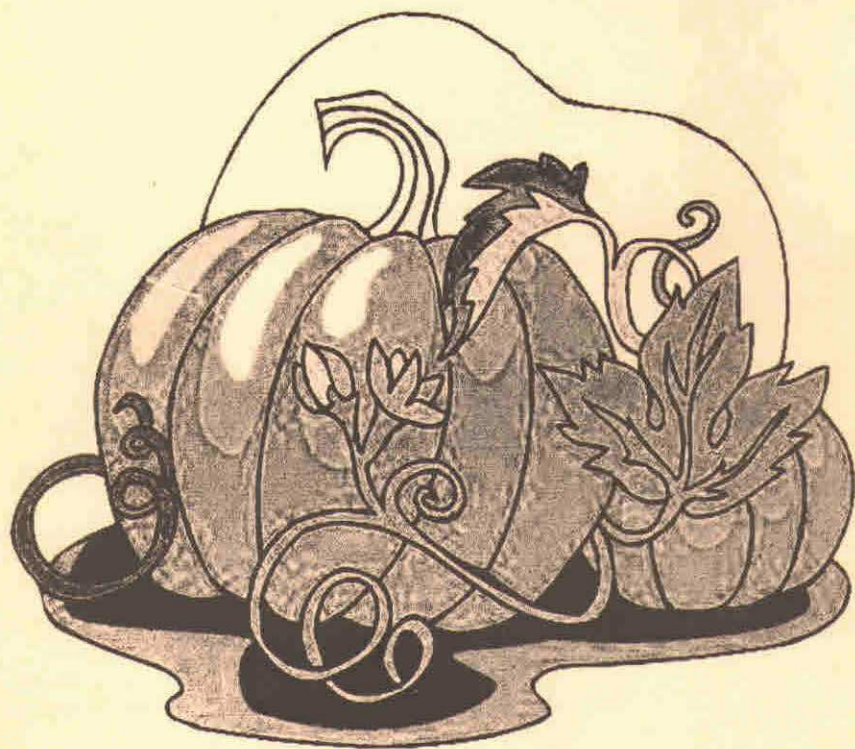


education otherwise



No. 160 - Oct 2004

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HOME EDUCATION IN THE NEWS

Vacant - volunteers please !!!

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DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS 1st November 2004

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). **Email contributions will be acknowledged within a few days. If you require a postal acknowledgement please enclose ssae.** If no acknowledgement is received, or in case of queries, please contact the NL co-ordinator (see inside back cover). *Please also ensure your EO membership is up to date.*

Please send contributions via the most appropriate section editor above.

DISCLAIMER

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CONTENTS

PHONE SERVICE	2
CLIQUES	3
HE NEWS/ NOTICES	4
ARCHIE	6
ARTICLES	
Diary of HE Nobody	7
Responses to.....	9
'Real Life' & Other Articles	13
ARCHIVES	20
COMPETITION	21
LETTERS	22
ADVERTISEMENTS	23
BOOK REVIEWS	24
E.O. ADVERTS	30
LOCAL CONTACTS/ADS	31
NOTICES	33
REGIONAL DIARY	35
BACK PAGE CONTACTS	40

CO-ORDINATORIAL

Hello again everyone – Welcome to Autumn's newsletter. Hope you will find it warm, comforting and full of nourishment! Maybe I should include a recipe for pumpkin soup? If you're not into pumpkins there's plenty more to get stuck into, so make a cuppa and let the kids educate themselves in a free range way, whilst you peruse....

Thanks to everyone who has contributed their views and stories and to the creative and admin team for volunteering their work.

Without volunteers Education Otherwise would grind to a halt and there are lots of opportunities for you to contribute; with a home-ed. story or useful tip, or in an administrative role as an organiser or fact finder - whatever is your 'thing', even if it's just a one-off contribution – we can all keep the ball rolling together.

Talking of togetherness, if you fancy a trip to Scotland, booking details for November's EO National Gathering are in, plus details of the Open Council Meeting at the same venue. Could there be snow for those dreaming of a white EO National Gathering?

You can have togetherness of the wrong kind though – I would like to remind those who organise group activities and meetings to avoid advertising exact venue times and details to the general public. As well as showing awareness of child-protection issues, you also have a duty to protect home-educators in your area from hecklers and unwanted attention by the LEA.

Fiona Stewart 2/9/04

cover pic: © '99-'04 www.barrysclipart.com

TELEPHONE ENQUIRIES SECRETARIES

I have been asked by Iris Harrison to tell those who may be interested, something of the Work that the enquiries secretaries do. I have been on the telephone helpline for over ten years, so I have a lot of experience in knowing how it all works and in the valuable work that all the volunteers do in this particular role. Education Otherwise is run by volunteer parents and there are so many quietly doing all kinds of things to help. I am proud to be associated with so many good people, many of whom I consider my friends and between us we all share something we believe in.

I and many others on the enquiry line, play an important role in that we are usually the first port of call for people. We normally only have contact with people who are not members. Calls are many and varied and it is normally quiet in holiday time. Once school returns after holidays the phone can ring almost non stop all day long. Some people leave it until after 9 am to ring but it is not unusual to receive calls at 8 am from an anxious mother. Each call can last an hour or more and I am often still taking or receiving calls after 10pm at night.

Many people who ring have little, if any idea of the law. Many are desperately worried about their situation. Some parents have made so many enquiries, made so many phone calls, all of which have come to nothing. This one call to E.O. is usually the lifeline they have been longing for. Each call is unique and each call is very important. Some calls are urgent: sometimes a call can save the life of a child.

People ring up for all kinds of reasons but by far the biggest reason for calls and the biggest reason for taking a child out of school involves bullying. Children are verbally, physically and sexually abused at school. I have heard all these things so very many times and many stories that I have heard will live with me for the rest of my life. Self harming, nightmares, food refusal, bedwetting, attempted suicides. So many stories I have heard over the years. The children, whose lives have been so damaged, and their parents, will often never completely recover. Many children have seen psychologists, often who try to persuade them that they are some kind of problem and ought to do the decent thing and return to school! As though it were their own fault. There is never any acceptable reason for bullying and changing school does not usually solve anything. Children are not just hurt by other children but sometimes by teachers or other adults, who are supposed to be caring for them.

There are thousands of children in school who are happy, who love school, and none of us who care about children have any quarrels with that. It is lovely to hear and of course happy children equals happy mothers. However, there are thousands of children in school feeling miserable; of course they are learning nothing except how they are being betrayed by the very people who claim to love them. At least 16 children die through suicides caused by bullying in British schools every year and it breaks my heart to hear of their suffering. Childhood should be the happiest time of our lives, but for many thousands it is not. Some children choose death instead of school.

The calls I receive today are similar to the calls I received more than ten years ago and it is dreadful to think that things do not seem to have improved at all. To be a child, sometimes a very young child, and to be held down to be punched, kicked, spat upon and urinated on. To be stripped of your clothing in the middle of the playground, to be humiliated, often by teachers.

AWFUL, AWFUL, AWFUL. I have heard of all of these things. It is a national disgrace.

Mary Thompson, Manchester

CLIQUINESS AT HOME ED MEETINGS

There has recently been some discussion on the EO general list about cliquiness at meetings, which makes some parents and children feel bullied, and some instances where people seem to be using the 'different lifestyle choice' to condone bullying. There are also groups where those of a different religion are 'frozen out'.

Several people have said that they stay away from meetings because their children were bullied enough at school and they were not prepared to put up with it at meetings. Some don't even talk about HE in their area because they don't want to recommend their HE group due to the behaviour of some of the children.

Although there have always been some difficulties of this nature, it seems that more people are now willing to talk about it and try to tackle the problem at source. The list discussion seems to have covered some of the same ground as the recent series of 'bad press for Home Ed' series of contributions to the newsletter.

EO does of course already have policy about Child Protection and Equal Opportunitites (see Handbook pp 37-41) which states our basic principles that everyone should be treated with respect and dignity; that there should be no abuse, exploitation, scapegoating, ridiculing or bullying; and no discrimination or judgement on different lifestyles or beliefs. It is suggested that where any incident takes place that calls these principles into question, those involved should be encouraged to discuss the issues raised in a non-judgmental context. However, it has now been suggested that EO should draw up more detailed guidelines for behaviour at EO meetings, to show how these policies may be applied in practice.

Some local EO/HE groups already have such guidelines – HEDGE's can be seen on their website www.hedge-education.org.uk (or I can supply a paper copy on receipt of small s.a.e. – Anne). If you have an interest in the smooth running of local groups, perhaps you would have a look at these to see if you feel something of the sort could be useful for EO as a whole, and/or contact either of us with your experiences – or your own group's constitution or behaviour guidelines. If the idea seems to meet with general approval, we will draft guidelines for consideration.

Jacqui Houlding and Anne Rix (Council)



HOME EDUCATION RESEARCH NEWS

Paula Rothermel (author of the PhD thesis 'Home Education: Aims, Practices and Outcomes' - available from EO Publications) attended the EECERA (European Early Childhood Research Association) annual conference in Malta at the end of August in order to present a paper on home education. She has also organised a symposium on home education at the BERA (British Education Research Association) in Manchester, attracting contributors from Canada, Norway and Germany, as well as three from the UK. Paula has also been editing a special edition of an academic journal on home education with contributions from around the world.

Publication is expected to be some time this autumn.

Paula has now worked as an expert witness in several cases, and has undertaken Expert Witness training; it appears that Judges prefer to listen to EWs who have attended Law Society approved courses. She should now or shortly be on the Law Society list of approved EWs (she is already in the British Psychological Society EW directory).

Iris Harrison, Worcestershire

STOP PRESS Thursday 2nd September 04

Paula was today interviewed (from Malta!) as part of the BBC Radio 4 'You and Yours' programme. She gave authoritative backup, based on her substantial in-depth research, to the contributions from several home educators who were also interviewed. This was particularly valuable with regard to refuting the 'socialisation' issue raised by the programme, as well as confirming the level of achievement common in home education. Thank you Paula! And thanks also to the several EO members, including currently and formerly home-educated youngsters, who contributed to the programme - you all gave a clear, exciting and positive view of your experiences. Well done!

Anne Rix

Media Database

EO maintains a database of people who are willing to speak with the media. Currently only new members are being placed on this database as the renewal form does not ask this question. If you are an existing EO member and would be willing to speak with the media at some time, please contact Jacqui Houlding at jc_houlding@onetel.com or 01925 654856. You will be asked for your name and address, your telephone number and email address if you have one, the ages of your children who are schooled and the ages of children who are home educated.

If you have any specific area of interest within home education such as bullying, or travellers etc, please let us know this as the database is used to match people with requests from the media where possible.

Do you pay your Membership Renewal by Bankers Order?

We are very grateful for the continuing and valuable support of those members who pay their subscription by bankers order. However, the subscription rate is now £20 per annum, (concessionary rate £15 per annum).

I am encouraging all members who pay their membership fees in this way to check that they are paying the current rate. If you need to change your subscription the easiest way to do this is to telephone or write to your bank and ask them to increase your annual Banker's order to the new rate.

If you prefer to set up a new banker's order then contact me and I'll send you a form. Should you have any queries, contact me, Lynda Hitchman at database@education-otherwise.org

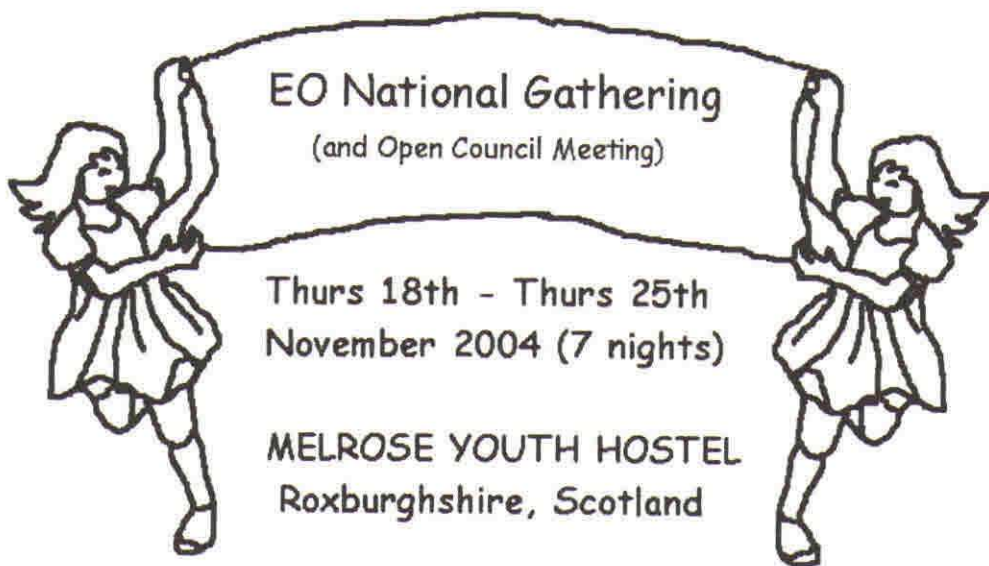
My phone number and address are inside back cover under Membership.

**Open Council Meeting of
Education Otherwise Association Ltd**
On Saturday **20th November** 2004 from 10am
At Melrose Youth Hostel, Roxburghshire, Scotland

All members of E.O. are welcome to attend.

For copies of or contributions to the agenda,
please send SAE or return label with attached postage stamp to;

The Chair EO, Julie Ridley,
32 Cheltenham Road, Chorlton, Manchester, M21 9QN



South of Edinburgh, west of Lindisfarne and
on the Southern Upland Way long distance footpath
50 min drive to lovely beaches & St. Abbs marine reserve
A chance to meet with other home educators from far afield.

Social events and discussion groups welcomed.

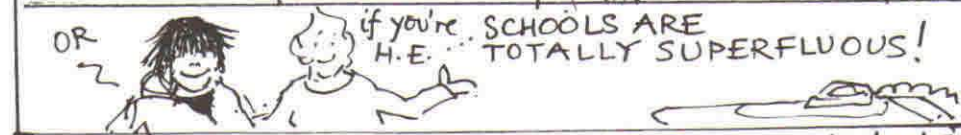
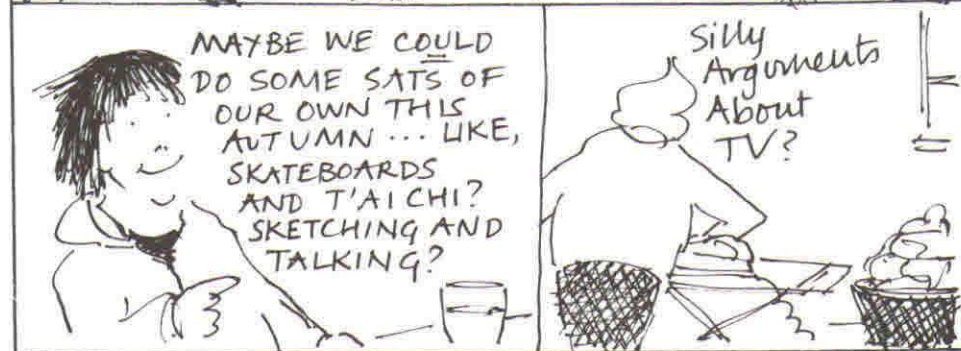
Costs to include all food and accommodation.

Day visitor rates and family rooms available.

