.net/lifestyles/homeeducation/index2.html)

Also try the new European website set up by the Fortune Wood family ([Mike@home-education.org.uk](mailto:Mike@home-education.org.uk)) which has good information and contacts for many European countries. The website is at [www.home-education.org.uk/europe](http://www.home-education.org.uk/europe)

It is worth noting that the very informative website provided by the leading French home-educating group *Les Enfants d'abord* now helpfully includes an English translation. Find them at [www.lesenfantsdabord.org/](http://www.lesenfantsdabord.org/)

Back in this country, the Independent was another newspaper which recently drew attention to the growing numbers of people choosing to educate their children out of school, even if the editor chose to present that choice in the all too familiar 'worrying trend' vein. A double worrying in this case, because firstly this sort of opting out reflects badly on the current state of the British education system, and secondly worrying because these children may be receiving an acceptable education, but missing out on interaction with other people. It is a shame that the views of the educational psychologist are not properly balanced by someone who knows more about how home education works and could reflect many families' experience that even if choosing to home educate was prompted by unhappiness at school, it usually becomes a positive and life-enhancing choice. It would be good if the Independent and other newspapers' readers could be reminded that home educated children, far from opting out of society, are getting involved in it in ways they never would have been able to while putting in the hours at school.

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### **Rising number of parents decide they can do a better job than the education system**

By Richard Garner, Education Editor

Up to 140,000 pupils are being taught at home as growing numbers of parents remove their children from school because of concerns over increased testing and bullying. Education charities say dozens of families are contacting them every week because they no longer want their children in the classroom. Both the *Home Education Advisory Service* and *Education Otherwise*, the leading charities in the field, report the number of parents approaching them is rising. Another group, *Home Education UK*, has put the number of children shunning school as high as 140,000, which would amount to 1.5 per cent of the school population.

Helen Donaldson, a member of the Midland group of *Education Otherwise* who is teaching her 10-year-old daughter at home, said: "In my case, it was because I was bullied at school. I don't trust teachers to do the right thing by my child." She has seen a growing number of families approaching her group. "At first, it seemed to be just a middle-class thing, but the trend has been for more lower-income families to realise they have a legal right to educate their children at home if they've had problems with the school system," she said.

Some parents opt to keep their child at home for the entire length of their compulsory schooling. Others may only do it for a limited time particularly, recently, for the period of primary schooling. Parents point out that most other European countries start formal school at the age of six or seven rather than at five or even earlier, as in Britain.

The Government says it recognises the right of parents to educate their children at home and refuses to voice any concern over reports that the numbers are rising. Ministers are, though, anxious to stress the benefits of a school education. Stephen Timms, the minister for Schools, said: "It is vital that all children get a good education during their compulsory school years. We have raised standards in schools and think therefore that opportunities for learning in a school environment have improved."

There are concerns over the long-term educational and social effect of withdrawing children from school. Ged Balner, an education psychologist with the London borough of Bromley, said: "Some children find it difficult to fit into a class of 30, so some parents do seek to educate their children at home. Certainly at primary level it is practical and the progress of a child could be accelerated by learning that way. However, you have to weigh that against the lack of social interaction with other children.

"At secondary level, it becomes more complicated. Some educated parents could certainly cope with the primary school curriculum, but when it comes to more specialised linguistic tuition and what is required in the laboratories in science lessons even teachers would find it difficult to deliver the whole curriculum [at home]."

Other education experts said the advent of online teaching materials led more parents to contemplate teaching their children at home. However, one said: "It might make it easier to impart information, but knowledge comes from interaction with other people."

According to the *Home Education Advisory Service*, a growing number of families are turning to home education. "Every week dozens of parents inquire about education at home instead of school," it said. "Many parents turn to home education as a last resort when there are problems at school which cannot be resolved."

A spokesman for the Department for Education and Skills said: "Parents should bear in mind that at school children are taught by trained professionals and that it is important children learn how to interact with others." A local education authority must be satisfied that a proposed home learner would receive a suitable education and would probably seek to visit the family home or look at samples of work produced by the child.

**'If your child is being bullied, the worst day at home will be better than the best day at school'**

By Terri Judd

Karen Ingelbrecht's home teaching skills are about to face their toughest test to date when her eldest daughter, Jenny, returns to school this month in the run-up to GCSEs. Yet Mrs Ingelbrecht, who has six children, has no doubt her most senior pupil will outshine her contemporaries, insisting: "She is top of her sets. She has always been bright."

While advancing home education as an alternative to the "indoctrination" of state schooling, Mrs Ingelbrecht is anything but a rebellious spirit. A self-confessed traditionalist and a Catholic, she had become appalled by what she saw as a lack of discipline in many schools.

"Don't be afraid to educate your children at home," she says. "If your child is being bullied and is unhappy, the worse day at home has got to be better than the best day at school." Those were the circumstances that motivated the 42-year-old to pull out of school her two oldest daughters, then 13 and 11. Jenny, now 15, had been bullied for some time. Within four days of Catherine, now 13, joining the same school, both suffered a traumatic incident. "Three nights out of five Jenny would be coming home in tears," Mrs Ingelbrecht says. She decided to teach both at home, with 22-month-old Rebecca - a prospect that initially left her feeling "scared silly". Her two older boys, aged 11 and nine, happily stayed at school. "They like playing football in the playground," she says. "They are happy and there is no resentment." But she would have no hesitation withdrawing them from the state education system if that changed.

The girls' day does not start until after the boys have left the home in Folkestone, Kent, with their father Peter, 45, a former city analyst who runs an arts and crafts shop with his wife. After an hour of housework and helping with the baby of the family, David, they sit down to English, maths and science lessons for two hours. They adjourn for lunch, then have an hour of creative lessons in the afternoon. A history lesson can involve watching a documentary on the wives of Henry VIII, while English can be a visit to a Chaucer exhibition in Canterbury or studying a video of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

(Printed with permission, with thanks to *The Independent*, 28 January 2002) Thanks to Helen Donaldson for drawing my attention to this on the day, and to Priscilla for her continued interest and interesting articles.

*Ann Kennedy Smith*

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## **EO's Silver Jubilee is this year - we're 25!**

*June, as well as Jubilees and heatwaves (we hope!?), is the season for examinations - so here's a question for you:*

- (a) Who's the most famous home-educated person you can think of?
- (b) What examinations has s/he passed?