For booking forms and information
send SAE or return label with attached postage stamp to,
EO Gathering, 17 Maes Ingli, Newport, Pembrokeshire, SA42 OTE

Educating Archie

testing testing
by SEG



It's estimated that a year of school life is taken up by tests

Diary of a Home Educating Nobody!

Ross Mountney

The children have been doing some great stuff lately!

I thought I'd tell you that because I am conscious that I have described a good many tantrums and thought you'd like a change!

It's brilliant; Home Education! When it goes well, that is. When the day runs smoothly, when there's no shouting, conflict, name calling, frustration - and that's just me I'm talking about! Yes - it's brilliant when I see the children getting on with things they have chosen to do that stretch their minds and their skills, that fall into place for them instead of falling apart. When I see them using skills that I thought they'd never attain. Or reaching an understanding that at one point seemed impossible. Doesn't happen often - but brilliant when it does! You'll no doubt recognise that rare kind of atmosphere that descends over the house when everyone is busy, involved, and enjoying what they're doing and you didn't even have to threaten them with the broomstick - they got on with it on their own. (Only joking about the broom by-the-way!)

I can tell when it's working well because it is a moment when they are independently busy; they are not requiring my assistance or even my attention. They're just so totally absorbed that I don't exist. For a moment anyway. So I stand back - making a concerted effort not to interfere, and ask myself how this moment arrived.

Was it because I taught them well? Was it because I know some magical parenting strategies? Was it because I've given them lessons in studying? Or perhaps it was because they are just such contented and motivated children? (I wish...!)

No. I've decided it was none of those things. It was nothing to do with lessons, strategies, or anything I may have done or taught them. I've come to the conclusion that it was simply because they've had the opportunity to do things badly.

Now that may sound appalling to you. No one in their right mind ever gets anywhere doing things badly, do they? Consider this:

My first child was in school for four years. Being a sensitive and conscientious child she absorbed the hidden messages that for any of her work to be worthwhile in anybody's eyes it had to be correct. It had to be done in a certain way. It had to be produced in the way the teacher approved of. It had to meet all the requirements laid down in the prescribed curriculum. Now, conscientious or not, any child would soon sense this kind of pressure to do things right and there is usually an enormous amount of pressure in schools to do just that; to work in one particular kind of way. And pressured is exactly how she felt. She felt judged. She felt stressed. She felt burdened with guilt and shame if it was wrong. And terrified of not getting that all important teacher approval. Until she eventually became terrified of having a go.

Before she started school she loved drawing. A few years of trying to draw it right, of being told that if her drawing didn't look exactly like a particular thing (at seven years of age) then it was no good, destroyed that love. Even now, six years later, the legacy of that regime means that drawing can still reduce her to tears. She never draws for fun or from imagination any more.

In some schools even guesses have to be right. Being right is the rule. That is the only way to get ahead. Doing things wrong is packed with shame.

Her sister, who only did the first reception year in school, has a completely different approach. She hasn't been shamed by being wrong. She has only ever been encouraged to have a go whatever the outcome. She has been shown that whatever the outcome there is something to be learned from it. Therefore she has the confidence to make guesses, try alternatives, break rules, find ways forward whether they be right or not. Because once you've had a go, made mistakes, you can then see the way forward. You make lots of fascinating discoveries. You learn heaps more than when on the straight and correct path. This was all proved to me by a CD-ROM the children like playing with. It's a maths one with a kind of adventure that takes the player through various mathematical concepts to gain the golden coins. It is not something I've ever considered to be particularly valuable, but they like playing it and that's what it's been for. Meanwhile some of the maths seeps in. One day my eldest said, 'It's not fair. How come she can get to the end and get all the golden coins when I can hardly get past the first hurdle? And she's three years younger than me!' I thought about how they both worked it out. Then I realised. 'It's only because she is prepared to do it wrong!' I said. 'She makes guesses. She has a go at anything. She clicks any old answer until she gets through. She makes lots of mistakes. That's how she does it. That's how she learns. YOU will only ever put in an answer if you're sure it's right. So if you're not right you're stuck!'

We talked a lot more about right and wrong. About the value of making mistakes and that there's no shame attached. How mistakes can eventually sort out the right answer for you. About just having a go - whatever. And now she has a new task to do in her week. As well as her other artwork she likes to do, I've suggested she put aside time to draw badly! We had a good laugh over that! But it is serious. It is seriously sad that our learning culture puts so much emphasis on always being right, consequently inhibiting valuable learning. Being brave enough to be wrong sometimes takes our children forward into more diverse learning. It also gives them the confidence they need to tackle anything - even when it's going to take several attempts to get it right.

Giving our children confidence is the greatest thing we can do for them. That's why the children have produced so much good stuff lately. It's nothing I've taught them. It's just that their confidence in 'having a go' - even if they do badly at first - is growing!

IN REPLY TO KATIE MORLEY

I have not been home educated all my life, in fact only for four years. I suppose that makes me a newcomer to the fabulous world of EO. Four years may seem like a small space of time to have been home educated but it doesn't feel like that; it felt completely natural from the day I left school.

I'm 16 now and this September I start at my local college. I haven't done any GCSEs; I never wanted to. I never saw any need for doing them because I never thought I'd want to go to college. But last year the idea came up, I thought about it and I decided it was something I wanted to do. While I was deciding, I only discussed the subject with my Mum and home educated friends; I didn't want outside influences telling me it was the right thing to do. When the open day at college came around I went with a friend's family. I wanted to go on my own; to talk to the tutors on my own; to present myself as the independent individual I hope I am. I talked to the tutors instead of having them talk at me; their responses were good. Two tutors told me they would be happy to have me in their class, another told me to tell the college what I was doing and not let them argue about it. Very good advice. We requested an early interview as I wanted to know whether or not I would be allowed in as soon as possible. At the interview I had my Mum with me, which was a good thing as their negative attitude to someone who didn't have GCSEs, or seem to want to do them, put me on my guard. At first they told me I should do GCSEs but they had no chance!

One of the main reasons for going to college was to meet more people my own age. As everyone knows, with home education you have plenty of friends, of all different ages. This is NOT a bad thing. But that was my reason for going to college, so I wasn't going to do GCSEs with schoolies mostly a year younger than me. Plus I have never felt any need to do GCSEs and as it turned out I didn't need them anyway.

The interview didn't go smoothly. We argued with the administrator; we argued with the head of the literature department (this being my most 'academic' subject). I was told to write an essay on the tragedy of Romeo and Juliet. I did this. I got into college. Doing or not doing GCSEs in an incredibly personal thing. If you don't want to do them, because of the unfair world in which we live in where people are judged by pieces of paper, not their own talent or personality, you have got to be prepared to argue a lot - with everyone, because for some reason GCSEs have a very loyal following. If taking a GCSE is something you want to do then it's a brilliant thing but I think it is horrible that people think them necessary.

Who knows whether I will leave college after a week, two weeks or stay for the whole two years? I don't. But I will always have the fact that I was judged by my own abilities and that, for me, is a much greater achievement than 10 GCSEs. In Katie Morley's letter she says how she thinks home education is geared for younger children. Since I wasn't home educated as a young child from my own experience I feel home education is a wonderful thing for anyone of any age, I don't believe it stops at any age either. My life changed so much for the better when I came out of school. I got to know myself again - someone I had lost in school. I met some fabulous people who have had such an incredible influence on my life. All I can do is thank my beautiful mother for taking me out of school in the first place. I preach to everyone about the fabulous world that is home-ed; taxi drivers, shop assistants, people I meet on trains, ticket collectors - everyone. I'm very lucky.

Amie Borthen

(Note from Amie's mum...)

Amie came out of school on the last day of the December term 1999 and never went back. A new millennium, a new start. I have benefited so much through home education. Not only have I got my happy daughter back, I have made a lot of friends and am able to 'give a little back' by being a part of the EO helpline. I have also learnt, academically, so much more than I ever learnt in school. I feel I have been the privileged one to be given the chance to home educate and hope that others enjoy their home educating experience as much as I have. As a single parent on benefits who also has MS, I want people to appreciate that anyone can successfully home educate, no matter what their circumstances; it just takes determination.

Jo and Amie Borthen, Exeter
email: jo4eo@aol.com

CHILD BENEFIT POST-16

This became a problem after my son dropped out of a College course when he was 17 - I felt obliged to report this change of circumstances, and was promptly asked to return my Child Benefit Book. With help from Citizens Advice, I looked up the law as stated in CPAG (Child Poverty Action Group) Handbook and found that there is a clause which covers this situation:

"If a child of 16 or over ... is being educated elsewhere (such as at home), the decision maker may only recognise the education if s/he is satisfied that the education was being provided in the same way before the child reached 16."

I decided it was worth a go, and wrote the following letter to the Child Benefit Office:

Dear Sir or Madam

(Child's name) d.o.b. 21-05-85, CHB no. XX XX XX X

I write with respect to the form you sent in response to my telephone enquiry around Easter, and your subsequent telephone call, in order to clarify the situation with regard to my son's education.

Between the ages of 9 and 16 my son's education was home-based and autonomous. He then decided that he wished to have some formal certification of his achievements, and applied for a GNVQ course in ICT at *(Local Tertiary)* College. The normal course entrance requirements are 5 GCSEs at grade C or above; my son had taken none, and gained entry by interview. The course was not exactly what he would have liked to do, and covered many areas in which he was already proficient from his own autonomous studies, but was the nearest available locally to his career aims. Although he found the college atmosphere stressful and many of the classes tedious, he persevered in order to gain the qualification and achieved a Distinction at the end of the year.

The college then persuaded him to register for a two-year B.Tec. course, starting in September 2002, and although he (and I) had some misgivings about the suitability of this to his educational needs, he decided to give it a go. Unfortunately, it proved even more irrelevant to his career aims than we had feared, which became a cause of significant stress. Consequently, his attendance at college became sporadic and ceased entirely at Easter this year.

My son has reverted to autonomous, self-directed study for several hours a day, and his education is therefore continuing, as before, on a home-education basis. We are investigating the possibility of enrolling him on a distance-learning course which is more appropriate to his educational requirements than those offered by local colleges.

Yours faithfully,

Signature

Name

Their response was to send form CBC/FTE4, which I filled out as follows:

Why do they not go to school, college or similar educational establishment?

Irrelevant and stressful (as explained in my letter of 19th May – extra copy attached)

On what date did they last go to School or College? 11 April 2003

On what date did the education at home start? July '94 – Sept. '01.; Resumed 12 April '03

How many hours of study do they do at home each week? Approx. Ave. 20 hrs.

When do you expect them to stop getting education at home? 21.07.2004

(i.e. end of summer term following 19th birthday)

What subjects are they studying? Computer programming, maintenance and construction

Are they studying for a qualification? No

Do they receive personal tuition by a tutor in your home? sort of Yes ... self-tuition using online tutorial resources as needed for autonomous self-directed study, as prior to college attendance

List the subjects: HTML, Web Design

(N.B. Son confirmed he could provide URLs as evidence if needed)

(all other Qs answered NO)

It worked! My Child Benefit book was received back shortly thereafter (including a lump sum for the arrears); total time taken approx 2 months, but worth a bit of letter-writing. Others might be able to adapt this to suit their own circumstances.

Anne Rix, Devon.

GCSE EXAM CENTRES

EO has received the following invitation:

"Christian Education in Deeside have decided to set up a centre in Rochdale which will allow home educators to sit International O levels, GCSEs and International A levels.

It will be possible to sit exams from Summer 2005, but the agreement we have with Cambridge will be that candidates will become members and will therefore be able to sit exams at our centre.

They will not in effect be classed as private candidates.

Candidates will still be responsible for preparing themselves for the exam. The centre is being run on a non profit making basis and anyone will be able to use the centre.

The centre will be located in Rochdale and it is hoped that costs will come down as more parents use the centre.

We are a group of home educators who feel this will provide an invaluable service to the Home Education community. It has grown out of our own need to access a centre for our own children.

If anyone is interested please e-mail me: deevilla1@aol.com
If anyone is interested in sitting exams in 2005, you need to be registering as soon as possible."

In addition to the above, the GCSE page on the EO website has been updated with additional venues for sitting the IGCSE examinations run by EdExcel. These can be seen at <http://www.education-otherwise.org/Links/Resources-Qualifications/GCSEs.htm>

If anyone knows of any other venues where this examination can be sat, please advise *Geraldine Adams or Sarah Cook (back page GCSE contacts) or Jacqui Houlding so that the website can be updated.*

National Trust for Scotland Concessions

In the August newsletter we reported that families could join the National Trust as 'an educational group' at a special rate of £15 (prebooking necessary and during term time only). This **IS** correct, however it transpires that this applies to membership of the National Trust for England and Wales (NT) and **NOT** to membership of the National Trust for Scotland (NTS). Although just to confuse matters, as they have reciprocal agreements, an NT educational group could prebook a visit to an NTS property!

National Trust for Scotland have been in touch and they will be happy to give 'small educational group' membership to a local home education group if they receive a formal letter from the group asking to join. This costs £20, access is **NOT** restricted to term time (as in England and Wales) and prebooking is **NOT ALWAYS** necessary (but best to check with individual properties). They do not currently have a concessionary category for individual home-ed families. See their web site for more info : www.nts.org.uk

A local home-ed group wishing to join should write to National Trust for Scotland, Membership Services Dept. Wemys House, 28 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh EH2 4ET
Tel: 0131 243 9300

REAL LIFE

(something the National Curriculum doesn't cover)

We are new to the adventure of home educating. I won't bore you with too many details of yet another "How we got into Home Ed," story, but I do feel that just a little background would give some flavour.

It happened to us eight months ago, two days into the January term, when my ten-year-old, visually disabled daughter lay in my lap sobbing and pleading with me never to send her back to school. The only thing that I could do to console her was to give her the promise she wanted. Six years in mainstream with little support had taken its toll. She is a bright intelligent child who could no longer cope with the social exclusion and bullying from her so-called peers. A month later our twelve-year-old daughter had a run of ill health. It turned out she (a top set student) was suffering from stress and struggling with the madness of secondary school. A month after this we attended our eight-year-old's parents' evening. Her teacher informed me that he thought it was likely that our youngest daughter was innumerate and he didn't have the time to teach her in a way she would understand. He suggested we helped her at home. So we did. By April all three girls were deregistered and so much happier! We are lucky, I am a rare beast inasmuch as I was already an "at home mum", so no job to give up. We already had a "lady what does" to help me look after our three storey Edwardian madhouse, not because we are loaded but because I, too, am visually disabled and it takes me forever to do house work. Incidentally, my visual disability gives me a unique understanding of the challenges my ten-year-old faces on a daily basis.

During the first few months I read everything about home education that I could put my hands on and then some. We soon found there is no right way to home educate, just do it the way it suits your family. So, there we were, slightly shell-shocked, but with three happy children, all doing very well and enjoying what they are doing. My office (my place of peace and quiet where I could hide and do what I do) became the resource centre and now is bursting at the seams with books of every sort, two computers, videos, arts and crafts stuff and my sewing corner, not to mention a Braille writer, a talking book machine and the second TV, plus a big squashy sofa. We had fairies running about for a week or so; they even went to the shops and library! We had our own weather watchers who would run out into the garden in all weathers to check the temperature. We even started to publish our own family newsletter, which runs into about eight pages, and has a print run of approaching thirty! Then one evening in May, World War II broke out. We gathered the children in my husband's office and listened to Neville Chamberlain's radio broadcast declaring war on Germany. Later that same night (11.30 pm to be exact) we were woken from sleep by an air raid warning. Sirens ringing in our ears we woke the children and took three sleepy girls and our eighteen-year-old son (he was home on leave from the RAF?) out to the air raid shelter. That's where we stayed for almost an hour listening to bombs dropping all around us and people's wartime experiences until we heard the "all clear". For a week we lived as if in wartime Britain with rationed food and daily shopping trips. (I spent so much time in the kitchen doing real cooking!) No computers or TV - and yes, even when the children were in bed we grown-ups didn't have the TV! All the board games had the dust blown off them and

a great deal of reading was done. We had our fair share of air raids too! Then came VE day! What a relief, welcome back Pizza and frozen chips! But we enjoyed it and plan to do it again.