*And to continue with the theme of examinations .....*

## **From the Archives**

### **Looking back at Education through the Press: Exams**

#### ***From September 1980***

A GCE board is searching for a 'drunken' examiner alleged to have marked O level papers in full public view on a train after consuming 4 pints of beer, 2 whiskies and a Bloody Mary. A letter to the Guardian ... claimed that the man boasted of his drinking on the 20.30 Euston to Liverpool train on June 7. Thus fortified he proceeded to mark the English papers for the Associated Examining Board. (TES, June)

#### ***From April 1982***

Mrs Thatcher told of sitting for an examination and concentrating so hard that she had not heard a terrible thunderstorm overhead. "For the first time" said Mrs Thatcher "I realised that you can concentrate so much that you notice nothing else." (Guardian, February)

#### ***From April 1984***

"I am horrified that at least 3 examination boards have put '1984' on O level syllabuses. It's too complex to be handled at O level" said Professor Bernard Crick, Orwell's biographer. Replied John Swallow, from the National Association of Headteachers: "A man of the intellectual stature of Crick can't really bear to put it over to 16 year olds in the simplistic way that most O level teachers have to do because they are doing it for an exam." (Times Educational Supplement 1983)

#### ***From December 1984***

Spain has abolished homework and official exams for its 6 million children under 12. (Daily Telegraph 1984)

#### ***From August 1985***

"I had never passed an exam in my life and I always did appallingly badly in the exams at the Royal College" (Review: Julian Bream in his autobiography, A Life on the Road)

#### ***From June 1986***

Head teachers have issued another plea to the Government to postpone for a year the introduction of the new 16-plus examination, the GCSE, due to enter the school curriculum next autumn. ... (Teacher's unions) have decided to boycott development of the new examination due to replace O levels and CSEs in September. (Daily Telegraph 1986)

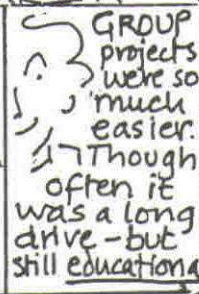
#### ***From October 1988***

80 fifth form pupils at Dover Grammar school for Boys had to endure a nine hour wait before they could sit their exam in GCSE geography when papers failed to arrive on time. The pupils assembled at their desks at 9 a.m. only to be told there were no papers. They had to be kept in isolation until they finally sat their exam at 5.10 p.m. (Daily Telegraph 1988)

# EDUCATING ARCHIE

by *SGU*

Mrs G & Archie look back on 25 years of projects, workshops and faulty exhaust pipes - happy times!



## **Paid Administrator and Proposed Increase in Membership Fee**

With the steady increase in membership of EO over the last few years the work involved in managing the membership database has also grown. By the autumn of 2001 the database secretary estimated that she was spending between 15 and 20 hours a week maintaining the database. At the council meeting in October it was suggested that it was time to look for a paid administrator for EO since it was felt that the job of managing the database had grown beyond what could reasonably be expected of a volunteer. Whilst not wishing to change the ethos of EO the meeting recognized that the growth in membership, and the wider interest in home education, meant some changes to EO's infra-structure were necessary.

A report was presented to the council meeting in January, by the Business Practice Group, recommending that an administrator be appointed to take over the majority of the work being done by the database secretary and membership secretaries. The meeting agreed to this proposal and an agency was found to take over the administration of the database. This agency is now dealing both with new members and with renewals, and the database secretary is continuing to deal with queries. This system should speed up the process of membership applications, and keep the database up to the minute. This is a new venture for EO, but hopefully it will improve the service EO offers to both new and existing members.

Although for the moment it is possible to pay for the administrator from EO's reserves, the council meeting in January also felt that it would be more appropriate to meet the cost of the administrator from annual income. This last year has been a very active one for EO, and as a result we have spent more money than we have raised. We have had the publication of the new handbook, a presence at the national Education Show for the first time, the response to the Scottish guidance, and the preparations for the 25th anniversary gathering, all of which have taken time, energy and money. EO is also hoping to expand into externally funded development work.

If EO is to continue to support these new ventures, and hopefully to expand its activities further, it will need more income. With all this in mind, the council is recommending that the basic membership fee be increased to £20 in order to maintain EO's position at the forefront of home education, and to enable EO to provide as efficient and diverse a membership package as possible. This would be the first increase in the membership fee for many years, and hopefully would not put membership beyond anyone's reach. It is also recommended that, for the first time, members on very low incomes would be able to choose to pay a slightly reduced fee of £15 (or two instalments of £8 each).

If you have any views on this proposed increase please send them to the treasurer:

Garry Humphreys, Three Stacks, Wicken Lane, Old Leake, Boston, Lincs. PE22 9QE or [garryhumphreys@lineone.net](mailto:garryhumphreys@lineone.net)

or to the Chair: Jill Fisher, 54 Ratcliffe Rd, Leicester, LE2 3TD or [jill.fisher@care4free.net](mailto:jill.fisher@care4free.net)

## Visioning – EO in the Future

In June 1977 a group of families met together at Lower Shaw Farm for the first major gathering of Education Otherwise. They met together from all over the country for mutual support and to plan a direction for a new movement, Education Otherwise.

25 years later EO is still helping home educators to support each other and is working towards a wider acceptance of home education. In 2002 EO has thousands of members, a nationwide network of local contacts and local groups, and offers specialist help in particular areas to members and non-members. EO enquiries secretaries and local contacts deal with thousands of enquiries from members and non-members and the media team co-ordinate hundreds of articles, radio slots and television appearances about home education.

EO publishes and distributes books and leaflets about home education, and produces merchandise advertising home education. Information about home education is distributed to other organisations such as LEAs and Citizens Advice Bureaux. Through EO's patient and persistent work with LEAs home educators generally meet with much more respectful treatment than in the past, and work with the DfES has yielded important amendments to legislation and guidance which affect home educators.

At the end of August 2002 EO will be holding a large gathering at Beaumanor Hall in Leicestershire to celebrate 25 years of home education and also to look forward to the next 25 years. As part of that gathering there will be a half day session on EO's future, with brainstorming sessions to help explore how EO members think EO should be developing, what areas EO should concentrate on, and what changes could be made in the scope and nature of EO's work. The results of these sessions will be reported in the newsletter, and a wider discussion opened on EO's future in both the newsletter and on the EO e-mail lists. A questionnaire will also be drawn up based on the issues raised during this exercise which will be circulated to all members

Those members who are not attending this celebration are encouraged to start thinking about EO's future now, discussing issues with friends and within local groups, and sending any feedback to be incorporated into the sessions at the gathering.

Questions that members might wish to consider include:

1. What is EO's core work, how well is it done, what could be improved?
2. What about the newsletter? Should it be more frequent, different content, replaced or supplemented by a glossy magazine?
3. What areas of work should EO move into?
4. Can I contribute to EO's work? What would I like to do?
5. Should changes be made to the way EO does business?

Remember, EO is a membership organisation; your ideas and input are important. EO has always been about supporting each other and working together, we need to build on that for the next 25 years.

Send any feedback to Jill Fisher, 54 Ratcliffe Rd, Leicester, LE2 3TD or [jill.fisher@care4free.net](mailto:jill.fisher@care4free.net)



*There's THAT Golden one, AND there's OUR*  
**SILVER JUBILEE**



## EO is 25 ... Tell the world !

*Let's use the opportunity of EO's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary to do a big publicity campaign about Home Education.*

Over the Summer school holidays and into the Autumn term many families are thinking about education and school. Some of them have doubts, others have difficulties in school or at home, a few face desperate situations with bullying or school phobia. Many of them still don't know there is a choice: that **they could home educate**.

We know that it is an **option for everyone**. EO has been supporting HEers for 25 years. We know it works. We can give parents **correct information** about HE and the law, we can give them **confidence** to take charge of their learning and we can offer **support** as they work out what is right for their particular family.