Then arrived the builders! Back in January we had got planning permission to build an annex on the back of our house. Yes a granny flat! It wasn't just a case of building onto the back; it involved the back being remodelled and would mean we would get a brand new kitchen/dinning room as well. "What a shame!" I hear you all cry. We decided to drop a gear on the "education" front and let the girl's coast. In reality we stopped, they didn't! Phase one was demolition. The girls delighted in watching as the outbuildings were pulled down brick by brick, and were fascinated to see the huge washhouse chimney left standing on its own while our builders carefully assessed the safest way to bring it down without dropping it onto our neighbour's extension. There were cheers and squeals as the chimney first wobbled, then was pushed and finally gave in and fell gracefully into the, by now, huge pile of rubble below. The girls helped stack the old bricks ready for re-use, then calculated how many there were in each stack. They watched as foundations were dug, cement was poured and walls built. They asked endless questions about everything! All praise to our builders who answered all of them with good heart. They watched from outside, with their noses pressed up against the window, as two feet of earth was dug out of the back room floor. Then tried to calculate how many loads of concrete would be needed to fill it.

When it came to planning the kitchen the girls had their say too. They wanted a kitchen that firstly was safe for every one to use, but mostly it had to have a place where they could all work and learn what we in this house call "living skills". "Twelve weeks!" our builder said, and much to our amazement that is how long it took. The girls coped with all the mess, noise, dust and even a temporary kitchen in the garden for a day or two. They have talked the ears off the four men who became a real part of this mad family. I am sure I have the only ten-year-old who could tell you how it was all done and an eight year old who could lay bricks and even tile a bathroom. As for our twelve year old, well she watched from her bedroom window convinced that her parents were truly barking mad.

Chatting with another mum made me ask myself a question: what do we really think about home education? She was saying with relief how glad she would be when her little darlings returned to school. Then she looked at me with sympathy in her eyes and patted my hand, saying "But, you poor thing, you can't say that, can you?" I smiled and thought to myself; no it's you that is the poor thing. I'm not running about like a thing possessed, looking for the best deals on school uniforms. I won't be having the morning trauma hour trying to get three reluctant children out of the door on time. I won't be planning my day around the 3.15 scrum at the school gates and having to play skittles with the traffic. I won't be running myself ragged helping confused children with homework that had to be in yesterday while trying to prevent a television war from breaking out in the living room. I will instead have watched, as my little darlings learn in their individual ways and be creative as only children can. I have the pleasure of a whole new relationship with my children and as a family we have grown. Our lives have changed dramatically and for the better.

© Janine Blecker Davis August 2004

ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR - ANOTHER VIEW

While I agree to some extent with what has been said about HE groups, museum visits and the trouble that some people can cause, I also think there is another side to the story. Sometimes it is the museum or workshop leaders who are at fault, not us. I think home-ed organisers sometimes may be too quick to accept blame for a group's behaviour. We do this because we often feel that we are 'odd' or that we have to justify ourselves, or be even better behaved than the mythical school party we may carry in our heads.

The Otherwise Club has suffered several times from workshop leaders and 'educational establishments' that do not like children who are actually interested in the subject which they are supposed to be expert in. Sometimes, many times, the children and young people are more knowledgeable about the subject than the leader, which quickly becomes apparent through their questions. Nor do many like the fact the children ask questions at all.

Home education and home educating groups often get blamed for other issues that may happen to a group. For example we were asked to fill in a feedback form about our day at one outing. The day consisted of an interactive historical drama in the morning and a workshop about the historical period in the afternoon. It was obvious to all, adults and children, that the afternoon workshop leaders had been brought in, given a script to memorise and did not know the answers to almost all of the questions the children asked, although they were very pleasant. I stated this on the feedback form. The next time I went to book a workshop with this church I was told home educators were no longer welcome to these workshops because the day was obviously too easy for us. I argued and eventually was told that we were one of only two groups who had made negative comments on the feedback form. I asked if the other negative comments came from home educators. No they hadn't. I asked if she was now going to ban all schools from the workshops, as there had been a problem. At this she said we could come if we wanted.

But I don't want to go where we are not wanted. There are plenty of workshops around (we are in London), although we love the historical drama group and have done every workshop they have since they started. They love our enthusiasms and us. It's a shame.

If there has been a problem with a trip it is important to probe the museum or venue to find out exactly what the issues are. It may be easy to solve and nothing to do with home education at all. If it is to do with an issue specific to home educators, the group can then make an informed decision about whether it is worth adhering to the 'rules' of the museum, or not going again. Don't assume you've done something wrong. It may be plain old prejudice.

It is up to the HE'ers organising the trip to look into their own hearts each time there is an incident and make sure they feel that the HE group was at fault and not the museum. It is all too easy for us to fall into the trap of seeing ourselves as the oddballs that have to be apologetic for our behaviour rather than the educational trailblazers that we are. If a museum makes demands that home educators are not able to abide by, the organiser should, in my opinion, explain politely but forcefully why it is not possible for us to comply.

If they threaten to stop HE'ers going to the museum so be it. We must not be blackmailed into behaviour that does not suit us.

Leslie Safran Barson, The Otherwise Club, London

EXAM-FREE ALTERNATIVES TO GCSE

Being the mother of a very bright and computer literate son who has been diagnosed with Asperger's, I have often wondered how he will get qualifications when he is oppositional-defiant, hates to write, and can't sit in a chair without a great deal of humming, operatics and fidgeting - not helpful qualities for sitting 2-hour exams, especially in a room full of strangers who are trying to concentrate!

In recent years the Open University have produced an expanding range of 'mini' courses, taking only a few months to complete by correspondence, very reasonably priced and well presented, with NO EXAM! I'm on my fifth one and am very impressed with the quality of the materials and their content.

Lamenting the fact that my son would have to wait until he was 18 before he could take advantage of these short courses, I was told by a member of OU staff that they do admit under-18s in special circumstances. Oh joy! Problem solved - an exam-free qualification which my son could use to gain university entrance, should he choose to pursue that avenue in life.

EXCEPT - on making further enquiries I found that 'special circumstances' only applied to bright school children. The Open University - pioneer of home study - was totally baffled by the notion that home-educated children were in existence and that they might benefit from the same opportunity to study as those in schools!

Having been passed from department to department and back again, I eventually got to speak to a deputy regional director, in charge of the scheme for schools. Finally - someone who could give me a definitive answer? Ms M told me that she had never come across applications from home-educated children, but that they could of course apply.

The problem as she saw it was that there is no mechanism in place to assess the ability and maturity of home-educated children, whereas a school child would have references from their school. Apparently OU like to reassure themselves that adults and foreign students also have the necessary academic skills before enrolling on their courses, so this wasn't any denigration of teenage ability, rather, OU don't like to set someone up to fail. If a home-educated child already had an 'A' level, that would satisfy OU that they had study skills and motivation, but children on the school scheme do not need 'A' levels to apply. A school child will be interviewed by their school before applying to OU. Ms M was unsure of how a home-educated child could be similarly vetted.

The scheme for schools is called YASS (Young Applicants in Schools Scheme) - and your regional officer for administering the scheme would probably be the best person to speak to if you would like your teenagers to apply for these courses.

Phone the main office on 01908 274066 for information on who this would be in your area, or type 'addresses' into a search from their website: www.open.ac.uk.

Details of OU's short courses can be also be found on their website. There are a few in each subject area, particularly in science, the arts and technology (see 'where to start' in the menu for each area). In my opinion they are academically at GCSE 'A' level. What seems to worry Open University is that the value of their qualifications will be reduced if it's proved their courses are achievable by mere children. The director of students stressed that they were 'not an alternative to A levels.' He also feels it important that such arrangements remain the exception rather than the rule....Not very 'Open' in my opinion.

Fiona Stewart (acting NL co-ord)

Education Now is no more; long live Personalised Education Now!

A few members of *Education Otherwise* were also members of *Education Now*, so nothing that follows is news to them. For the majority, *Education Now*, after some 17 years of activity as a publishing co-operative and independent think-tank, has merged with the *Centre for Personalised Education Trust Ltd (CPE)* and the new entity will trade under the name ***Personalised Education Now (PEN)***. *The Centre for Personalised Education Trust*, a charitable company, limited by guarantee, was set up in 1996. (Charity number: 1057442)

The Trust exists to promote education based on **learner-managed learning**, using a flexible **catalogue curriculum**, located in a **variety of settings**, and operating within a **framework of democratic values and practices**. The role of educators moves from being predominately *'the sage on the stage'*, to mostly *'the guide on the side'* - an approach very familiar with many EO members, which is why the work of CPE and EO overlaps so much.

The vision of **PERSONALISED EDUCATION NOW** includes:

- a focus on the uniqueness of individuals, of their learning experiences and of their many and varied learning styles
- recognition that learners themselves have the ability to make both rational and intuitive choices about their education
- advocacy of co-operative and democratic organisation of places of learning
- acceptance of Einstein's view that *imagination is more important than knowledge* in our modern and constantly changing world
- adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a recognition of the limitations on choice in education.

PERSONALISED EDUCATION NOW maintains that people learn best:

- when they are self-motivated
- when they take responsibility for their own lives and learning
- when education is seen as a life-long process

Of course, each of these statements is capable of expansion and exposition, so we have plans to publish a book soon undertaking this task. This will be published by *Educational Heretics Press*, who are sponsoring CPE by donating any surpluses it makes to the Trust.

The start of Autumn will see a new journal appear with the name of ***Personalised Education***, replacing *Education Now's 'News and Review'* which ran for 44 issues. Those directly involved with its publication have changed their roles from their previous involvement in publications. Peter Humphreys becomes Managing Editor, Chris Shute becomes Copy Editor, and Roland and Janet Meighan will be assistant editors. As always, we invite contributions from members.

We believe that the new trading name is very significant at this moment in time with the government now giving some emphasis to **their** interpretation of *personalised learning*. The government's view seems to be summed up in the phrase *'teacher directed personalised learning with learner compliance and assistance'*, whereas our view is that it should be *'learner directed with adult support, assistance and advice when invited'*.

It is of course the difference between the Authoritarian approach, (*'you will do it our way - or else'*) and an Autonomous one, (*'I did it my way, though seeking help and support when necessary'*).

We already have institutions that work to the autonomous philosophy within a democratic value system. A prime example is the public library. Others are nursery centres, some schools and colleges, museums, community arts projects and home-based education networks. They work to the principle of **'anybody, any age; any time, any place; any pathway, any pace'**. Such institutions are learner-friendly, non-ageist, convivial not coercive and capable of operating as community learning centres which can provide courses, classes, workshops and experiences as requested by local learners.

Our Home-based Education Research (www.homeeducationresearch.org)

Mike and Jan Fortune-Wood, our research officers, continue to work with great commitment on the research project, which is of central concern to CPE since home-based education is one of the few arenas where personalised education can be found at present. The purposes of such sustained and high-quality research remain as ever, to both inform and defend. Data from the first and second questionnaires is now published on the website. A book will be published soon by *Educational Heretics Press*.

Although the concerns of EO and CPE overlap, CPE is independent of the home-based education community. So its research also has the status of being independent. We have to go a long way to catch up with the USA, however, where there is a long-standing *National Home Education Research Institute*, with a journal, the *Home Education Researcher*, now into volume 14. We often have to quote USA research in our work and this is not as strong a position as having sustained, regular UK research available.

A crucial factor in the continuation of this important research is, of course, funding. The funds raised so far are quickly running out. Fund raising is both time consuming and disheartening! We welcome any ideas from members that may help in this effort. Mike has launched an e-mail appeal to home-based educators – please help if you can. We believe that the experiences of home-based educators need to be properly recognised and supported as examples of learner-managed learning, the use of the catalogue curriculum and flexibility in learning locations.

Contacts:

Personalised Education Now (PEN) trading name for *The Centre for Personalised Education Trust*,
Office: 113 Arundel Drive, Bramcote, Nottingham NG9 3FQ Telephone/fax 0115 925 7261
Educational Heretics Press - at the same address - and at www.edheretics.gn.apc.org
Home Education Research Project - see www.homeeducationresearch.org or contact PEN office.

Council Tax Update

Or – did we ever get what is due to us....

In the August newsletter I described my struggle to retain the 25% 'single adult discount' for my home educated son, up to his 19th birthday (in May), which was eventually granted (the deciding factor apparently being that I was still in receipt of Child Benefit for him until then). I had been told that if he was on a low income I could apply for CT Benefit after that date. Had he been in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance, I would automatically have been awarded 25%. However, he still regards himself as being autonomously home educated and felt that he should not call on the state for a benefit he felt he wasn't morally entitled to ... sigh! Well, after providing lots of evidence of his lack of income, a good deal more letter writing and several telephone calls, I have at last been awarded CTB of 15%, backdated to his birthday (as the delays were on the Council's part). I queried why only 15% ... Answer:

"Council Tax Benefit Regulation 2 (3a), 54(1) sch 2 para 1(1), (2) states that if a claimant is not receiving Jobseekers Allowance or Income Support and gross income is under £144.00 per week, then 15% Second Adult Rebate is awarded."

So there you have 'chapter and verse' to quote if you're in a similar situation. Since £144 is about what one would take home for a week's full time work at National Minimum Wage, it's clearly designed to cover people on low earnings rather than nil - but at least it's something. He'll just have to do some extra lawn-mowing to make up the spare 10% ...

Anne Rix, Devon

MORE MATHS GAMES

Games to play with your child to help number awareness.

N.B. Children may play them on their own later, but your presence, support and active enjoyment are an important part of the process of 'demystifying' numbers and making them fun.

Games with playing Cards

Snap

Deal cards evenly between players. Each player has their share in a pile face-down (no peeping!). Take turns to take top card and place it face up in front of you on table. When two face-up piles have same number card on top (any colour) the first player to call 'snap!' takes both piles. Aim to collect all the cards!

Beggar-my-neighbour

Deal cards evenly between players. Each player has share in face-down pile (or in hand, but no peeping). First player places top card from hand face up in centre of table. If this is a number 2-10, next player takes a turn, placing card on top of first. Continue until a player places a Royal (Jack, Queen, King or Ace). Next player then has to 'pay' plain number cards as follows:

one card for a Jack; two cards for a Queen; three cards for a King; four cards for an Ace.

If all due are plain numbers, player who placed the Royal takes the whole pile; If a Royal comes up during 'payment' that becomes the new target to 'pay' for, and turn passes to next player. Aim to collect all cards (N.B. to parents – this game can go on for ages!)

Card Pairs

Shuffle the deck. Place cards face-down in rows and columns (dealer chooses how many rows and columns – odd ones just sit at the end). Take turns to choose any TWO cards and look at them – if you find a pair (two kings, two threes ...) keep the pair. If not, turn passes to next player. Anyone who finds a pair gets another turn. Aim to collect the most pairs. *(as a variation, one player tells another which cards to turn over).*

Score it

Remove picture cards (but leave ace in pack) shuffle and deal 3 to each player. Rest of deck placed face-down in centre. Each player takes a card from top of deck in turn. When a set of cards in hand totals 20 (a score) place that set face-up on table, and take another card from deck. Aim – to get rid of all cards in your hand (or have smallest total remaining) when deck used up.

Twenty Patience

N.B. although this is a Patience and can therefore be played alone, children will benefit and enjoy it more with an adult supporting (talking about what's going on, helping with adding up, giving hints ...).

Remove pictures (but leave in ace) and shuffle. Place cards one at a time, face up, in a row. When you see a set of consecutive cards that total 20, remove them and close up the gaps, then continue to add cards to the row one at a time, looking for new sets of 20. It doesn't matter how many or few cards make up the 20. Two tens would be the least number; the most would be? Aim to finish with as few cards as possible left in line.

Pontoon/Vingt-et-un/21

You don't have to gambol with money – use matchsticks or counters.

'Banker' shuffles pack and deals two rounds of cards (so each player has two cards) face down. Players look at their cards and make an initial 'bid' according to how likely they think they are to be able to get a set adding to exactly 21 (Jack, Queen, King each count as 10; Ace can be either 1 or 10). Dealer then offers players in turn an additional card. Players can opt to 'buy' another card (in which case the bid must be increased and the card is passed face down so others don't see it) or to 'twist' (no increase in bid, card passed face up) or to 'stick' (take no more cards). Continue until all players 'stick', then show hands. If your cards add to more than 21 you are 'bust' and you lose your bid. Player with highest score up to 21 wins all. If two or more hands equal 21 then a hand with only two cards (Picture + Ace) wins over a hand using more cards (e.g. 10, 8, 3); but a 'five-and-under' (5 cards still not over 21) is also good. As with all 'friendly' games, variations to rules may be agreed between players beforehand (Parents might wish to suggest simpler rules to start with).

Remember - the most important thing is to HAVE FUN with your family

Archives

Compiled by Sarah Guthrie

Extracts from the Summerhill Conference 'The Free Child' held in July 1999

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: '.....insists that children themselves are the subjects of rights. Those rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent. Governments cannot argue that the first priority is the availability and standards of provision. They must address the full range of principles embodied in the Convention. Human rights are not add-ons; luxuries to be provided when resources allow. They are integral to the very nature of education demanded by the Convention. It is important to stress that the promotion of their Convention rights is entirely compatible with the broader needs of society for a future generation of young people with their necessary academic skills and competence to participate in democratic society.But it does nevertheless require profound shifts in attitudes in the way education is delivered - in the underpinning philosophy and in the role that children are seen to play within the education system.'

(Gerison Lansdown, Director of the Children's Rights Office)

Biodiversity or monoculture:

'Around the democratic world politicians bemoan the substantial and growing disinterest of young people in mainstream political parties and processes and their alienation from and distrust of politicians themselves.... almost everywhere school systems have tended to be authoritarian; concerned predominantly with control, academic subjects and the transmission from teacher to pupils of quantities of nationally prescribed information.....with a dose of civics or 'citizenship' instruction added to the didactic curriculum brew. The evidence is clear and overwhelming that this is useless.

(Derry Hannam, Trainer in Education for Democratic Citizenship for Schools Councils UK and the Council of Europe)

Mental Health and the Free child:

'A healthy child often wishes to be alone. Healthy children think; they think intensely about many things. They ask questions which make sense,.....they like to give; they share their things with others if they feel so inclined....It is obviously very easy to get crossed lines on the matter of freedom and licence, particularly if one has nobody around to offer guidance and moral support....if you are going to allow your children freedom, you must allow them to be themselves; to be free within the bounds of your lifestyle. Obviously that doesn't mean that you will give them a licence to do exactly what they want to do at the expense of your own freedom.'

(Dorothea Fuckert MD)

The New Learning System

'Nowadays my thesis that compulsory mass schooling is obsolete meets less and less opposition. There is more shock, if not actual horror, however, at the proposal that the academic curriculum is also obsolete. Many parents are busy stoking up the expectations of their children, that pursuing grammar school type curriculum will get them jobs. They are misreading the sign. The sign is beginning to say, in Monopoly board game style, 'Go straight to obsolescence. Do not pass Go. Do not collect a job.'

(Roland Meighan)

COMPETITION PAGE

Hi all - Competition time again.....Closing date 31st October

This months quiz prize is a couple of EO 25th Anniversary mugs – collectors items!

The winner of last editions quiz is: Simon Hoggarth, Northampton, who wins an EO Hoodie.

We had many entries this time including one from France; keep trying you might be the next winner!

Answers to last quiz: 1. 116 years (1337-1453), 2. Ecuador, 3. Squirrel Fur, 4. 30 years, 5. An Envelope, 6. Towel, 7. Our Clothes, 8. Potatoes, 9. Your Temper, 10. Are you asleep?



Using these letters: AAADDEEEEEKSSSS

Fill in the gaps in the square so that all words read the same across and down

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R * * *
* * * *
* * * *
* * * K
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As usual address to send answers to:

EO Competition, 79 Cumberland Avenue, Cleveleys, Lancashire. FY5 2DS or if you prefer email to: tracysolooney@tiscali.co.uk

Don't forget to include your name, address, telephone number or email address
GOOD LUCK!



London Film Festival – Education Events Programme

(20 October - 4 November 2004) National Film Theatre, Belvedere Rd. London SE1

Over 40 events for education audiences at Key Stage 2 up to A level as well as for students and adult learners. All free film screenings and low-cost workshops and events are linked to the festival's programme of 200 new films from around the world. We have in the past welcomed home educated parents and children to a range of our formal and informal education events. For booking and vacancy details Tel: 020 7815 1392 or mail:

festival.education@bfi.org.uk

website: www.lff.org.uk

LETTERS

Property Wanted

We are a prospective HE Christian family and are looking to buy a moderately priced property in a village or small town with countryside in close proximity. Ideally we would need a good train/public transport system, access to HE families/activities and lively Christian worship.

If you live in such a community that is still reasonably priced and a pleasant place to live, any advice would be welcome. Please contact Sara (name & address supplied)
Tel:01584 891756

Contacts Wanted

Hi, I'm Rachael, Mum to 2 home-educated sons aged 14 and 12, one ill with CFS (Chronic Fatigue Syndrome). I have CFS/ME too. I am interested in contacting other home educators who have a son(s) around 12yrs old and who live within an hour of Haverhill (or Norwich area, as we are considering moving). I would appreciate any contact, especially from Jehovah's Witnesses as I am one. I will reply to everyone and could meet up?? Or if you'd like a penfriend, that would be fine too. Please contact Rachael Baldock, 11 Rye Court, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 8HS. rachbfine@btinternet.com

Help with research wanted

I'm researching the positive effects that autonomous education may have on children diagnosed with ADHD and similar difficulties. If you have any personal success stories to tell, I would love to include them in my work, in the hopes of helping the many desperate families out there struggling in mainstream education. Please contact Winnie Durdant-Hollamby (LC Sussex-East) Tel: 01342 826087
barry@artofchange.co.uk

New Group For Yate/ Chipping Sodbury

I am beginning to compile a list of contact details for families interested in forming a local group for the Yate/Chipping Sodbury area. We are near to Bristol, but many of us apparently don't get into the centre of Bristol for meetings and activities and would prefer something closer to home. My thought was to gather this info and then try to organize a place for meetings and see how it develops from there. If you would like to be added to this list and be notified when something is arranged, please contact me with your details (name, contact info, ages of children etc). You can email me at
DianeLovett@blueyonder.co.uk
or Tel: 01454-853455 or
P.O. Box 1859, Yate, Bristol
BS37 4YS. Thanks!

New Group Isle of Thanet, Kent

A new Home Educating support group has been set up in the Thanet area. Families from the Thanet and surrounding area will be warmly welcomed. The group has made links with local community groups to provide family fun activities. The group is able to organise something for all ages and abilities. For further info please Tel: Mrs Vanda Alexander
01843 842629.

Advertisements

To place: Adverts should normally be limited to 1/8 page or 50 words and sent to the NL Advertising Co-ord. (see inside front cover) but please send cheque payable to 'Education Otherwise' to Treasurer (see inside back cover).

Advertising Rates: *Non-members* – (subject to space and interest to members) £35 per issue (50 words)
Members (please give full contact details) – small items/notices, free; commercial enterprises, £25 per issue
NB: DEADLINE FOR ADVERT COPY AND PAYMENT – 1ST OF MONTH PRIOR TO ISSUE.

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REVIEWS

Willow Weaving by *Truus Stol and Janny Roelofsen*

Just in time for the new season of willow, this book is an excellent resource for families or EO groups. Its innovative and easy to follow willow weaving models can be made and enjoyed by all ages. The raw materials (wire and willow) should be cheap (even free) and easy to obtain. If you don't know anyone with willow and do not want to buy it then beg some cuttings and plant them now in a spare corner of your garden to get you a supply for next year. This book (including clear colour photos of the finished model) shows you how to make a super range of garden decorations; swans on a nest, Easter baskets, a dolphin in a hoop, a dog, a horse.... An excellent value book we will use time and again.

Sally Hall

£6.99 ISBN 1-84448-015-1 Search Press

Belonging by *Jeannie Baker*

We both loved this book. It is unusual in the way it is presented and it manages to get across important points without any text. This book tells the story of Tracy as she grows up from a baby, to having a child of her own. At the same time the importance of plants and wildlife is represented by the view from her bedroom window. When she is a baby the view out of her window is of a cement covered city, but by the time she has her own baby the view is full of plants and wildlife. The text at the back of the book explains the importance of belonging to a living home and community, leading to Tracy setting up her own local native plant business with her husband and child. I love the way this book is presented, it uses collage to relate the change in the environment to important points in Tracy's life. By doing this, the length of time it takes to create a change in the environment is illustrated. Rowan has picked the book up frequently and asked lots of relevant questions based on the themes of this book. We will be looking out for more books by this author.

Kathleen Smith with and Rowan (5)

£10.99 ISBN 07445-9227-5 Walker

I Took The Moon For a Walk

by *Carolyn Curtis and Alison Jay*

This book seemed more like a poem with illustrations added, rather than a story. It is about a boy who takes the moon for a walk through the countryside and a description of their journey. Neither Rowan or I found it particularly stimulating and it did not really catch our imagination. As Rowan also pointed out, the illustrations did not look like it was night-time either. The best and most useful part of the book were the pages at the back called *the mysterious moon*. These pages gave lots of facts about the moon including the different phases. Also the page on the *world at night* was interesting - showing how

different animals have adapted to the dark. Even with this though I do not think this book is particularly good value, which is a pity as we normally like Barefoot books.

Kathleen with Rowan (5)

£10.99 ISBN 1-84148-602-7 Barefoot Books

The White Rider by *Chris Priestley*

This book is a little better than its prequel, *Death and the Arrow*, as it is more of a gripping story to follow. It is London, 1716 and fifteen year-old Tom Marlowe, son of the owner of a printing shop becomes mixed in with suspicious circumstances involving his friend, Doctor Harker, his own father and the mysterious White Rider. This is a medium paced story with a fairly difficult-to-understand storyline. I recommend *The White Rider* to boys and girls aged around ten to thirteen. Out of ten I would probably give this eight.

James Baker (12)

£10.99 hb ISBN 0-385-60694-X Randon House

Heroes and Villains of History

These are colour and learn books introducing children to key figures from history. Amy and Izzy found the illustrations in these books unattractive. The text gave brief but accessible historical information relating to the person and events in their time, including a small section of less well known and amusing facts. Unfortunately we found neither the illustrations nor text engaging.

Julie Randall with Amy (8) and Izzy (6)

Colour of History

£2.99 each plus p & p of between £1 and £2 depending on the quantities ordered 01349 824459 - less for bulk

Chewing the Seatbelt by *Andrew Daddo*

This is a book of short stories about Fergus Arnold Kipper, an Australian boy. The stories are intended to be funny and they are about unusual things that happen to Fergus. The first is about trying to eat ice-cream and a Mars bar without making a mess in the back of a car. Some are funny but some are about Fergus doing bad things, like stealing. I don't like the fact it uses "Jesus" as a swear word. Some of the words it uses are Australian (ice-pole instead of ice-lolly) and I had to think about what they meant. The back cover is misleading: it suggests that the book is funnier than it actually is. My mum doesn't like the remote, traditional style of parenting that it portrays - *Just William* without the affection and humanity. If anyone else would like to read it, we'll happily pass it on.

James La Fleur (9)

£4.99 ISBN1-84428-648-7 Walker Books

Zak by Bridget Belgrave

The first half of the novel sets the scene and introduces the reader to Zak. He is an unusual boy; he can fly and has conversations with animals. On his first day of school, after several bad experiences, he flies out of the window and never returns to school. The second half tells of Zak's adventures when he goes on holiday with his family. The first half of the book is slow but by half way the novel becomes very exciting and we both found the book hard to put down towards the end. This is a fantastic book for those who feel that they are different from most people.

Anthea (?) with Clare Crane

£4.99 ISBN 0-9539563-3-4 www.zak.the.book.com
or www.liferesources.co.uk Tel 01865 559540

The Gladiators from Capua

by Caroline Lawrence

Flavia, Nubia, Lupus and Jonathan - the famous heroes once again come back in this latest book from Caroline Lawrence. Jonathan is believed dead in the fire in Rome, until Lupus hears rumours that he is alive. They go on a quest to find him. Their search leads them straight to the games, where they must face wild beasts, criminals, conspirators and gladiators. Here Nubia faces a terrible choice - her brother or her friend? Whom shall she save? I love this book because I learn Latin and Roman History. It brings it alive. The book is just as good as all her others. I couldn't stop reading once I started.

Karis Youngman (10)

£7.99 ISBN 1-84255-252-X Dolphin (Orion)

Friendship Bracelets by Veronique Follet

This book is easy to follow and easy to read and is packed full of really bright diagrams and photographs of lots of different types of beautiful friendship bracelets. You can make them for your friends and as gifts. The publisher of this excellent book also does other good craft books that I enjoy. I found this book really useful as I also do weaving, knitting, sewing and macramé (the latter is a more complicated version of friendship bracelets). From this book I have done the 'jipijapa' that is a pattern that has arrows and alternating blocks of colour. I have also done 'tehuacan' which has alternating stripes that twist round holes. I am currently working on 'tonosi', which is comprised of diamond patterns and holes.

Keith Hall (10)

£6.99 ISBN 0-85532-803-7 Search Press

Beneath the Deep Twilight by Simon Varley

Vols 1 & 2. This is a book about a boy called Jake who falls down a hole and has a big adventure with

some telepathic creatures called Molligots who live underground. The Molligots are an ancient species whose ancestors dug down to live underground at the time when dinosaurs became extinct. Jake's sister Emma who also fell down the hole has been captured by underground flying monsters, the Terravultas, and the Molligots help Jake search for Emma. The story is in two volumes both contained in the one book and is quite a long read. I would recommend it for 8 to 10 year olds.