### **You can make a difference.**

There are lots of ways of getting the information out there:

- **put leaflets and posters anywhere parents go**...community centres, health centres, libraries, dentists waiting rooms, supermarkets and shops, swimming pools and sports centres.....
- **set up a display about HE** (and your local group)...in libraries, health/ neighbourhood centres...at local/community events, festivals.....
- **arrange to talk to a local parents group about EO**...toddlers groups, NCT, breastfeeding groups, disability and allergy support groups, church groups, women's groups.....
- **contact your local media**.... Community newsheet, local paper, radio, TV....
- **anything else** you can think of....

If you would like to do some local (or national) publicity I have sets of A3 information posters, A4 EO posters and various leaflets for you to use. Send me an e-mail [lucy.charlton@care4free.net](mailto:lucy.charlton@care4free.net) or phone me 0845 458 9510 (local rate).

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## ADVERTISEMENTS

### South West France Holidays

Permaculture base run by EO family offers small campsite (basic facilities) also furnished 18ft Tipi and cabin available. Organic veg and meals on offer. Beautiful, peaceful area, clean air, marvellous walking, good fishing nearby.  
Enquiries: **Laura Havard,**  
**Lausoprens, 82140, St Antonin Noble Val, France** or phone after **April 10th 0033 563 30 89 55**

### The Non-Stop Reader

A fully phonics reading scheme  
- guides the parent at every stage  
- leads the child one step at a time  
- is enjoyed by everyone  
- has witty text and illustrations  
- is a complete course in one volume  
By mail order: £18.50  
**Non-Stop Books, 26 Lathbury Rd, Oxford OX2 7AU**  
**01865 554 953**  
**nonstopbooks@compuserve.com**  
**www.nonstopbooks.co.uk**

### The Leas Beach Park

Small EO family run caravan site with touring pitches right next to a beautiful sandy beach. Local shops, restaurants and pubs within easy walking distance. 20% discount to home educators £5 donation to EO  
**Tony and Jos Underhill, The Leas Beach Park, Mill lane, Bacton Norwich NR12 0HS**  
**01692 652115**  
**www.theleasbeachpark.co.uk**

### \*N.B. re LOUISE VERRAN FUND

Address may vary - see p. 30 of April NL which gives c/o 62 Wallwood Rd. London E11 1AZ.  
I have not been able to access website <http://www.free-range-education.co.uk/index.html/vf.html> to verify contact details. Anne (NL co-ord)

Services and products advertised on these pages have not been endorsed by Education Otherwise. EO does not make recommendations about any tutors or youth leaders, whether members of the Association or not. Use of people in any such role, whether paid or unpaid, remains the responsibility of the parent.

### Wise Owl Educational Shareware

**PO Box 334 Abingdon OX14 2YB**  
**01235 529808**  
**wiseowls@aol.com**  
UK's only children's shareware library, specializing in educational programmes and games. Ages 2-16+. 900+ titles (DOS, Windows 3.1, 95 and 98) 3Ω and 5Ω media. £3 per disk. Free catalogue and advice  
<http://members.aol.com/wiseowls/index.html>

### The Louise Verran Fund

Invites applications from home educated young people for help towards the cost of specific projects.  
For further information and application form please send SAE to:  
**The Secretary, The Louise Verran Fund, Kelda Cottage, The Reddings, Lydbrook, Glocs GL17 9SX**  
To make a donation to the fund please contact the same address. ✱ (see below)  
Thank you.

### ARTLESSONS IN CENTRAL HAMPSHIRE:

Twenty minutes from Winchester/ Southampton/ Fareham/ Portsmouth/ Petersfield/ Alton. A fully qualified teacher of art and design, and a practising artist, I am offering classes at Exton in the Meon Valley, off the A32.  
**Contact: Clare 01489 877300 or**  
**E-mail: martins@exton54.fsnet.co.uk**

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

### **NatureKids**

Part / Full Time Education with an emphasis on Learning through Experiences, Home from Home and in time with Nature. Ideal for all children, especially those with Dyslexia or Dyspraxia. Small group, personal attention, ages 5 - 13 years.  
**Please phone for further details.**  
**Felicity 020 8441 8309**  
Barnet / Potters Bar / St Albans / Hemel Hempstead areas

### **WILLOW HOUSE**

for children ages 5 - 11 years  
**Tuition for children who do not go to school or who wish to "flexi-school".**  
All subjects available, including French.  
**Willow House, 19 Downs Side, Sutton, SM2 7EH**  
**Tel: 020 8643 7277**  
**email: rvm@zoom.co.uk**

### **Tonalis Summer Course** **3rd - 9th August 2002** **THE SINGING CHILD**

Singing as a creative journey for child, parent and teacher.  
With Michael Deason-Barrow (Tonalis), Susan Digby (Voices Foundation) and Mike Brewer (Nat. Youth Choir)  
Stroud Glocs. Early Booking Fee: £185 + accommodation, etc.  
**Enquiries: tel/fax 01666 890460**  
**tonalis@aol.com**

### **EARLY READING DIRECT**

can help you teach your child to read. Designed by teachers who understand the value of home education, the pack is full of fun activities which develop first reading skills at a pace that's right for you and your child. It contains Workbooks, Reading books, Alphabet and Picture Word Cards and costs just £29.95  
**01425 615019**  
**www.earlyreadingdirect.co.uk**

### **OUT OF REACH - ANGELINA ARCHER**

**Price: £7.99 - ISBN: 0-9541027-0-3**  
18 year old Angelina was an Education Otherwise member. This moving novel of love and friendship is published by the author under Hybiscus Books  
Please make cheques payable to  
**Hybiscus Books, 22, McGregor Road, London W11 1DE**  
**Tel: 020 7792 1101**  
**hybiscus@talk21.com**

### **Experience the Culture of Spain** **Costa Blanca**

H.E. Family have 2 bed apartment available for winter and summer rental. Lower airfares during term time and fewer queues at some nearby attractions - Terra Mitica, Aqualandia & Mundomar. Taste traditional paella and experience the excitement of a real fiesta. All this and not a high-rise hotel in sight!  
For details of price and availability :  
**Brian or Sylvia 0034 96 5583960**  
**losaltos@ctv.es**

### **Isle of Wight**

6 Berth Holiday Caravans set in a tranquil woodland site boarding on to the beach, completely unspoilt by commercialism, lots of wildlife, lovely walks, fishing, dogs welcome.  
**Tel: Garry 07786 985929**  
**e-mail: diamondwight@hotmail.com**  
**www.diamondwight-holidays.com**

### **Exeter Kindergarten Project - a**

Steiner initiative will be launching a new class for children aged 6 years upwards from September 2002.  
There will be a lecture by Christopher Clouder from the Steiner Fellowship on Thursday 6th June in Exeter, Devon. He will talk about Steiner 'culture' - the arts, the class teacher, the curriculum and the way it has proved successful in urban environments around the world.  
**Please ring Heien Wilkins on 01363 866 841 for details.**

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## RI SCHOOL LECTURE PROGRAMME