Alex Burnett-Pope (9)

£14.95 ISBN 1-85776-794-2 Book Guild

Supernaturalists by Eoin Colfer

This science fiction book is set in the far future and is about an orphan called Cosmo (who was named after the hill where he was found). The orphanage, an institute for 'parentally challenged children' is a dreadful place and Cosmo makes his escape. He has a life-threatening accident that gives him the gift of being able to see the blue parasitic creatures that attach themselves to any injured person. A gang called the *Supernaturalists*, who can also see these parasites, rescues him and so his adventures begin. The book is very exciting - I read it in a day because I couldn't put it down! - and is more sophisticated than Colfer's *Artemis Fowl* series (which I also thoroughly enjoyed). I would recommend it for 9 to 12 year olds.

Alex Burnett-Pope (9)

£12.99 ISBN 0-141-38040-3 Puffin Books

From Goals to Data and Back Again

by Jill Fain Lehman & Rebecca Klaw

A weighty book of American origin with its own CD-ROM! I felt rather overwhelmed by some of the jargon and the book's size, but there are still some interesting pearls of wisdom in there (eg: "*Basic Intervention Goals*, qualifying and quantifying desired behaviour). Its subtitle is "*Adding Backbone to Developmental Intervention for Children with Autism*", it aims to show how to identify goals, write them in measurable terms and then collect together the end results as data, which can be analysed. "*Things to Remember*" are helpfully listed at the end of chapters and there are exercises to test the reader's understanding. The CD-ROM contains Word and Excel files for workbooks and appendices. Although the book includes parents in its potential readership, some of the technicalities (talk of "standard deviation" and "negative correlation") made sections of the book unappealing to me. I wouldn't rush to buy this book, but it does have some valuable points about identifying progress hidden away in there.

Sue Onions

£26.09 incl CD-ROM ISBN 1-84310-753-8 Jessica Kingsley

Earthwise by Carol Petrash

A wonderful and very original craft activities book. These seasonal activities are brilliantly thought out and easy to follow. They all use natural materials and are environmentally aware. There are some lovely activities on threshing, grinding wheat and baking bread with useful tips for equipment and materials. There are some lovely wood carving and weaving activities, all nicely illustrated. The section on creating a play area had good suggestions and plenty of ideas for being 'earth friendly'. A wonderful book which fans of the *Festivals* series will love.

Hilary Woolf with Issac (4)

£8.99 ISBN 0-86315-158-2 Floris

Muddle Earth by Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell

This book is about Joe Jefferson and his dog Henry Joe is a totally ordinary schoolboy until a rather wacky wizard (who only knows one spell) called Randolph the Wise, summons him with a warrior-summoning spell. Joe is suddenly expected to wrestle dragons, fight ogres and all with his Wellies of Power and a saucepan for a helmet! This book is hilarious and a must get for any lover of fantasy who likes a story that is different. The words bring the story to life. Brilliant.

Adam Young (10)

£5.99 ISBN 0-330-42628-1 Macmillan

Asperger Syndrome - What Teachers Need to Know by Matt Winter

Wonderful! This book is clear, well-written and has some good suggestions. Matt Winter is a teacher from New Zealand who volunteers with Cloud 9 Children's Foundation, for whom he wrote this book. It starts with what AS is (plus dyslexia, ADD and other associated syndromes and conditions), goes through signs of AS then devotes 22 pages to classroom strategies. Although it's aimed at teachers, I found all of this book useful in various ways. Matt Winter seems to have an excellent understanding of children with AS and the challenges life can throw at them, he also presents sensible solutions to some of those challenges. If any child with AS goes into the school system I'd recommend this book for the teacher (it even discusses not letting colleagues use the diagnosis as an excuse to exclude a child!) Websites, resources, further reading and contact organisations are listed at the end. My one criticism is that it seems expensive for its size (it is written with lists using bullet points, ready to be used by busy teachers) - but I'd still buy this book (or put it on my Christmas list!) for its clarity, positive attitude and ideas.

Sue Onions

£ 10.95 ISBN 1-84310-143-2 Jessica Kingsley

The Chaos Quest by Gill Arbuthnott

This is a real good against evil book...with a brother and sister, Kaie and David, helping the Stardreamer keep from losing her powers to the Lords of Chaos before time is blown away. This is a sequel to *The Chaos Clock* and I think we would have enjoyed this book more if we had read that first, helping us to understand and feel for the characters more. Still a good magical read with plenty of adventure.

Denise Ridgway with Lewis (10)

£4.99 ISBN 0-86315-459-X Floris

Tales from the Water Hole by Bob Graham

This is a collection of stories from award-winning author Bob Graham. Personally, I thought they were rather dull and uninteresting, although Holly liked them. When asked why she liked them I was told "they were nice" but no other comment was forthcoming. Perhaps I would like his other books better (I am not familiar with them) but this one didn't seem to offer anything new in an already massive market. However, a small child might find the characters and illustrations appealing.

Karen McIntyre with Holly Holly (7)

£10.99 ISBN 0744565936 Walker

Quilling For Beginners by Jean Woolston-Hamey.

This is a very simple book to show you the technique of how to make pictures using spirals of paper (*quilling*). Although this book gave you a very clear range of instructions, a lot of the patterns were quite babyish and could have done with more detail. The book did get better towards the end though with some slightly harder and more elaborate flower pictures bringing the book together. I personally felt that it could have had some better patterns in it (the gallery of different children's work in the back pages was quite repetitive) and give it 5 out of 10. I would also say this book was best for children ages six to ten who have not done quilling before.

Jenny Allwood (12)

£8.99 ISBN 07318-1231-X Search Press

Curious George Rides a Bike by H.A. Rey

This is a story about a monkey who receives a bike and the adventures he goes on. My children all liked this story and Elsbeth could read a large percentage of it. The instructions for making the paper boat went down well and have been tried out. My only concern is that the monkey goes off with a man he meets from the circus. In this day and age when we are encouraging our children not to talk to strangers I thought this was a little careless by the author, although Elsbeth did point out he got home safely at the end!

Sarah and Elsbeth Beard (6)

£5.99 ISBN1-84428-507-3 Walker

Poo – a national history of the unmentionable
by Nicola Davies

Wow! What a brilliant idea, a book all about poo. If it isn't in this book, it's not worth knowing. The book covers such burning questions as 'why are poos different shapes?' 'what do animals learn about each other from their poos?' and 'what happens to all the poo, why aren't we up to our necks in it?' There are some very interesting facts about dung beetles! This is quite a long and in-depth book, ideal to read in two or three sessions. We both learnt a lot. It would make a wonderful basis for an unusual project. Definitely one to show the inspector when they call! Romy found the illustrations hilarious. They're certainly very original, but I sometimes found them slightly annoying with all the fake scribbling out. Apart from this tiny criticism, we would heartily recommend this fun book to all children over 5, (and grown-ups too!)

Hazel Smithson with Romy (5)

£7.99 ISBN 0-7445-8634-8 Walker

Space Pirates and the Treasure of Salmagundy
by Scouler Anderson

This is a lively adventure book that also teaches basic mapping skills such as compass reading, using a map key and grid reference. The characters are Captain Tosca and her crew, Needelspune, Dogzboodi and Coleslaw who are searching for clues to find the missing pirate treasure. Complete with the hooked evil pirate One Hand Hulke, this is a well thought out educational book with lots of humour and fun. The boys were keen to create their own treasure hunt games after reading it.

Carole Yeomans with Jack (7) and Luke (5)

£10.99 ISBN 1-84507-060-7 Frances

Lincoln

The Gods are Watching by Caroline Pitcher

This story is set in Ancient Egypt but, instead of being about Pharaohs, it is about the adventures of a poor orphan boy called Varro. Varro is being chased by an evil lord (I won't tell you why!) and lots of things happen to him as he tries to get away. For example, I enjoyed the part where Varro saved a young girl (Kawit) and her pet cat from a crocodile - it was really exciting! I didn't like it when the Embalmer was working on the body of a dead baboon (Yucky!!!) or when Varro had to kill a king cobra. There is also a lesson to learn about trust - sometimes you can't trust those people you think are your friends. This is a very exciting adventure story with a happy ending. I was pleased that Varro's life turned out OK in the end.

Deiniol Murphy (9)

£4.99 ISBN: 0-7136-6859-8 A&C Black

Doctor Judy Moody by Megan McDonald

Everyone had a look at this novel for 8-10 year olds but no-one wanted to read it, so I did! Their objections were that it was too American and it's about school/doctors. I would have to agree. We've got loads of excellent British writers and far too much Americanisation of young people's culture. We'd much rather read books from other cultures entirely such as Asian, Indian or African, than this (It was quite amusing though!).

Kirsten Freeseleben (without Kit 11, Jem 9, Celeste 6 and Ivo 4)

£4.99 ISBN 0-7445-9362-X Walker

The Gift – First Book of Pellinor

by Alison Croggon

When I first picked up this book and read the reviews on the back, my first thoughts were 'oh no, not another book in the same vein as *Lord Of The Rings* but I gave it a go. The story is about Maerad, an unhappy slave girl imprisoned inside a mountain. The day begins as normal until she receives a visit from a Black Spirit. When he finds out her mother belonged to the School Of Pellinor, he realises that Maerad also has the special powerful gift that entitles her to a place at the School Of Pellinor. It is only then her destiny unfolds and their epic journey begins. As I read chapter after chapter of this book I became more and more bored, and found myself falling asleep after several of them. Halfway through the book I decided enough was enough and put it to one side. If you are a fan of the *Lord Of The Rings* or even *Harry Potter* then I would recommend this book for you as I am sure you'll enjoy it.

Simon Hoggarth (15½)

£7.99 ISBN 1-84428-636-3 Walker

Damage Limitations: Trying to Reduce the Harm Schools do to Children by Roland Melghan

This is a brilliant book for anyone who is involved in home education or thinking of becoming involved. It reassures anyone who has doubts that home is the best way of educating our children - school is definitely not the way to go. For a person who is contemplating home education this is a must as I doubt that anyone who reads this book could ever send their child back to school. It shows how schools have been set up to benefit the parents and not the children, basically to babysit while they work or get on with their lives. It also shows how the tests in schools are not to benefit the children but to help the teachers put the schools higher up on the league table. How our children are told what to think instead of thinking for themselves. I could go on but let me just say I found this a very informative book. Some I already knew but a lot just made me certain that what I am doing (HE'ing) is definitely best for my children.

Georgia Fowler
ISBN 1-900219-271 Education Heretics Press

The Tomten adapted by Astrid Lindgren

It would be hard to find a nicer bedtime story. Beautifully painted, quiet moonlit scenes and poetic words tell of The Tomten, a small elf-like person who lives on a farm. Every night for hundreds of years, he checks with each animal in turn, talks to them and reassures them that the winter will pass and spring will return. Nobody sees the 'tomten'. He finally tiptoes around the house to check on the family before going back to his quiet corner of the hayloft. It is a beautiful cosy tale of winter bedtimes, very comforting and definitely one of our favourites.

Hilary Woolf with Issac (4)

£8.99 ISBN 0-86315-153-1 Floris

Kamo's Escape by Daniel Pennac

This is about Kamo, a young boy who is staying with a friend, whilst his mother is away searching for information about her grandfather, who died in Russia in the early 1900s. Kamo's friend's father makes good an old bicycle that his father had owned during the 2nd World War. He wants Kamo to have his own bike to enable him to ride with him on holiday. However, Kamo has a bad feeling about riding and refuses to get on it. After a while he decides he will ride it and one day he is out riding and starts to cycle really fast standing up on the saddle and shouting 'I'm coming Catherine' (he loves *Wuthering Heights*). A car comes out of nowhere and crashes into Kamo. He is taken to hospital and is in a coma. After a while he starts talking and uses strange words and names. His mother comes and sits at his bedside. She tells Kamo that she has discovered his Great Grandfather was killed whilst riding a bicycle. He was calling the name Melissa, a woman he loved and thought he had lost. He was hit by a black car, like Kamo. His mother has his Great Grandfather's watch that stopped at 11 o'clock; the time Kamo had his accident. The strange words Kamo has been speaking turn out to be Russian and all associated with his Great Grandfather's life. This is a really good story with a twist at the end. This book is one of a series and I would like to read more.

Francesca Houghton

ISBN 0-7445-8353-5 Walker

Curious George Takes a Job by H.A. Rey

Although this book was written in 1947 it has a certain timeless charm reminiscent of the *Harry the Dog* series by Margaret Bloy Graham. It is the gently paced tale of a little monkey whose curiosity gets the better of him when he escapes from the zoo and embarks on some adventures, but who comes out happily in the end. Finn liked the pictures and enjoyed the story, later relating it to his own toy monkey. I did feel the need to explain some of the Americanisms to him to clarify the story ('movie', 'elevator') and to expand on the 'African jungle', but

overall, he was happy with it. A good book to borrow from the library.

Tina Burnett-Pope with Finn (4)

£5.99 ISBN 1-84428-508-1 Walker Books

The Encyclopedia of Origami Techniques

by Nick Robinson

One of my favourite activities is doing origami and this book is brilliant. My favourite project in it is the 'square bear'. It is done in 19 stages and is quite complicated but the result is good. All the instructions for the basic folds and bases are given and there are 30 projects (by different designers) set out in detail for you to complete. There is also an excellent gallery of finished origami items (by different people) in full colour. My favourite is 'organic abstract'. I also liked 'ring of rings', 'modular design', 'knotologie' and 'spiral box'. I think this book is really good value as it is one of those books you can keep looking at and you can have a lot of fun for a long time doing the projects. There was only one problem I found - there were no instructions for the gallery projects and I would love to be able to make many of these!

Peter Mullion (11)

£12.99 ISBN 1-94448-025-9 Search Press

Usborne Activities Big Book of Mazes

This book is packed full of unusual mazes. The pictures are fun, interesting, colourful and the mazes are made up of a variety of items such as rooms and corridors, mushrooms and a canyon. There are three different stories about Cat and Mouse who need help to get them through the mazes. It is a book that is instantly appealing. However, many of the mazes are confusing and we had to use the answers page to see which way we were able to go. Each maze is quite complicated and takes a while to do. A nice book for someone with lots of patience!

Clare Crane with Natasha (9) and Anthea (7)

£4.99 ISBN 0-7460-6000-9 Usborne

The Glow-worm Who Lost Her Glow

by William Bedford

Sit tight you're in for a diatribe. This book is offensive for so many reasons. The British obsession for gender colour coding is in full swing here. Female glow-worms are pink, males are blue. Apart from being anatomically incorrect it is insane to train our children from birth to orientate themselves towards one of these two colours. If you doubt me try dressing a baby boy in pink and a girl in blue and reflect on your own feelings and what society makes of your action. By the time children can read this kind of drivel they've aligned themselves as firmly as a compass. I'll continue without mercy. The illustrations are Disneyfied and sentimental. The text lacks imagination and is packed with clichés. There is an underlying message that girls are insecure and

boys are vain and bad-tempered. We adults can have a good experienced laugh at this whilst sending the next generation down the same bigoted path. The author's remit to make this book a schoolroom teaching tool renders the contents fact heavy and boring. I never showed it to my daughter, along with pink t-shirts with 'little madam' slogans, it went in the dustbin.

Carolyn McCourt without Li Chen (4)
£3.99 ISBN1-4052-09763 Egmont

Social Skills Training for Adolescents with General Moderate Learning Difficulties *by Ursula Cornish and Fiona Ross*

This book is based on the authors' (successful) work changing adolescents' behaviour. Primarily aimed at teachers setting up Social Skills Training sessions for 13-17 year olds (with references to KS3 and KS4 National Curriculum), it still has much to offer parents, especially those who home educate. Even if you don't want to complete the Social Skills checklist, it's a reminder of skills which medical professionals often ask about (eg: "Makes appropriate eye contact") and the Possible Questions for Parents could highlight areas to work on. The ten sessions of the training programme make up most of the book starting with "Listening and Paying Attention", it goes through controlling feelings, body language, resolving conflict, recognising strengths and more. The book assumes you're working with groups of adolescents so most activities (eg: role plays) are for pairs or several people - this is an obvious downfall for any HE'er working with one child. However, each session has a "homework" section aimed at parents, often using picture sheets (eg: facial expressions) which would be very useful and many of the ideas can be adapted. Certainly worth a look.

Sue Onions
£15.99 ISBN 1-84310-179 -3 Jessica Kingsley

CONTACTS

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 607780 or visit 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. Many local EO groups have meetings where books and other resources are swapped or sold. Don't forget you can usually pick up cheap books at car boot sales, jumble sales etc and the library is a free resource.

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EDUCATION OTHERWISE ADVERTISEMENTS

Resource listing

based on National Curriculum materials available to parents.

Covering all primary levels, and some of secondary.

Most useful to parents looking for a structured or NC approach.

Available free from

henrietta.turnbull@btinternet.com (rtf or wpd or doc file);

or please send a stamped addressed envelope plus £1 for printing costs to H. Turnbull, Hadlow House, 2 Hadlow Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4AF

EO T-shirts:

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

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2. navy shirt with white slogan: "home education - a real option" £5 adult (M, L, XL)

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EO Car Stickers

Help spread the word.

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

Compliment slips, Summary of the Law, leaflets and other stationery also available ~ please see inside back cover, and page 16 of Handbook

EO Hoodies and Mugs

Hooded sweatshirts

with the triangle logo and the letters SINC now available in navy blue and black children's and adult sizes (£15 for children's and £20 for adults' including postage and packaging).

EO 25th anniversary mugs

available in white and red with a picture of Archie

(£5 including postage and packaging).

If you are interested in the above please contact Jill.Fisher@care4free.net

or ring at 0116 212 8120 for further details

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plus 1 x loose 2nd class stamp for each card required.

EO/NEC vouchers

£30 discount per course - A5 SAE to Sarah Cook, The Old Cottage, Croglin, Carlisle, CA4 8RZ (quoting EO membership number) or sarah@croggies.freeseve.co.uk

LOCAL CONTACT UPDATE

if you want to volunteer

or would like to know more about being a local contact
please contact the Local Contact Co-ordinator (see inside back cover)

New Acting Local Contacts

London North

Powys

Yorkshire West - Calderdale

Merseyside

New addy

Resigning LC

Northamptonshire

Stirling

Powys

Areas Needing a Local Contact

Camarthenshire

Durham

Dorset East

Dorset West

Fife

Gloucestershire

Herefordshire

Hertfordshire

Highlands & Islands

Humberside

Isle of Man

Tina Burnett-Pope

David Yeoman

Gill Kilner

Hazel Croft - would like local help

Y Hartley (Pembrokeshire) yeh@onetel.com

Jane Owen

Karen Strang

Julia Phillips

Kent

Manchester North

Staffordshire

Stirling

Strathclyde

Somerset

Tayside

West Midlands (Birmingham, Solihull,

Walsall, Wolverhampton)

Yorkshire South

Yorkshire W - Kirklees, Wakefield

New Council Members Needed

To all those active, committed people out there: We need you!!!

Keith Charlton recently resigned from Council and we have had advance warning of another CM's intention to resign next year. Council must be staffed by a minimum of 14, under EO's Articles of Association.

Could you consider becoming a CM?

The formal requirements for being a Council Member and an indication of what is involved, is given in the Handbook and you can contact current CMs if you have further queries or to discuss the job.

In NL 155 Ann Samuel Till reflected on Becoming a Council Member:

'The main thing to consider about it is taking a share in the legal responsibility for decision making in EO. Some council members also do a lot of actual EO jobs, others just meet the above responsibility - which is fine. The qualities you need are a commitment to the freedom to home educate, honesty, the capacity for clear thinking and hearing different views (including those of young people!) and it helps if you have the knack of making a molehill out of a mountain!'

If you think that's you and you value the existence of EO as a home-ed mutual support network then it's recommended! You can learn a lot too; after a term on the council and having home educated your children you can do anything!

Local Contact Co-ordinator Needed

Keith Charlton has had to resign as Local Contact Co-ordinator for personal reasons, so a new LC Co-ordinator is needed. The role is to support, value and appreciate Local Contacts; assist in solving local difficulties/disputes; facilitate meetings for Local contacts to get together and share experiences. In areas where there is currently no Local Contact, the Co-ordinator will liaise with local members

to ensure that one is established wherever possible and that appropriate support is available for new members in the area.

Local Contact guidelines are given on pages 33-35 of the Handbook, and the Co-ordinator should be able to support LCs in all these functions. It would be helpful if the LC Co-ordinator was prepared to be a Council Member.

Keith is happy to talk to anyone considering the job and to provide ongoing support to the new coordinator. He is particularly committed to the programme of workshops for LCs and is prepared to continue to run them with the new coordinator or with other support if the new coordinator does not feel able

to take on that work. If you would like to discuss this further please contact Keith Charlton 0116 259 2118

AVON FUNDRAISER

Katy Wildgoose, who home-educates in Derbyshire, has kindly offered to organise a fundraiser for Education Otherwise, using her experience as an Avon sales leader. Katy can send you an Avon catalogue on request. All goods carry a money-back guarantee, and there is lots to choose from - not just cosmetics but clothing, toys, jewellery and many other items.

Katy's webpage gives more details, at:

<http://beta.hometown.aol.co.uk/katarinawild/myhomepage/refpage.html>

There is also a Yahoo group where you will be able to check up on your order's progress at: <http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/Avon-EOFundraiser/>

Every brochure includes samples and 20% from every order placed through Katy will go to Education Otherwise. You will also receive a goody bag and free gift with your order and have your name put into a raffle, which Katy is organising especially for EO.

Katy can be contacted at 152 King Sreet, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 7DF
Phone or text 07754465712 (mobile) email Katarinawild@aol.com

EO Seasonal Greetings Cards

Greetings cards are now available. They are blank inside for your own message, and have the message 'School is optional' on the back. All profits from these cards go to Education Otherwise, charity no. 1055120.

They come in packs of 10 with envelopes, @ £3.99 per pack (inc. p&p).

Send cheques payable to 'Education Otherwise' to Martine Frampton,
3 Redesdale Mews, Hospital Road, Moreton-in-Marsh, GL56 0BQ.

Please state which design you would prefer 'Robins and Penguins' or 'Snow Walk'

Now available to view and purchase via EO's website:

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

Problems with deregistration?

When you take your child out of school in **England and Wales**, you need to see that he or she is *deregistered*. You should be able to do this simply by writing to the school. If you tell them that the child is receiving education otherwise than at school, they must delete the child's name from the admission register. This relieves you of your duty to send the child to school.

Deregistration information sheet

Unfortunately, not all schools are equally aware of the legal basis of deregistration. To make it easier to explain this to them, an **information sheet** is now available. It consists of a single sheet of A4 printed on both sides. One side gives the legal basis of deregistration with references; the other sets out the relevant legal texts. The sheet is intended for LEAs and schools in England and Wales.

How to get a copy

To get the sheet in the form of a **Word document** (Word 97 and above), please send an email to

<database@education-otherwise.org> or to
<anneandrob@onetel.net.uk>.

(Before printing, you should check that each page starts with the title *Deregistration* and ends with a horizontal line followed by a single line in italics. You should print page 2 on the back of page 1.)

To get one or more **paper copies**, please send a stamped self-addressed A5 envelope plus an extra second class stamp for each copy to Rob Wade (London - Middlesex).

Rob Wade

CONCESSIONS

Please would all members look out for places of educational interest around them that may be willing to offer concessionary access to EO members. Please contact me with their details so that I can send them a letter of request, or let me know of existing concessions to include in EO's concessions list. Many thanks for your help!

Write to - Dawn Waddington, Ty y Llyfrau, Bangor Rd,
Penmaenmawr, Conwy, LL34 6AF. Phone - 01492 622063.

Email - dawn@home2school.co.uk

MORE NOTICES

Volunteers sought to update Information Leaflets

THANK YOU to those who have already volunteered to update our leaflets in this series - more volunteers are needed please. They are only 4 A4 pages, but it can be quite time consuming checking that every reference is correct and deciding what information is most important to include. It is ideal if two people can work on a leaflet, perhaps one taking the initiative and the other being available to bat ideas back from. Please do not be backward in coming forward and choosing a leaflet you would be interested in updating. The remaining leaflets are:

- Choosing Your Approach to Home Education
- Special Educational Needs
- Flexi Schooling

Contact Priscilla Park Weir - Surrey Tel: 01276 22735 priscilla@pvpw.fsnet.co.uk

2004 CONTACT LIST - IS YOUR ENTRY CORRECT????

The contact list is based on information received by the beginning of April 2004. Please look at your listing to check it's accurate and that you are in the right county/area. If any of your entry has changed, do get in touch with me.

If you move during the year, please let me know as soon as possible to ensure that future newsletters arrive on time at your new address. Please also contact me if you have renewed your membership but are missing a newsletter.

Lynda Hitchman

database@education-otherwise.org (see inside back cover for address/phone number)

Security of Information

Please remember that non-members may see the main newsletter, and restrict your published contact details to those you feel comfortable to have in the public domain. Remember when giving details of venues, dates etc. that this may for some members be sensitive information.

The Children's Pages and the Contact list are for members only; please be careful of how you dispose of these so that private information doesn't get out. Someone had placed the Children's Pages of the newsletter in their recycling bin ... and then had second thoughts.

**IF YOU CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, EMAIL OR OTHER DETAILS,
OR IF YOUR NEWSLETTER DOES NOT ARRIVE**

please contact the

DATABASE ADMINISTRATOR

(See inside back cover)

On-line renewals

membership and renewals can now be processed on-line

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

Regional Diary

All regular meetings listed below are included automatically in every issue, but if you have a local NL, please reduce your details to minimum.

Events organisers please remember when giving full details of events that the newsletter may be read by people who are not members of EO.

New members attending their first meeting should phone to check it is happening as shown.

Thank you to contact people who are keeping an eye on their local entries and letting us know if changes are needed. Please do check every issue, it really helps!

CHANGES BY LETTER OR EMAIL PLEASE -to:

FIONA STEWART, (see inside front cover for addresses)

or by phone to Jo. 01392 438876

ENGLAND

BATH

H.E.L.P. group meets regularly for outings and activities.

Contact: Louise Jensen 01761 472568

jensen-thomas@clara.co.uk

BEDFORDSHIRE

For full details of events programme contact June

McDonald on 01234 341375 or email

info@Bedford-Home-Ed.org.uk

"Technology" theme for autumn. Lots of art and craft, plus visits to Cadbury World, The Science Museum including IMAX, London Eye, Leicester Space Centre, etc. Regular swimming, multi-sport, gym sessions, youth group & chess club, + Open afternoons, resource library and more Website: www.Bedford-Home-Ed.org.uk

BERKSHIRE

E-mailing list for home educators in Berkshire and surrounding areas for events/activities

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BerkshireHomeEducators

****NEW**** Camp Mohawk Home Education Centre - 4 days

per week - workshops; lessons; other activities; also for

Local NL/What's on Contact: Dawn 01628 783107

thirdEye1@compuserve.com Or New Web Site for

Berkshire www.homeeducators.co.uk

Reading Mondays, 10am - 12noon swimming at Central

Pool, lots of teenagers Contact: Lynn 0118 972 1420

Thursdays, 5.30-7pm. Activities for teens incl. video

production, mixing decks, web design etc., Email

becky.h@ntworld.com for more information

Caversham Fridays 12 - 5pm social, all ages, sep. rm 4

teens in hall with park outside and woods. £2/family.

Pangbourne (near) Monthly, 2nd Tuesday, 11am - 6pm

chat and play, Adventure playground, animals. £3/family

Also activities 4 teens. Contact Lynda 0118 961 4466 or

Gail 01628 483895 or email hitchmans@ntworld.com.

Bracknell Weds termtime, ice-skating at John Nike

Leisure Centre, 2-4pm. £1.50 show EO card at reception.

Contact: Angela 0118 9661331 (weekends only) or

Edwina, email: wgodfrey@netcomuk.co.uk

Burghfield Common Thurs termtime Swimming at

Willink Leisure Centre 1.30-3pm. Contact Angela (see

Bracknell)

Windsor Leisure Centre, Fns termtime, organised sports

session 5 yrs up, 11am-noon. Contact Muriel 01628

664939

Windsor Leisure Centre, Fns termtime, family swim

12.30. contact Angela or Edwina (see Bracknell)

Newbury Friendly group of mixed ages, meets Friday

pm, regular activities incl. baking, arts and crafts,

juggling, games etc. Newcomers welcome. Contact

Heidi 0118 9710176 leslie.botha@btinternet.com

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

BRISTOL

Thursdays meeting at St Paul's Adventure Playground

1-3pm, Spanish, Science and Pottery happening on a

regular basis. Contact Ian or Silke 0117 9412707

Email list for Bristol and surrounding areas at:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BristolHomeEducation

Also local group website for more information about home

education in Bristol: www.bristolhomeeducation.org.uk

BUCKS

Newsletter for Bucks/Northants Contact: Georgeanne on

01908 662256.

Milton Keynes home educators network extends a

warm welcome to all (wherever you live): activities,

socials and support. Local Contact Georgeanne Scott

01908 662256 or www.mkhen.co.uk

(and another Milton Keynes HE group...)

MKHE - Milton Keynes Home Educators, friendly group

welcomes all, lots going on, arts + crafts, socials, outings,

chess club, sports, open afternoons, themed activities

etc, monthly newsletter + online discussion room contact

Georgia 01908 371945

www.miltonkeyneshomeeducation.co.uk

South Bucks: meetings for craft, activities, play,

speakers, drama, trips etc.

Contact: Jackie 01753 886924

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Cambridge regular meetings and outings

Contact: Penny 01223 526441 penny.k@ntworld.com

Alconbury monthly activities run by Christian group. All

welcome Contact: Audrey Hull 01480 219881

Peterborough: weekly meetings on Wednesdays art,

craft, science, swimming, sports, play and visits

Contact: Sarah 01733 265043 SJLambert@aol.com

Cambridge/Norfolk border: fortnightly at Guyhim.

Contact: Pat 01354 656582 or Ruth 01945 480232

North Cambridgeshire Contact Jane 01354 677869.