SUMMER 2002

- Mon 10 June 14.30 Years 9-10**  
Sci-Sport lecture and exhibition
- Wed 12 June 10.45 & 13.30 Years 5-6**  
Cracking codes and stealing secrets  
*Dr Simon Singh*
- Thu 13 June 11.00 Year 4**  
Hattie Maths  
*Sue Brown*
- Mon 17 June 10.45 & 13.30 Year 4**  
What's that smell?  
*Professor Peter Atkins*
- Tue 18 June 10.45 & 13.30 Years 5-6**  
Cyborgs and bionics vs. implants and transplants  
*Professor Larry Hench*
- Mon 24 June 10.45 & 13.30 Years 7-9**  
Elementary my dear chemist  
*Dr Peter Wothers*
- Tue 25 June 10.00-15.30 Post 16**  
Maths in Medicine  
*Professor Richard Catlow*
- Tue 2 July 10.45 & 13.30 Year 4**  
Electricity: fixed, free and flowing  
*Dr Bryson Gore*
- Tue 2 July 17.30 Post 16**  
Smart machines; debating Artificial Intelligence
- Fri 5 July 10.45 & 13.30 Years 7-9**  
Wild Weather  
*Dr Simon Torok*
- Tue 9 July 11.00 Years 5-6**  
5 ways to leave the Earth  
*Ron Lewin*
- Wed 10 July 10.45 & 13.30 Years 5-6**  
Seeing, hearing and talking
- Thu 11 July 10.45 & 13.30 Years 7-9**  
Arcs, Sparks and Microscopes  
*Dr Bryson Gore*

### The Royal Institution

21 Albemarle Street, London W1S 4BS

PHONE 020 7670 2969

FAX 020 7629 3569

E-MAIL [schools@ri.ac.uk](mailto:schools@ri.ac.uk)

WEB [www.ri.ac.uk/insideout](http://www.ri.ac.uk/insideout)

### GUIDE TO SCHOOL YEARS

YEAR	AGE
4	8-9
5-6	9-11
7-9	11-14
10-11	14-16

## MUSEUM OF LONDON

FAMILY EVENTS - SUMMER 2002

- Sat 1 June** Fascinating Rhythms  
Meet the Muffin Man  
Victorian Londoners
- Sun 2 June** Meet the Muffin Man  
Jitterbug Crazy  
Arty headgear  
Victorian Londoners
- Mon 3 June** Celebration! Workshop  
Jitterbug Crazy  
Tales of 1950s London
- Tue 4 June** Jubilee Street Party\*
- Sat 8 June** Victorian Londoners
- Sun 9 June** Weaving folktales  
Victorian Londoners
- Sat 15 June** Victorian Londoners
- Sun 16 June** Mercury storytelling  
Flights of Fancy  
Victorian Londoners
- Sat 22 June** Victorian Londoners
- Sun 23 June** Medieval shoemaking  
Victorian Londoners
- Sat 29 June** Victorian Londoners
- Sun 30 June** Victorian Londoners  
Wonderful Wigs
- Thur 4 July** World City Fashion\*
- Sun 7 July** Archaeoquest walk  
Underground mysteries
- Sun 14 July** Underground mysteries
- Sat 20 July** Archaeology days\*  
Gladiator Combat\*
- Sun 21 July** Archaeology days\*  
Gladiator Combat\*
- Sun 28 July** Washing up the past
- Sun 4 Aug.** Armour Workshop
- Sat 10 Aug.** Gladiator Combat\*
- Sun 11 Aug.** Gladiator Combat\*  
Shields and Swords

\* **Book early to guarantee a place**

... full details and other events etc. in the Museum's leaflets of "Family Events" and "Exhibitions & Events"

### Museum of London

London Wall, London EC2& 5HN

Tel. 020 7600 3699

Recorded information 020 7600 0807

Email: [info@museumoflondon.org.uk](mailto:info@museumoflondon.org.uk)

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

## Gwersyll Dewi Sant St Davids Camp

Welcome to all home educating families. 20th - 30th June 2002  
Pencarn farm St. Davids  
Pembrokeshire

### Important Booking Information.

This will be the 8th EO camp at the same beautiful coastal campsite with excellent facilities and fabulous scenery.

Unstructured camp, activities locally, communal space provided.

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

Bookings must be made in advance only

first come ... to a maximum of 50 families.

Booking fee of £1.50 per person forms the Camp Fund which pays for communal expenses, admin, fire wood etc. This is a minimum, pay more if you can, refundable with cancellations **only** notified before 15th June. All people under 18 must be with a responsible adult. Badgers have been known to raid tents, bring secure food boxes. Boxes can be borrowed by public transport users for a returnable deposit. Some static vans available phone for info (01239 851672). Vans have same site fee as camping (hook up £1 per night). Site fees: discounted for this camp, to be paid to the site on arrival. Per night: Adults (17+) £3, Children (6-16) £1.50, Dogs £1.50. You can come before 20th or stay after 30th and get this discount.

### Book by post only before 15th June

1. State adults and children's names, address and phone number.
2. Send cheque for your booking fee payable to GDS or Giro transfer a/c 56 675 3081 (min £1.50 per person over 6)
3. State expected arrival date.
4. Enclose SAE for receipt and map.
5. £3 deposit of you want to borrow a badger proof food box.
6. If arriving by public transport please advise of expected arrival time if you wish to be picked up from bus or train.

**Send to: GDS, Ffynnonau Gleision,  
Rhydlewis, Llandysul, Ceredigion  
SA44 5SW**

## PEAK CAMP 2002

5th -14th 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: 1.50 Children: 0.80 Cars: 1.00

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. However, it would be useful if I had an indication of the number of families coming that I could pass on to the farm.

There are no pre-organised activities. In the past, however, walks, cycle rides, rock climbing, circle dancing and shared meals have been popular activities. There are cycle hire centres and cycle tracks nearby as well as riverside walks. Offers of shared activities or workshops are generally welcome. 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 the usual one: 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.  
Tel 0114 2585702

## Regional Diary

Events organisers please remember when giving full details of events 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 included automatically in every issue. Please notify any changes or meetings no longer taking place to:

**Martine Archer, 43 Cecil St, Harrogate HG1 4NP  
01423 858916 mtjm@macunlimited.net**

### BATH

H.E.L.P. group meets regularly for outings and activities. Contact: Louise Jensen 01225 840735

### BERKSHIRE

Woolinks LeisureCentre Burghfield Mondays 1pm.

Tuesdays swimming at Windsor Leisure Centre noon onwards. £2.80

Wednesdays ice-skating at John Nike Leisure Centre, Bracknell 2-4pm, £1.50 show EO card at reception.

Contact: Pat Connor 0118 9662123

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

Contact: Dawn 01628 783107 (Also for local newsletter) [www.zednetdemo.co.uk/2eddin](http://www.zednetdemo.co.uk/2eddin)  
Newbury group on Fridays for younger children.

Contact: Gillian 01491 671328

Lambourn. Weekly meeting on a farm for crafts, cooking and nature walks, group based on respect for each other and our world and an unhurried childhood.

Contact: Tracey or Roge 01793 610448  
[roge.tracey@virgin.net](mailto:roge.tracey@virgin.net)

Reading: Mondays, 10am - 12noon swimming at Central Pool, lots of teenagers

Contact: Lynn 0118 972 1420

Fridays, 11am - 3pm-ish near Pangbourne for chat and play. Separate space for teenagers; adventure playground for younger ones, animals.