CHESHIRE

South Cheshire and North Staffs newsletter for local

social and educational events. Contact Carme 01782

786 720. Email: home.ed@ntworld.com

CLEVELAND AND DURHAM (see also DURHAM)

Contact: Pauline Butterworth 01642 570786

CORNWALL

Free events sheets every two months via Email or SAsEs

Contact: Anna Wheeler, Cambrose Farm, Redruth, TR16

4HT 01209 890378 Email:

Annawheeler@cambrose.fsnet.co.uk

Local information on our local home ed website:

Homeedinkernow.tripod.com

CUMBRIA

Informal gatherings for socialising, support and activities

Cumbria Otherwise Newsletter, for full details of events

throughout the county contact Martin, 01539 732918 or

email cumbria.otherwise@dsl.pipex.com

Kendal alternate Mondays Endmoor Village Hall

1-4pm. Contact Jo Collier 01539 567005

Pennith alternate Tuesdays Castletown Community

Centre 1.30-3.30 Contact: Sarah Cook 01768 896019

DERBYSHIRE

Chesterfield group meets every Wed. morning.
Contact: Kaz 01246 205463 or Yvonne 01246 555645

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

regular meetings, socialising and days out.

Contact: Julie 01283 760800

Anyone in Church Gresley, Swadincote area interested in creating new local home ed. group for friendly get-togethers and activities. pls tel. Lucinda 01283 218948

DEVON

Devon Newsletter, full details of events throughout the County: £3.00 for 6 months by post. E-mail copies free: news@ed-he.org.uk or 01297 625439

National Trust (Devon) - free membership/entry to NT sites to all Devon EO members for pre-booked 'educational' visits. Card held by Moira Kneale on 01395 279026

Exeter: Tuesdays, Free Range Learning, something for all ages: AM, 10-12.30, Yoga, Maths, cooking, swimming, free play indoors and out. PM, 1.30 - 3.30, A varied arts programme provided by Magic Carpet, Wren Trust etc., including Drama, Craft + Musical activities. Bring packed lunch & stay all day, further details Annie 01392 434167
Wednesdays, fortnightly EO social meetings, 2-4pm, alternating between Exeter & Crediton, contact Lisa 01392 421614, email: lisa.cameron@tesco.net

Pottery - held in pottery workshop with kiln etc, fortnightly 11am contact Neil 01363 82314 or Annie 01392 434167
East and Mid Devon: Local Contact Becca 01404 549479
Lots of varied activities - full details in Devon newsletter (above)

North Devon Local Contact: Amanda 01237 422403
Bideford area Fortnightly social meetings on Tuesdays.
Ring Louise 01237 441786 or Amanda (above)

South Devon Local Contact Bridget 01803 862158
Loads of activities for all ages - full details in Devon newsletter (see above)

Youth Club at Buckfastleigh (& alternate weekly outings)
Thursday 12 to 3pm contact Corinne 01626 368044

DEVON EAST/DORSET WEST

Lyme Regis, Axminster, Bridport, Chard
Contact Habiba 0845 4582984 (local rate)

Regular meetings on Thursdays, Contact:

All 01297 443816 or Karen 01460 30461

DORSET

Regular meetings, keep in touch. Contact Christine 01258 880355 or Rosemary 01747 853593

Bournemouth area: local website www.he-ed.org.uk
Meeting every Monday for crafts, games, play etc.

Friendly, welcoming group. Contact: June 01202 827945 bugchick@btinternet.com

DURHAM

Durham based group, monthly newsletter £5 p.a.

We also have a yahoo chat group at
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/durhamhome_ed.

We meet weekly and have other less regular activities scheduled. Contact Schuyler Waynforth 01740 622499 or s.waynforth@btopenworld.com or Beth Currie 0191 3735109.

ESSEX

Full details in Essex Epicycle newsletter, available from Corinne 07802 630693 epicycle@wavy.org

All over Essex trips (usually Thursdays) and workshops

Braintree Cheeky Chimps indoor play area

1st Thursday of the month (ex school hols) 2pm

Chelmsford Ice skating, Riverside, Fris 3.30-5pm

Meetings social and activities, 3rd Thurs of month 1- 4 pm

Colchester Meetings, social and activities, alt Weds, 11am to 3pm

Tiptree Meetings, social & activities alt. Tues. 2-5pm

East London/Essex group, Fortnightly meetings

Contact Gill on 020 8597 8537

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Monthly social meetings open to all.

Regular workshops and outings. Website:

<http://members.lycos.co.uk/GlosHomeEducators/index.html>

also Email list for events and forum for discussions,

information and virtual activities. Contact Rob and Fiona

01684 290087 openhorizons@ntworld.com Caroline

01242 890351 cambrose@ieee.org Beverley 01242

524091 or Mhairi 01452 384104.

Gloucester meetings & swimming. Contact Dawn 01452

540019 dawnandmike@blueyonder.co.uk

or Tracy 07941 612092

HAMPSHIRE

ACTIVEO: 5 events a week within 20 miles of Petersfield.

All welcome. 01428 712394 www.activeo.co.uk

FAREGOS HE Group meet weekly at Holbrook, Gosport,

for swimming or skating, weekly in Fareham for crafts

and other activities. Other outings on an ad hoc basis.

Friendly, welcoming group. Contact Gayle 01329 823112

or Ros 01329 516482 or Email for more details

gayle@timica.com

North Hampshire: Friendly group for children aged 0-13

meets Wednesday afternoons. Regular themed

meetings in Scott Centre, Andover, Ice skating in

Basingstoke plus other educational visits and fun

activities in Hants and Wilts borders. Contact Carol 01264

357650 email eo@azakic.com

Farnham/Aldershot Friendly group for under 10s,

weekly meetings/outings/activities. Contact: Emma

01483 426277 emmajeavons@supanet.com

HERTFORDSHIRE (see also N.London)

TOP Health and Education Together. Numeracy, literacy

and parenting health sessions. Literacy home study

program 3-10 years at London Colney.

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: Pnsilla 01438 840674

olsandpjs@aol.com

St Albans, Social group meeting at Sandridge village hall,

1- 3pm, 2nd and 4th Thurs. Contact: Carolyn 01727

851073

ISLE OF WIGHT

Contact Shara 01983 562313

Isle of Wight Learning Zone workshops, social events and

newsletter, contact Sue 01983 241095 for details

I.W.E.O. group: craft sessions, visits, swimming, theatre,

picnics, barbecues, mutual support, especially older EO

kids but new members and visitors always welcomed.

Contact Jude 01983 531680

KENT

Wealden Home Ed website: www.when.omnia.co.uk and

email group:

wealdenhomeeducatorsnetwork@yahoo.groups.com

East Kent including Dover, Canterbury and all

surrounding areas ...

****NEW** Isle of Thanet** Contact: Vanda 01843 842629

Medway towns Contact: Bndget 01634 234938

Bromley Contact: Claire 0181 460 7347

Claire@wadefamily99.freemove.co.uk

Tunbridge Wells group meet every Monday from 10-4

for Tae Kwan Do, art and crafts, & many other activities.

Contact Kim 01892 863941 or Lesley 07900 503247

French for beginners through songs and games. Yoga for children. Contact: Katherine 01892 863958

LANCASHIRE

Fortnightly sessions at Botany Bay: contact Jacqueline 01204 361072 or Angela 01204 659634

Fortnightly badminton lesson followed by swim: contact Angela/Jacqueline

Crafts at St Paul's/Old Cobblers; pond dipping / kayaking/wall climbing etc. contact Pam 01706 215585 or davidandpam@ntworld.com

Events on Fylde coast Contact Tracey on 01253 858840
Ice skating group on 2nd Wed every month at Blackburn Arena. Cost £4.15 + £1 skate hire. 2pm - 4.30pm. Tel: Jackie 01695 424220 for information

Blackpool weekly meeting at Michael Hall Theatre School, Preston Old Road (Whitegate Drive end) Details: Tracy 01253 858840

LEICESTERSHIRE

Frequent meetings for play, craft, walks, hanging out, singing, swimming, science, skating and much more.
Contact: Lise 0116 242 5802

LINCOLNSHIRE

For a free email newsletter of activities and local events contact:

Donna 01472 752507 Donna.Eures@ntworld.com
Helena 01724 720595, Tessa 01522 790452

Variety of informal events and get-togethers. Contact Christine 01507 338070, christinehalse1@yahoo.co.uk

****NEW** S Lincs** Regular meetings & activities, swimming etc. Contact Lorraine 0845 458 3004

LONDON

Bromley/Croydon Chrysalis group meets most Tuesdays in Bromley also other activities + outings, contact Jenny 0208 654 3972 or Mish 0208 289 5886 or email chrysalishomeed@yahoo.com

Clissold Park. Tuesdays. All welcome.

Contact: Charlotte 0207 254 0419

SE London Wednesdays Honor Oak playground.
Contact: Steve 8680 2933

Lewisham Thursdays 11-1 then to park afterwards
Contact: ****NEW**** Jemima 0208 2975672
jemimacomish@btscali.co.uk

Kidbrooke rollerblading Contact: Fiona 020 8852 9756
bettleslake@clara.net

Sydenham Fridays fortnightly at 11.30-2.30

Contact: Chrystia and Keith 8776 8597

Forest Hill Nature Reserve Fridays alternate fortnight 11.30 Contact: Dave 8692 4080

Plumstead Common Adventure Playground SE18 alternate Fridays, meeting at 12.30 pm.

Contact: Bev 0208 312 2160, Kim 0208 317 7262

NW London Otherwise Club Contact: Leslie 0208 969 0893
Harrow meetings fortnightly on Fridays

Stanmore events on Tues and Wednesdays. Programme available from Vivienne, email timsharkey@aol.com or tel. 0208 954 1885 or Vicki on Aceva@btinternet.com

N London Hornsey Home Educators Club (currently under 10s, meet for arts, crafts, drama, games etc) Thursdays 11.00-12.30
contact: Tina 0208 340 4212

N London Barnet Group, meets Mondays, contact Mirelle 0208 449 7868, email lance.e@virgin.net or Lynda 0208 368 9046.

West London (and Middlesex) Home Ed group meets every Tuesday for varied educational and social activities and visits. Contact Betsy 020 8993 0677 or betsyhomeed@yahoo.com. Also contact Betsy (EO West

London Local Contact) to join WestLondonHomeEd yahoo group - shares information on these and other activities and items of interest to home educators.

Also Wednesdays 12-2.30 pm, fortnightly during term-time. Good-sized meeting place, with pool table, soft play room, and excellent outdoor play area, equipped for all ages. Optional organised activity for part of the session. Welcoming all for fun, friendship and support. Please ring: Alison 0208 56 99398 or Kathryn 0208 566 0543 or e-mail Alison@rothwell1973.fsnet.co.uk or kathrynvglynn@hotmail.com

West London (Chiswick) home education group now meeting every Tuesday. Outdoor activities throughout the Spring / Summer. Warmer/drier activities every Tuesday during the rest of the year. For full details and more information about winter activities, please contact Naomi 020 8567 7589 or naomisandler@yahoo.co.uk. Also contact for details of yahoo group membership for discussion and information about events throughout area.

MANCHESTER

Monthly formal art lessons at Stockport Art Gallery £1.50.

Also 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 Sats at Moores family home, limited places, Contact: Karen 01204 573136

NORFOLK

Newsletter for Norfolk - Listing meetings throughout the county. To advertise your event, or to receive a copy

from September, please contact Ali on
simon.whitehall@tesco.net or ring 01603 401020.

Also workshops for older children. If you would be interested in theme-based sessions for the older 11s

please contact Liz Starling, 01760 725388

starling@starling.screaming.net (or Ali as above)

NORFOLK/SUFFOLK BORDER

Term-time, every Thursday 2.30 - 4.30

Swimming, indoor sports/play at Breckland Leisure Centre, Theford. Contact Fay 01953 681785

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

For email updates of activities and outings send your email address to northantshomeed@aol.com

or phone Jane 01234 326479.

Want to get together with other local home ed teens?

Please contact Lynne Stewart 01604 454240, andrew.stewart77@ntl.com

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Weekly meetings. For full list, Contact: Wendy 0115 9114312 or Louise 01773 780634

OXFORDSHIRE

Group meets alternate Thursdays for structured timetable of activities. Children split into 3 age groups 0 - 4, 5 - 7 and 8+.

Workshops include - singing, cooking, crafts, science, history, literacy, sport, watercolour painting and lots more. Regular visitors to the group bring subjects we can't cover as individuals and we go on lots of trips.

Contact Wendy 01865 514973

SHROPSHIRE

Activities and outings. Contact: Val 01952 502225

South Shrops. regular meetings every Tuesday, outings and workshops: Carolyn 01588 680503

SOMERSET

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

Contact: Sally 01749 841554, Helen 01373 465260

Wivelscombe/Taunton area - regular get-togethers and outings: Maggie 01984 624651.

Wells and Glastonbury Area Regular social meetings, weekly swimming, outings and nature activities. Contact Lesley 01749 689241, Tanya 01458 834871 or Steph 01749 812959

SOMERSET NORTH - Regular get-togethers and activities Contact Vicky 01275 848425

STAFFORDSHIRE / S. CHESHIRE / N. SALOP

Stafford every 2nd and 4th Wednesday in village hall for games craft etc. 12-3.30 Contact Jane 01283 820642 jane@jackslane62.freereserve.co.uk or Theresa 01889 563052

North Staffs and South Cheshire newsletter for local social and educational events. Contact Carrie: 01782 786 720 Email: home.ed@ntworld.com

SUFFOLK

Felixstowe, group meeting fortnightly in town centre location for socialising, outings, sports etc.

Karen 01394 279117 kjc88@whsmithnet.co.uk

North Suffolk nr Lowestoft - Weds pm - £2.50 per family. Christine 01502 519649 or Jackie 566266

Woodbridge, Foxburrow Farm, Once a month, activities organised by Suffolk Wildlife Trust

Wetherden meetings every 3rd Friday 10.30-2.00 £3 per family, shared lunch: Details from Heather Ward, 01953 688 128

SURREY

Banstead base but everyone is welcome. Weekly meetings/activities. Contact Sue 01737 556683 or Lindsay 01306 501229

near **Cobham** just off A3 - Learning Group for parents & children 0-7, in 26 acres of private woodland, based on High/Scope approach to independent learning and problem solving. For more details contact Rachael rachael.underwood@classicfm.net or phone 01932 706191

Guildford area: Theatre bookings: Tisha 01483 898575, Skating during term time Friday 1-4: Rachel 01483 565703 (no Sunday calls please) Under 10s: Nicky 01483 232080

Dorking/Reigate area.

Contact: Helen Burnett 01737 243606

Farnham/Aldershot Friendly group for under 10s, weekly meetings/ outings/activities. Contact: Emma 01483 426277 emmajeavons@supanet.com

North Surrey Home Ed group meets up in Croydon once a month. Age range from 2-15, small group, looking to grow. For more details, contact

Karen: karen_wilkins@hotmail.com

or Viv: viv@madtoyman.fsnet.co.uk

SUSSEX

Wealden Home Ed website: www.when.omnia.co.uk also email group:

wealdenhomeeducatorsnetwork@yahoo.groups.com

Local Contact: Isobel 01403 261178 (W Sx)

Winnie Durdant-Hollamby 01342 826087 (E.Sx)

Many events and activities throughout the County.