Contact: Lynda 0118 961 4466

or Abigail 01628 483895

E-mailing list for home educators in Berkshire and surrounding areas for events/activities  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BerkshireHomeEducators>

### BRISTOL

Tuesdays, trampolining with coach am followed by workshops at Totterdown YMCA. Friday am ice-skating.

Contact: Kathy Nott 0117 966 8265

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

Contact: Carla 9354389

### BUCKS

Newsletter for Bucks/Northants

Contact: Dawn 01908 569380

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

South Bucks: fortnightly meetings for craft, activities, play, speakers, drama, trips etc.

Contact: Jackie 01753 886924

Dorothy 01494 782864

### CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Cambridge regular meetings and outings.

Contact: Penny 01223 526441

[penny.k@ntworld.com](mailto:penny.k@ntworld.com)

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

Contact: Audrey Hill 01480 219881

Peterborough: weekly meetings on Wednesdays for art, craft, science, swimming, sports, play and visits.

Contact: Sarah 01733 265043

[SJLambert@aol.com](mailto:SJLambert@aol.com)

Cambridge/Norfolk border: fortnightly meeting at Guyhim.

Contact: Pat 01354 656582 or Ruth 01945 861464

### CHESHIRE

Contact Gill Wilson 0161 443 8723 for North

Cheshire/Stockport

Meeting 1st Wednesday of the month for crafts games and activities

Contact: Carrie 01270 875 633

Sue 01270 883 978 (for S. Cheshire)

### CLEVELAND AND DURHAM

Contact: Pauline Butterworth 01642 899247

### CORNWALL

Twice weekly events all round the county.

CHEERS newsletter

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

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

### CUMBRIA

Informal gatherings for socialising, support and activities.

Kendal alternate Wednesdays Castle St Youth

Centre 12.30-3.30

Penrith alternate Tuesdays Castledown Community Centre 1.30-3.30

Contact: Sarah Cook 01768 896019

### DERBYSHIRE

Chesterfield group meets every Wed. morning.

Contact: Karen 01246 865532

Kaz 01246 205463 Yvonne 01246 555645

South Derby/N.W. Leics/E. Staffs :

regular meetings, socialising and days out.

Contact: Julie 01283 760800

### DEVON

Contact: Becca 01404 549479 (East/Mid Devon)

Anne 01237 451535 (North Devon)

East and Mid Devon: Wednesday meetings:

11am - 1pm Exeter - activity sessions, e.g. science, craft, gardening, movement

2pm - 4pm Exeter - social gathering with optional activities (fortnightly from 6th March)

Contact Annie 01392 434167

10am - 12noon Aliphington - pottery (bring old apron/shirt) Contact: Becca 01404 549479

1pm - 3.30pm Crediton - social gathering (fortnightly from 13th March) Contact: Emma 01837 82365

Pottery session, to be arranged.

Contact: Neil 01392 255912

Brixham regular meetings

Contact: Sally 01803 856 862

**North Devon** New group now meets alternate Tuesdays from 14 May, 11-3ish, to 'picnic' on smallholding (fields, wood, streams) near Bideford. Contact: Anne 01237 451535 anne@annerix.demon.co.uk

**South Devon** meetings every Wednesday

Contact: Hannah/Gordon 01803 762788 lindnich@eurobell.co.uk

Penny 01626 360640 or Bridget 01803 862158 National Trust, Devon - Card held by Nick Vidal-Hall (01548 830716) gives free membership/entry to NT sites to all Devon EO members for pre-booked 'educational' visits.

South Devon: teenagers and pre-teens meeting every Thursday at a youth club in Totnes 2.30 - 6pm. Adults contact Nick / Young people contact Arran and Willow 01548 830716

#### **DEVON EAST/DORSET WEST**

Lyme Regis, Axminster, Bridport, Chard  
Contact: Henry & Suzanne 01297 444207  
Ann 01297 561070

Habiba 0845 4582984 (local rate)

#### **DORSET**

Regular meetings, keep in touch  
Contact: Christine 01258 880355

Rosemary 01747 853 593

Bournemouth area: Meeting every Monday for crafts, games, play etc. Friendly, welcoming group.

Contact: June 01202 827945, bugchick@btinternet.com

#### **ESSEX**

Colchester fortnightly meetings, Wednesdays £2.50 per family

Contact: Sue 01206 520284

35 Lethes Grove, Clochester, Essex CO2 8RG  
Monthly in Chelmsford and weekly in Southend.

Essex Epicycle newsletter gives full details.

Contact: Corinne 07802 630693 epicycle@wavy.org

New group East London/Essex area

Contact: Gill 020 8597 8537

Swimming at Goresbrook Leisure Pool, Ripple Rd, Dagenham, every Tuesday 1pm onwards

Contact: Cindy 020 8553 0964

#### **GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

1st Tuesday of the month at Twynning

Every Thursday swimming and trampolining.

Other outings every month.

Contact: Rob and Fiona 01684 290087

#### **HAMPSHIRE**

Portsmouth EO: Warm and welcoming group with kids 5-15 meet Fridays for art, craft, music, chat and outings. Contact: Julie 023 92 640242

ACTIVEO meet 3 times a week within 25 miles of Petersfield. All welcome. Contact: 01428 712394

Fareham/Gosport area, friendly welcoming group.  
Contact: Gayle 01329 823112

gaylie@btinternet.com

Basingstoke/Winchester area: group with mainly under 8s meet alternate Wednesdays St. Luke's hall Overton, with trips and activities between.

Contact: Michelle or Mark 07966 159017

Michelle.virgo@il2.com

Friendly group for under 10s, weekly meetings/outings/activities Farnham/Aldershot area.  
Contact: Emma 01252 350034

emmajeavons@supanet.com

#### **HEREFORDSHIRE**

1st Monday of month for meetings, various venues.

Contact: Kath and Malcolm 01432 830883

homed@appcs.co.uk

#### **HERTFORDSHIRE**

TOP Health and Education Together. Drumming + all ages groups/individuals every Tuesday.

Numeracy, literacy and parenting health sessions.

Literacy home study program 3-10 years. All at Bentley Heath Barnet. Also Cuffley Outdoor Centre Group every Friday afternoon

Contact: Priscilla 01438 840674

olsandpjs@aol.com

Casual Swimming Friday morning, term time only at North Herts Leisure Centre, Letchworth. Meet in the pool 9.00am - 9.15am cost 60p per person on production of EO/HEAS card.

Contact: Priscilla Simmons (as above)

or Karen Bartlett 01462 743034

#### **Thursday June 27th 2002 Visit to ACTIVITY**

**WORLD**, Birchwood, Hatfield from 6.30pm to

8.00pm. For all ages, including adults.

To book contact Priscilla Simmons (as above).

Sandridge village hall, Sandridge, St Albans 2nd

and 4th Thursdays, term time. 1-3pm

Contact: Carolyn 01727 851073

Melissa 01462 438577

#### **ISLE OF WIGHT**

I. W. E. O. group: craft sessions, visits, swimming, theatre, picnics, bar-b-qs, mutual support,

especially older EO kids but new members and visitors always welcomed.

Contact: Jude 01983 531680

Isle of Wight Learning Zone workshops, social

events and newsletter.

Contact: Shara 01983 562313

Alison 01983 810862

#### **KENT**

Regular meetings and activities

Canterbury

Contact: Irene 01227 709570

Medway towns

Contact: Bridget 01634 234938

Tunbridge Wells

Contact: Kim 01892 863941

French for beginners through songs and games.

Yoga for children.

Contact: Katherine 01892 863958

For events listings send SAE : Amanda Mackenzie, 16 Brambletree Cotts, Borstal, Rochester ME1 3TN

Bromley

Contact: Claire 0181 460 7347

Claire@wadefamily99.freeserve.co.uk

SE Kent : new group at the Ravensbourne

Community Centre, Ravensbourne Est.

Brangbourne Rd, Bromley. Every Tuesday 10-12

for support and outings. Contact: Lorraine 0208 461

0885 (9-10am only please)

## LANCASHIRE

Regular meetings

Contact: Angelica 01254 603 497

Outings and get-togethers

Contact: Brenda or Diana 01254 389673

Fortnightly play sessions at Botany Bay, Chorley, Junction 8 M61

Contact: Jacqueline 01204 361072

## LEICESTERSHIRE

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

Contact: Lise 0116 242 5802

## LINCOLNSHIRE

Weekly meeting in Cleethorpes

Contact: Caroline 01472 690738

Monthly meetings in Lincoln, plus various other events and gatherings.

Contact: Eileen Tel 01522 803590

Ruth Tel 01522 804583

Kathleen Tel 01522 869239

Boston area group. Regular meetings/outings.

Contact: Gill 01205 871399

Ross 01205 870679

Monthly meetings in Lincoln, last Tuesday of the month, also educational visits etc.

Contact: Eileen 01522 803590 Ruth 01522 804583

or Kathleen 01522 869239

## LONDON

Walthamstow Fridays 2-3.30pm

Contact: Kate 020 8520 2676

Tuesdays Clissold Park. All welcome.

Contact: Charlotte 0207 254 0419

Wednesdays Honor Oak playground.

Contact: Steve 8680 2933

Thursdays Lee 11-1

Contact: Clare 020 8480 0740

Thursdays once monthly during term time

rollerblading Kidbrooke

Contact: Fiona 020 8852 9756

bettleslake@clara.net

Fridays fortnightly at Sydenham 11.30-2.30

Contact: Chrystia and Keith 8776 8597

Fridays alternate fortnight Forest Hill Nature Reserve 11.30

Contact: Dave 8692 4080

Bromley

Contact: Claire 8460 7347

NW London Otherwise Club

Contact: Leslie 0208 969 0893

Harrow every other Friday plus swimming

Thursdays and other stuff.

Contact: Sue 0771 802 2677

Vivienne TIMSHARKEY@aol.com

W. London HE group every Tuesday for social and educational activities and visits.

Contact: Claire Evans 0208 943 4491

timsteps@altavista.co.uk

Lewisham EO group Thursdays weekly.

Contact: Clare 8333 9455

New group at Plumstead Common Adventure

Playground SE18 alternate Fridays from 1st

February. Meeting at 12pm.

Contact: Bev 0208 312 2160

Kim 0208 317 7262

East London/Essex: every Wednesday 2.30-4.30

The Exchange Mall, Ilford.

Contact: Maria 0208 270 5293

jameson@maria.as

## MANCHESTER

Monthly formal art lessons at Stockport Art Gallery £1.50

Monthly meeting at Stockport library

E-mail young writers group Ed Wilson

wilson-net@lineone.net

MADCOW newssheet, send SAEs: Gill Wilson, 20

Brook Rd, Heaton Chapel, Stockport SK4 5BZ

Computing Skills 1st and 2nd Saturdays at Moores family home, limited places

Contact: Karen 01204 573136

## NORFOLK

NEON gives details of all events £1.50 plus 4 large SAEs

Contact: Steve Williams, North Cottage, Crostwick,

Norwich NR12 7BD

Workshops/social meetings 1st and 3rd Thursday

Contact: Sue 01603 738494

## NORFOLK/SUFFOLK BORDER

Diss area

Contact: Judith 01379 890622

Lowestoft area

Contact: Lin 01502 741097

## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

New activities/meetings being organised in addition to others already running.

Contact: Jane Newson 01536 418885

## NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Weekly meetings. For full list,

Contact: Wendy 0115 9114312

Louise 01773 780634

East Midlands Christian Home Educators 1st

Tuesday of the month 10-2

Stapleford Baptist church, Stapleford

Contact: Jo 0115 8770281 Julia 0115 8494083

## OXFORDSHIRE

Classes in creative writing. Monthly Parents meeting, monthly Drop-In, also regular museum trips and outings. Local newsletter.

Contact: Wendy 01865 514973

## SCOTLAND

Fife: outings and get-togethers

Contact: Karen 01334 655361

k.spy@btinternet.com

Irvine: weekly drama Fridays for 5-9 and 9+

Contact: Rhona 01294 273644

Monthly activities Eglinton Country Park,

Wednesday afternoons under10s

Contact: Shirley 01563 540063

Other visits coming up

Contact: Vivien 01563 537428

Highlands meetings

Contact: Rebecca 01667 462772

## SHROPSHIRE

Activities and outings

Contact: Val 01952 502225

South Shrops. regular meetings every Tuesday, outings and workshops.

Contact: Carolyn 01588 680503

## SOMERSET

Frome and beyond (FAB) home educators support group. Social gatherings, outings and newsletter.

Contact: Sally 01749 841554

Helen 01373 465260

Wiveliscombe - new meeting on the 1st Tuesday of the month (term time) at Scout Hut 10.30-13.30

Contact: Maggie 01984 624 651

## STAFFORDSHIRE/SOUTH CHESHIRE/NORTH SALOP

Fortnightly meetings

Contact: Patricia 01785 851150

Stafford every 2nd and 4th Wednesday in village hall for games craft etc. 12-3.30

Contact: Nicola 01785 612410

Alsager: 1st Wednesday of the month at YPCC for craft, music, games, chat.

Contact: Caroline 01270 875 633

Sue 01270 883978 Suedavies@tesco.net

## SUFFOLK

Regular meetings every 3rd Friday 10.30-2.30

£2.50 for family, shared lunch.

Contact: Sarah 01379 783678

## SURREY

Guildford area: Theatre bookings

Contact: Tisha 01483 898575

Skating during term time Friday 1-4

Contact: Jane 01420 88188

Under 10s

Contact: Nicky 01483 232080

Nicki's Woods fortnightly

Contact: Nicki 01306 884741

Dorking/Reigate area.

Contact: Helen Burnett 01737 243606

Friendly group for under 10s, weekly meetings/ outings/activities. Farnham/Aldershot area.

Contact: Emma 01252 350034

emmajeavons@supanet.com

## SUSSEX

Monthly newsletter £8pa or £4 six months, cheques to ESEO to Ian Lawes, 35 Waldegrave Rd, Brighton BN1 6GR

Contact: Bo 01580 201681 (East Sussex)

Isobel 01403 261178 (West Sussex)

Friday EO club at Lindfield

Contact: Liz 01444 414058

Home Educators Hastings Area, regular arts, craft, gym, outings and meetings.