Monthly newsletter gives full details: £8pa or £4 six months, For NL contact Tula 01323 648127, email asanababy@aol.com

Or ring one of the following local events organisers:

Lewes: Sylvia on 01273 474375, Hope 01273 401594 or

Jan 01273 514528

Lindfield EO Friday club: Liz 01444 414058

Hastings HEDGE Group: Rachel 01424 422178, Emily

01424 719570 or Ali 01424 814175

Brighton: Kathy 01273 685674, Lucy 01273 204764 or Jim 0779188343

Eastbourne Home-Ed Club: Tula 01323 648127 email asanababy@aol.com

Worthing/Shoreham Beach: **NEW** Avis 01273 542589 or 0770 3647954

Forest Row Area: Winnie 01342 826087

Petersfield ACTIVEO: 5 events a week within 20 miles, All welcome. 01428 712394 www.activeo.co.uk

TYNESIDE Regular, frequent & varied activities. New members welcome. Email list:

http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/home_ed_tyneandwear

Younger Group (under 8) - contact Becky 0191 478 5322 or becky.feeney@virgin.net

Older group (over 8) - contact Rosemary 0191 285 3707 or paul@thenews.icom43.net

National Trust & English Heritage Visits - Deborah 01434 674713

Woodland visits - Juliet 01207 544473

ablett.jules@tesco.net

Spanish - Carol 0191 2291178

Music - Rosemary (above) or paul@thenews.icom43.net

Book/Film Club/Citizenship (age 10+) - Peter or Carol

0191 2291178

WARWICKSHIRE

Usually 2 Thursdays a month; at Wolston nr Coventry and for an outing in 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

WILTSHIRE

contact: Beccy 01985 840174

Warminster meeting each Monday at Tropical Park,

Woodcock Road from 2.30pm, Beccy 01985 840174

Salisbury meeting every Tuesday afternoon, for details contact Vicky 01722 324863

Swindon: Informal get-togethers twice per month; badminton weekly Contact: Shena on 01793 334673 or join email list at

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NWlits_HE/

Devizes Last Thursday of the Month The Scout Hut, Southbroom Rd, 11.30-14.30, games, activities, support and socialising. Outings most Thursdays Contact: Janet

01249 818672 email: janet.eldekivist@btopenworld.com

Jemima: 01380 727470 Helen: 01249 822958

www.geocities.com/wiltshirehomeed/index.htm

WORCESTERSHIRE

Local Contact - Rachel 01527 597809

Meetings, events, trips out etc happening all through the month throughout the county.

Meetings - Karen Raybould 01527 835384

Meetings - North Worcs/Kidderminster - Gail Tutchter

101562 822034 gail@tqmi.co.uk

YORKSHIRE EAST

Regular meetings and visits.

Contact: Alison 01405 769902

YORKSHIRE NORTH

Regular meetings and outings. Contact Karen 01904

400317 kkarensandy@aol.com

Meetings at various venues over the summer. for info phone Tess 01947 825 772 or email at chris.geall@btinternet.com

YORKSHIRE SOUTH

Regular meetings for arts/crafts, visits, swims, hanging out and more. Contact: Jo 01709 820866
Denise 01226 733478 Gary 0114 2585702.
Tuesdays 12-3 term time at Highfield Adventure Playground. Free entry, small contribution for craft materials. Off London rd/Abbeydale rd. Contact: Annette 0114 2583502 or Fiona 0114 22751142

YORKSHIRE WEST

Bradford: Ten-pin bowling (last Monday of month) at Hollywood Bowl. Contact Sarah (01484) 361206 or by e-mail sl.marshall@ntworld.com

Ice skating and optional lesson - Friday (weekly, except 2nd Friday) at Ice Arena. Contact Judith (0113) 226 5515 or e-mail: judith.shalkowski@ntworld.com

Ice Hockey lesson - Friday (weekly, except 2nd Friday) at Ice Arena. Contact Sarah.

Leeds: Ten-pin bowling (2nd Monday of month) at Hollywood Bowl. Contact Sarah (as Bradford)
Gymnastics lesson (coach directed) - Weds (term-time only) at Carnegie Gym, Leeds Metropolitan University Beckett's Park Campus. Contact Sarah.

Wednesday Club - Wednesday (twice a month) from 1.30pm - 3.30pm at Room 9, West Park Centre.
Contact Judith (0113) 226 5515 or by e-mail judith.shalkowski@ntworld.com

Monthly meeting - 2nd Friday of the month 11.00am - 3.30pm at Room 9, West Park Centre. Contact Sarah.
Group trips - for list of dates contact Sarah.

Halifax: Gymnasium, Heath Training Centre, Free School Lane, every Monday except bank hols. 12 noon - 3pm. Meeting: Free-range activities + exchange of friendship and support for home educating children and parents. Contact: Gill Kilner 01422 311876, email: GillKilner@aol.com

Huddersfield: Last Thursday of month, 11-1:30 at Civic Centre. Lunch & chat.
Huddersfield Sports Centre. Swimming, Weds, term time 12-1:30. Contact Tracy 01484 317176.

SCOTLAND

ARGYLL Home-Ed Group - Monthly meetings and occasional outings/activities. All welcome. Contact Joanne 01866 822034 or Debra 01631 730469 email: debra@celtic-soul-music.com

****NEW** DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY** home ed group planning monthly meetings. Contact: Jean 01387 820374 or Debbie 01848 600348

FIFE Friday fortnightly meetings, activities and social get-togethers. All welcome. Contact: Nicola 01334 478530 nicola.stubbs@btinternet.com

HIGHLANDS meetings Fortnightly meetings in Inverness, plus occasional outings. All ages welcome. Contact: Rebecca 01667 462772 or Alison 01463 232571 alison@sauer.demon.co.uk

IRVINE For details of regular and one-off activities please contact: Rhona 01294 273644 or Shirley 01563 540063 or Vivien 01563 537428

LOTHIAN, CENTRAL & S.E. SCOTLAND fortnightly group for meetings and outings. Ann 0131 556 6271 or ann.samuelhill@blueyonder.co.uk or Jane 01835 863 118.

WALES

SOUTH WALES

Cardiff area FREE email newsletter/contact list from bev1.french@btinternet.com or Beverley 02920 797628. Monthly museum visit, organised by museum.

Swansea Group For information on local activities and events, contact Juliet 01639 760987, Frankie, fran.kie@ntworld.com or Geraldine, 01792 405894 or email: julafan1@ntworld.com

PEMBROKESHIRE EO swim & sauna: Haverfordwest pool, Dew St. 3pm at main reception, fortnightly. Call to check dates. Contact: Yvette 0845 458 9251

CARDIGAN area social meetings and outings on Mondays - Contact: Yvette 0845 458 9251

GWYNEDD Mondays swimming at Bangor
Contact: Louisa 01248 361254

Friday swimming at **Porth Madog** Weekly meetings at Tremadog Thursdays. Contact Jo 01766 512330

POWYS Weekly swimming/Tumble Towers in Welshpool on Fridays (term time only). Monthly workshops, outings, skateboarding and events in Welshpool and surrounding area. Contact: Julia Phillips 01691 648152 qwastad@lycos.co.uk

Newtown area: Mondays get-together, twice a month, in Newtown, for activities, play and socialisation. Contact Sue 01686 688748 or smw5@tutor.open.ac.uk

N.E. 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 year's listing eo@7times7.freemove.co.uk
****NEW**Wrexham** regular themed craft sessions run by a professional artist, with parental help. Contact Marie 01978 362436

THE NON STOP READER

The complete guide to reading for both parent and child in one volume, using a phonetic approach. Detailed advice for parents, lively text and wonderful illustrations, engaging for children and easy to follow. Widely used over the years by many home educating families.

NOW AVAILABLE DIRECT FROM E.O.

£15 including p&p for the reader and exercise pack. Cheques payable to 'Education Otherwise' to: M. Frampton, Fosseway Avenue, Moreton in Marsh, GL56 0EA

Back Page Part Two

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)

If you would prefer to volunteer for infrequent or small tasks please contact Emma Birkenshaw emma-birkenshaw@ntlworld.com tel 0113 2172795 Emma will add you to our volunteer database and contact you with information when help is needed.

Small Groups:

Finance: Martine Frampton, Lynda Hitchman, Ann Samuel Till, Ali Willer, Helen Donaldson, Priscilla Park-Weir

Enquiries: Pam Bellinger, Geraldine Adams, Iris Harrison, Jo Borthen, Edwina Theunissen

Publications: Gary Podmore, Lucy Charlton, Ali Willer, Anne Rix

Business Practice Group: Priscilla Park-Weir, Pam Bellinger, Martine Frampton

DfES Team: Ann Samuel Till, Gary Podmore

LEA/EA Group: Anne Wade, Sarah Cook, Ann Samuel Till, Keith Charlton, Lize Stevens, Rob Wade

Communications: Priscilla Park-Weir, Anne Rix

Scotland Group: Ann Samuel Till, Lucie MacAulay, Anne Wade, Jill Fisher, Jane Bathgate

Information for other organisations: Priscilla Park-Weir, Anne Rix

Grievances and Complaints

Martine Frampton 70 Fossey Avenue, Moreton in Marsh, GL56 0EA 01608 812411 martine-frampton@macunlimited.net

Lynda Hitchman, 31 Audley St., Reading, Berks, RG30 1BP 0118 961 4466 hitchmans@ntlworld.com

Celia McDonagh, 235 Coed-y-Gores, Llanedeyrn, Cardiff CF23 9NL celiamcdonagh@yahoo.co.uk 07763 729055

Anne Rix Hembury Orchard, Frithelstock, Torrington, EX38 8JT 01237 451535 anne@annerix.demon.co.uk

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:

Media co-ordinator: Belinda Harris-Reid (see SW)

Scotland: Alison Sauer, Inverness.

Tel: 01463 232571 Fax: 01463 220 825

Mob: 07956 193 983 alison@sauer.demon.co.uk

Northern Ireland (VACANT) Volunteers please!!

North West: (VACANT) Volunteers please!!

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

Midlands: Helen Donaldson, Colwich, Staffs 01889 882043 serf@unappreciated.co.uk

Wales: Celia McDonagh, Cardiff, 07763 729055 celiamcdonagh@yahoo.co.uk

East Anglia: Ali Willer, Sprowston, Norwich 01603 401020 simon.whitehall@tesco.net mailto:webmaster@education-otherwise.org

South West: Belinda Harris-Reid Buckfastleigh, Devon 01364 643343

bharrisreid@baselinedata.co.uk

South East: (acting): Claire Turnham, 6 The Butts, Aynho, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX17 3AN 01869-811099 Claire@birthandbeyond.co.uk

London(1): Linda Irene'schild, Stockwell, London SW9 020 7787 6692

lindaflora2002@hotmail.com

London(2): (Acting) Kathleen McLaren, Walthamstow. 0208 527 3296

krmclaren1@tiscali.co.uk

EO Email Lists

The **EO Business list** discusses the organisation and policies of Education Otherwise. Open only to EO members (memberships will be regularly checked to ensure that the list members are still members of EO) and only for the discussion of EO business.

To join the business list: Go to: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/eobusiness> Or send a blank email to:

eobusiness-subscribe@yahoogroups.co.uk

You will receive an automatic response from Yahoo asking for your full name and address. When you have responded and your membership has been checked as valid, you can be added to the list.

General HE discussion can take place on the **EO general list**, which can be accessed via the website at www.education-otherwise.org

Who does What in EO

Council Members

Geraldine Adams (N. London) 0207 2634922

Jane Bathgate (Borders) 01835 862118

Pam Bellinger (Leics) 0116 282 7929

(Company Secretary)

Sarah Cook (Cumbria) 01768 896019

sarah@croggies.freemove.co.uk

Martine Frampton (Gloucs) 01608 812411

martine-frampton@macunlimited.net

(Treasurer)

****NEW*** Phil Hicks (London Central)

0207 2294385 phil@hickslondon.com

Jacqui Houlding (Cheshire) 01925 654856

je_houlding@onetel.net.uk

Celia McDonagh (Wales) 07763 729055

celiamcdonagh@yahoo.co.uk

Gary Podmore (Yorks) 0114 2585702

podmorefamily@blueyonder.co.uk

Julie Ridley (Manchester) 0161 860 7589

julier@breathemail.net (Chairperson)

Anne Rix (Devon) 01237 451535

anne@annerix.demon.co.uk

Janet Simpson (Lincs) 01427 617313

HE@hubblesimpson.co.uk

Ali Willer (East Anglia) 01603 401020

simon.whitehall@tesco.net

June Wilson-Billing (Dorset) 01202 827945

educationotherwise@mac.com

Membership

Membership and newsletter subscription enquiries, membership cards, address changes, new member packs, other queries or missing newsletters contact:

Database Administrator, Education Otherwise, 31 Audley St., Reading, Berkshire, RG30 1BP

Tel: Lynda Hitchman 0118 961 4466 or

0118 901 2215,

Email database@education-otherwise.org

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: June Wilson-Billing, 17 Woodland Close, Verwood, BH31 7PM Tel: 01202 827945 e-mail educationotherwise@mac.com (please ring to check availability of items before ordering)

Website and email lists:

Jacqui Houlding, 01925 654856 je_houlding@onetel.com ****NEW***

Useful Contacts

Contact with LEA / Member Support / Other Problems.

If you need help in dealing with your LEA ring your Local Contact or any Council Member.

If you have a query not covered below please contact your nearest Council Member (list left)

Single Parent Family Contact: Rowenna Williams

rowenna73@hotmail.com Berlan Gron, Llanycil, BALA,

Gwynedd, LL23 7YG Tel: 01678 521348

Special Needs: Christine Waterman, 85 Elfrida Rd,

Watford, Herts WD1 8AT 01923 464773

GCSE Contacts: Geraldine Adams 0207 263 4922

Sarah Cook: 01768 896019

sarah@croggies.freemove.co.uk

School Phobia: Mary Thompson (acting)

01942 795975 ktmusic59@yahoo.co.uk

College Contact: (Acting) Lianne Smith Ivy Mount,

Canny Hill, Newby Bridge, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12

8NU Tel: 015395 30716 (07717 301 887)

Autonomous Education Support: Sammy and Nick

Vidal-Hall, Home Croft, Brownston St, Modbury, Devon

PL21 0QR 01548 830716

Research Contact: Pam Vickers 25 Boxley Rd,

Walderslade, Chatham, Kent Home: 01634 671507

Work: 01227 712206 pjvickers@aol.com

Company Secretary: Pam Bellinger 56 Beech Drive,

Braunstone, Leicester LE3 3DA 0116 282 7929

Treasurer: Martine Frampton, 70 Fossey Avenue,

Moreton in Marsh, GL56 0EA

01608 812411 martine-frampton@macunlimited.net

EO Stalls: Lucy Charlton, 2 Wistow Rd, Newton

Harcourt, Leics LE8 0FT 0116 2592118

Coordinator for Local Contacts: VACANCY

(Assistant): Lize Stevens, 10 Mantle Road, Leicester LE3

5HG 0116 2513182 kissit@yavot.me.uk

Coordinator for Enquiries Secretaries: Iris Harrison

(Assistant) Jo Borthen 01392 438876 jo4eo@aol.com

Newsletter Coordinator (Acting) Fiona Stewart,

7 Firvale, Harthill, Sheffield, S Yorks, S26 7XP

01909 774811 vulpixie3@btinternet.com

(Retiring) Anne Rix, Hembury Orchard, Frithelstock,

Torrington, EX38 8JT 01237 451535

anne@annerix.demon.co.uk

Chairperson: Julie Ridley, 32 Cheltenham Road,

Chorley, Manchester, M21 9QN 0161 860 7589

julier@breathemail.net

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 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;
- promote knowledge, understanding and acceptance of education otherwise than at school in the world at large.

For further information send an A5 s.a.e. to:

P.O. BOX 7420
LONDON N9 9SG

Helpline 0870 73 000 74

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

Education Otherwise Association Ltd., Registered Charity No. 1055120