Contact: Ali 01424 814175

Eastbourne Home Educators Club, alternate Fridays 9.30-11.30

Shinewater Community Centre 75p per child.

Contact: Angelique 01323 509702

Worthing: Thursday morning group 10-12.30. Many different activities and outings last Thursday of each month.

Contact: Sam Kruger 01703 233799

## TYNESIDE

Monthly meetings, visits etc.

Contact: Linda 0191 4567007

Regular outings and monthly get-togethers

Contact: Lillian 01912809150

## WALES

Cardigan area social meetings and outings on Mondays

Contact: Yvette 0845 458 9251

Swansea monthly meetings in Llanelli area

Contact: Sue 01269 861902

South Wales: group have moved to the Quaker Meeting House, Swansea (usually Thursday afternoons) for crafts, games, friendship, support and visiting 'workshops'. Also regular outings, educational visits, organic farming and nature walks.

Contact: Geraldine 01792 405894

Juliet 01639 760987 Frankie fran.kie@nttworld.com

NE Wales/Borders weekly gym/trampolining in Wrexham (Thurs) various meetings in Oswestry, W. Cheshire/ NE Wales. Also sports and ice skating at Deeside Leisure Centre.

Contact: Genny 01978 757489

49 Westminster rd, Moss Valley, Wrexham

LL11 6DH - £2 for a years listing.

eo@7times7.freereserve.co.uk

South Wales regular group activities and newsletter £3 pa. Weekly ice-skating.

Contact: Dawn 01452 540019

dawnandmike@cableinet.co.uk

Beverley 02920797628

Bev1.French@btinternet.com

Gwynedd Mondays swimming at Bangor

Contact: Louisa 01248 361254

Friday swimming at Porth Madog Weekly meetings at Tremadog Thursdays.

Contact: Jo 01766 512330

Pembrokeshire EO swim and sauna: Haverfordwest

pool, Dew St. 3pm at

main reception, now fortnightly. Call to check dates.

Contact: Yvette 0845 458 9251

## WARWICKSHIRE

The group usually meets 2 Thursdays a month; at Wolston nr Coventry and for an outing in the Coventry/Warwicks area.

Contact: Helen Hall 01926 771958

## WEST MIDLANDS

Meetings, trips out, activities etc are held throughout each month at a variety of locations all over the West Midlands. The newsletter HELM lists many of them. HELM is available free by email or by post for a small charge and covers HE related articles and events throughout the West Midlands and surrounding areas.

Contact: Joy Beasley 0121 585 6450

JoyBeasley@b-bunch.freereserve.co.uk

Penny Clarke 01922 745465

pennyclarke@blueyonder.co.uk

**WILTSHIRE**

Outings and visits every 1st Tuesday pm lower Street Hall, off Netherhampton Rd, Salisbury 2-5pm.  
 Contact: Vicky 1722 324863 or Sam 01794 342041  
 Caine: informal activities and get-togethers  
 Contact: Heather 01249 822 630

**WORCESTERSHIRE**

Regular activity meetings and outings in the N. Worcs area.

Contact: Gail 01562 822034 gail@tqmi.co.uk  
 Worcester area

Contact: Rachel Pearson 01527 596198  
 email keeperscottage@totalise.co.uk

**YORKSHIRE NORTH**

Regular meetings and visits. Send two 2nd class stamps for quarterly newssheet.

Contact: Sarah 01904 750324  
 sarah@wolny.org.uk

**YORKSHIRE EAST**

Regular meetings and visits. Send two 2nd class stamps for a quarterly newssheet

Contact: Alison 01405 769902

**YORKSHIRE SOUTH**

Tuesdays 12-3 term time at Highfield Adventure Playground. Free entry, small contribution for craft materials. Off London rd/Abbeyleale rd

Contact: Annette 0114 2583502  
 Fiona 0114 22751142

Thursday weekly informal social meetings.

All welcome

Contact: Angie 0114 2817466

Regular meetings for arts/crafts, visits, swims, hanging out and more.

Contact: Jo 01709 820866

Denise 01226 733478 Gary 0114 2585702.

Swimming fortnightly 2nd Tuesday at Hillsborough Leisure Centre 12 and 4th Wednesday at Bamsley Metrodome 12.30

Contact: Ian 0114 2817466

**YORKSHIRE WEST**

Outings and activities

Contact: Eva 01535 274520

Last Thursday of the month 11-1.30 at Civic Centre Huddersfield.

Contact: Tracey 01484 317176

2nd Friday of the month 1-4 at West Park Centre, Spen Lane, Classroom 9.

Contact: Susan 0113 2688304

Swimming (term time) Tuesdays Bradford

Contact: Eva 01535 274520

Huddersfield sports Centre

Contact: Tracey 01484 317176

Skating Fridays (except the week of the Leeds Meeting)

Contact: Francis 01274 884750

**LOCAL CONTACT UPDATE****New acting local contact**

Grampian : Fiona Chaff

**If you want to volunteer**

or are interested to know more about the job of being a Local Contact please get in touch with Janet Wilkinson,

31 Framlingham Road, Peterborough  
 PE2 8UG 01733 554436

thewilkinsons@ntkworld.net

**Areas needing a local contact**

Bedfordshire

Devon South

Hertfordshire

Isle of Man

London East

Manchester South

Powys

Surrey

Sussex East

Strathclyde

Tayside

**NEW CONTACT LIST & HANDBOOK - At last !!!**

All members who had renewed before March this year should have received a copy of these as a separate mailing early in May. New members who joined in March-May should also have received the mailing, but existing members who lapsed in March or earlier and have renewed since, may not have been on the label run.

If your membership is up to date and you have NOT received the March 2002 Contact List and Handbook, please contact me.

Lynda Hitchman database@education-otherwise.org  
 Or Database Secretary, 31 Audley Street, Reading, Berks RG30 1BP

## Education Otherwise Adverts

### Steve: A Story of Home Education

Available from the author.

£4.50 (+£1 p&p) Details from Mrs

Margaret Stevens 01844 343 928

To order send cheque payable to Education Otherwise to: 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 a delightfully readable format. There are accounts of different methods and lots of quotes from families.

Special price to members £9.50 from: 85 Coleridge Rd, London N8 5EG (cheques payable to Alan Thomas)

### Resources Booklet

50 page booklet giving information on different curriculum materials aimed at 5-11 year olds available to home educators who are interested in a more structured approach.

Send £1 coin with your address to: H. Turnbull, Hadlow House, 2, Hadlow Rd, Sidcup, Kent DA14 4AF  
Or get a free RTF copy by e-mail [henrietta.turnbull@ntlworld.com](mailto:henrietta.turnbull@ntlworld.com)

### EO T-shirts:

Good quality cotton printed with logo in choice of two designs:

1. white shirt with E.O. logo (red triangle kicked open by running children)
2. *NEW - For our SILVER JUBILEE!!!* navy shirt with white slogan: "home education - a real option"

£5 adult (M, L, XL)

£3.50 child (3/4, 5/6, 7/8, 9/11, 12/13)

Add p&p up to 6 shirts £2, 7+ £4

Cheques payable to E.O.Trading Ltd. Patricia Connor, 2 Whitegates Lane, Reading, Berks., RG6 1ED "

### Resources for Older Children

Information on curriculum materials for later years.

For a copy please send 60p to cover printing and postage with your address to: G. Dove, 302, High Road, Chadwell heath, Romford, Essex RM6 6AJ  
Free e-mail copy from: [gillchris@willrich.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:gillchris@willrich.fsnet.co.uk)

### EO Car Stickers

Help spread the word.

Please send a reasonably large SAE to: Ali Willer, 28 Cozens Hardy Rd, Sprowston, Norwich NR7 8Q

\*\*\*\*\*  
(more) EXAMINATIONS ...

*Scene: The Park in Springtime - blossom, sunshine, two academics strolling along a tree-lined path ...*

*1st Academic (arms wide, head lifted, joyful expression):*

O Cuckoo! Shall I call thee bird, or but a wandering voice?\*

*2nd do. (hands behind back, eyes down, lips pursed):*

State the alternative preferred, with reasons for your choice.

(Text from a cartoon in *Punch*, many years ago) Anne Rix

\* Wordsworth: "To the Cuckoo"



There's *THAT* Golden one. AND there's *OUR*  
**SILVER JUBILEE**



**EO is 25 ... Tell the world !**

*See full feature on page 33 of this issue*

\*\*\*\*\*

**Back Page Part Two**

*Get involved and join a small group:*

**Finance:** Garry Humphreys, Lynda Hitchman, Celia McDonagh, Ann Samuel Till, Ken Grindlay

**Enquiries:** Pam Bellinger, Geraldine Adams, Janet Wilkinson, Iris Harrison, Jo Borthen

**Publications:** Jill Fisher, Gary Podmore, Penny Clarke, Lucy Charlton, Chris Harper, Ali Willer

**Media:** Eva O'Rourke, Fiona Brookes, Celia McDonagh, Belinda Harris-Reid

**Business Practice Group:** Jill Fisher, Priscilla Park-Weir, Pam Bellinger, Martine Archer

**DFES Team:** Anne Wade, Jill Fisher, Gwen Baldock, Ann Samuel Till

**LEA/EA Group:** Isobel Bogucki, Jill Fisher, Anne Wade, Rob Wade, Gary Podmore,

**Communications:** Jill Fisher, Priscilla Park-Weir, Richard Eaton, Penny Clarke

**Scottish Group:** Ann Samuel Till, Lucy McAuley, Anne Wade, Jill Fisher, Gwen Baldock

**Information for other organizations:** Penny Clarke, Priscilla Park-Weir, Martina Macklin

**Grievances and Complaints**

Celia McDonagh, 169 Habershon Street, Splott, Cardiff CF24 2LA 0776 321 3851

Jill Fisher, 0116 2128120, Isobel Bogucki

**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:** VACANT

**North West:** Marina Orme 019467 28313  
 marinaatthelakes@aol.com

**North East:** Eva O'Rourke 01535 274520  
 evaandmary@aol.com

**Midlands:** Helen Donaldson 01889 882043  
 serf@unappreciated.co.uk

**Wales:** Celia McDonagh 0776 321 3851  
 celiamdconagh@yahoo.co.uk

**East Anglia:** Ali Willer 01603 401020  
 simon.whitehall@tesco.net

**South West:** Belinda Harris-Reid 01364 643343  
 bline@compuserve.com

**South East:** Karen Ingelbrecht 01303 254787  
 pencraft@ukonline.com

**London(1):** VACANT

**London(2):** VACANT

**Ireland:** VACANT(Volunteers needed)

**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)**

## Who does What in EO

### Council Members

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

Geraldine Adams (N. London) 0207 2634922  
Martine Archer (N. Yorks) 01423 858916  
Pam Bellinger (Leicester) 0116 282 7929  
Isobel Bogucki (W. Sussex) 01403 261178  
Penny Clarke (W. Midlands) 01922 745465  
Jill Fisher (Leics) 0116 2128120  
Lynda Hitchman (Berks) 0118 961 4466  
Jacqui Houlding (Cheshire) 01925 654856  
Garry Humphreys (Lincs) 01205 871399  
Celia McDonagh (Wales) 0776 321 3851  
Gary Podmore (Yorks) 0114 2585702  
Julie Ridley (Manchester) 0161 860 7589  
Ann Samuel Till (Scotland) 0131 5566271  
Jenny Stevens (W. Sussex) 01243 783469  
Dawn Waddington (Bucks) 01908 569380  
Anne Wade (Middx) 0208 9047155  
Ali Willer (East Anglia) 01603 401020

### Membership

*Membership and newsletter subscription enquiries, membership cards and address changes:*

Administrator, Education Otherwise, 5 Goodyers, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 2SH

<mailto:database@education-otherwise.org>

*For other queries or missing newsletters contact*

Lynda Hitchman database@education-otherwise.org  
or Phone 0118 961 4466

### Stationery

Leaflets, posters, membership forms, car stickers:

Ali Willer, 28 Cozens Hardy Rd., Sprowston, Norwich NR7 8QF (donations towards postage welcome, 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 SAE to: Bridget Elgie, 14 Elizabeth Crescent, Bay Vista, Whitehaven, Cumbria CA28 6JQ 0845 4582075 bidelge@aol.com (please ring to check availability of items before ordering)

### Contact with LEA

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

### Small Jobs

Martina Macklin, 16 Victoria St, Wall Heath, Kingswinford, West Midlands DY6 0JJ  
Tel: 01384 833 883

### Useful contacts

**Single Parent Family Contact:** Sarah Martin, Lammas, 34 Cowslip Drive, Little Thetford, Ely, Cambs, CB6 3JD 01353 648716

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

**School Phobia:** Geraldine Adams 0207 263 4922

**Autonomous Education Support and advice:** Sammy and Nick Vidal-Hall, Home Croft, Brownston St, Modbury, Devon PL21 0QR 01548 830716

**GCSE Contact:** (Vacant) - Volunteers please!

**College Contact:** Kathy Chilton 01969 623707

**Teenage Support:** Geraldine Adams 0207 263 4922

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

**Research Contact (acting) Pam Vickers**  
25 Boxley Rd, Walderslade, Chatham, Kent  
Home: 01634 671507 Work: 01227 712206

**Company Secretary (acting): Pam Bellinger**  
56 Beech Drive, Braunstone, Leicester LE3 3DA  
0116 282 7929

**Treasurer: Garry Humphreys** Three Stacks, Wicken lane, Old Leake, Boston, Lincs PE22 9QE  
01205 871 399

**Newsletter Coordinator: Anne Rex,** The Orchard, Hembury, Frithelstock, Torrington, Devon, EX38 8JT  
01237 451535 anne@annerix.demon.co.uk

**Local Contact Coordinator: Janet Wilkinson,** 31 Framlingham Road, Peterborough PE2 8UG 01733 554436 thewilkinsons@ntlworld.net

**Enquiries Secretaries Coordinator:**  
Iris Harrison 01584 781341

**Chair: Jill Fisher,** 54 Ratcliffe Rd, Leicester LE2 3TD 0116 212 8120

# education otherwise

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

Our principal aims are to:

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

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

HELPLINE 0870 7300074

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

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