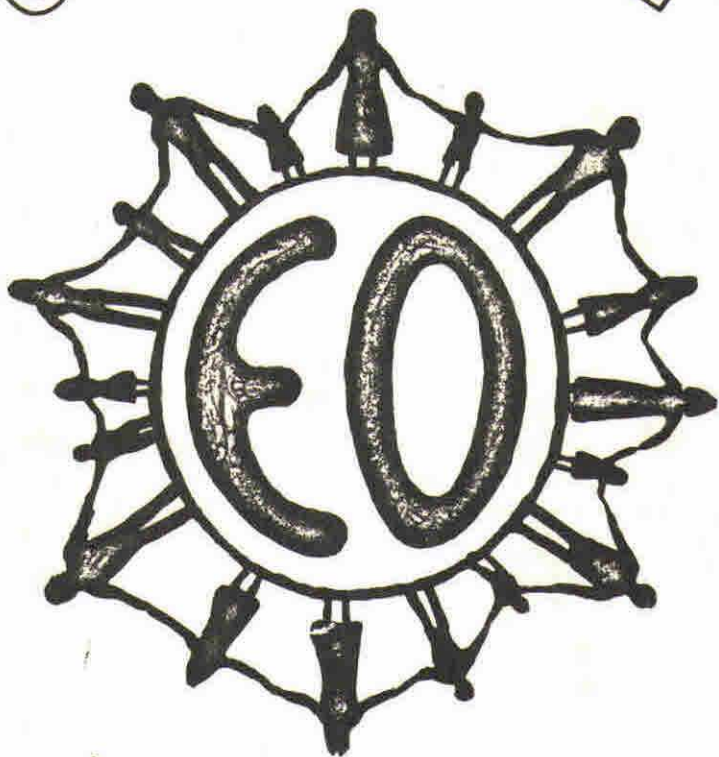


EDUCATION
OTHERWISE



NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 16
DECEMBER 1980



EDUCATION OTHERWISE

18 Eynham Rd, London W12

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December 1980
no. 16



Dick Kitto has been the mainstay of EDUCATION OTHERWISE since he founded it in 1977. What this actually has meant is hard to convey. Perhaps the nearest analogy is steering a large (potentially infinite) ship through uncharted waters, having occasionally to leave the helm and rush around to check that everything's watertight and carry out fairly complex repairs! It wasn't surprising that Dick began to feel like a break from such responsibilities, earlier this year. So he began to unload what he could of the administration over a period of months, until he was able to concentrate on his own life again.

Ironically, having got a little peace, Dick then fell ill. He was incapacitated for a couple of months with pleurisy, not helped by a move of house in the middle of it all. However, he's rapidly getting better and thinks he will be able to resume his involvement with EO after Christmas. We look forward to that, and thank Dick for his extraordinary and invaluable contribution to EO up to now.

A picture is gradually building up of a particular kind of candidate for EO. There have been many enquiries this year with the same kind of problem. It concerns, typically, a 13 year old boy who goes to a State school. Usually, the child is intelligent, sensitive, perfectly normally behaved at home. His unhappiness at school, however, causes him to react in various ways. He may find it hard to fit in, hard to concentrate, work, get on with the teachers. Or he may be bullied by other children, either because he is different, or because he wants to work, or just because he is there. One child even had his arm broken.

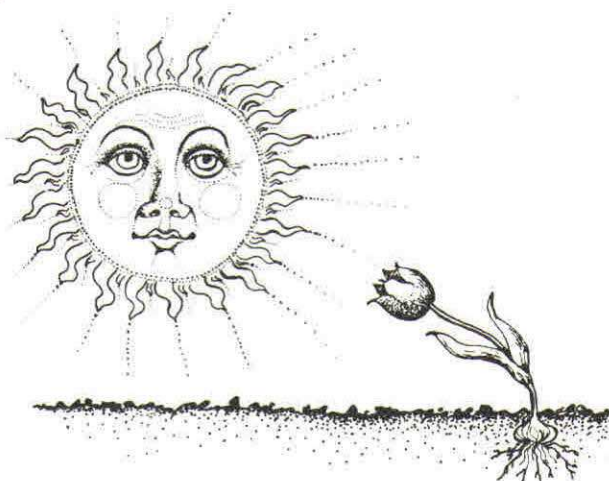
The educational psychologist will label such a child under-achieving/dyslexic/maladjusted/anti-social/school phobic or any other label currently in vogue.

But the parent - usually the mother - knows that it boils down to being unhappy at school, and withdraws the child. The local education authority often misinforms the family about its legal rights. Teachers know even less. But the child is at home - he relaxes and flourishes. Neighbours show sympathy, other parents confess to identical problems, and the idea of education otherwise spreads a little bit more.

Unfortunately, it can often take a lot of research for parents to find out about EDUCATION OTHERWISE as an association. One woman had to make 20 phone calls. If we all checked that our local citizens advice bureaux carried information on EO, it could make all the difference to other, less determined or able parents.

There are a lot of unhappy 13 year olds at school.

THOUGHTS ON A DAY OUT
AT TRENT PARK



Cherity Laniado

'You'll write an account of the E.O. day spent at Trent Park - won't you,' said Sarah Guthrie, smiling persuasively - and there I was trapped like my son when I smile at him equally persuasively telling him that his Record Book of Things he hasn't done before will be a source of pleasure to him as he grows older and can dip into it, and reflect on things past.

Pressure rises as London packing and sorting and checking amongst the continuous bustle of domestic life that living with three young children and building your own house can bring, is carried out. Every-thing is ready, the car is packed. We speed in the early morning through dark secretly forested Norfolk roads, a solitary car for many miles. Later we stop at a lay-by caravan cafe. We drink tea and watch passively as a crowd of peculiarly assorted 'Saxons' also drink tea out of plastic cups, before they disappear into a cavernous much travelled red London bus and continue on their way from where we have come.

Outskirts of London - masses of 1930's housing, Autumn is already here, leaves are turning yellow-gold. I struggle to read A to Z and not to miss anything we're passing. Cockfosters Underground station is found. Trent Park here we come. This place is large, we pass sporadic back-packers. Are they heading our way? We pass and almost miss a small unassertive poster E.O. Good Heavens - walkers from the station must be exhausted. The car stops, we look for an E.O. sign and catch instead a glimpse of the 'Big House' and on glancing around spot other E.O. acquaintances, the children depart at speed. Will there be many here? Was it advertised in Time Out? We are early. We make our way to the Lake side, others start to drift that way, faces and names start to connect, conversations start to buzz. 'That's Dick Kitto,' someone whispers in my ear. I turn and am surprised he is not as I imagined, more like Michael Bentine in serious mood. Suddenly I'm curious, what is the force that drives him, how is he involved?

2 o' clock approaches, crumbs are shaken, apples eaten, packages replaced in bags. There are not as many here as I supposed there would be. One of my children throws a tantrum about his sandals he has coated with mud - slowly like pulling out a wasp sting, he calms down and we head towards the Music Block. A well-known lady will be there selling books and will advise, a story for children will be read, a meeting for co-ordinators held, music activities and clay modelling there for the taking. We are all in a big hall waiting. I look at the books, Cooking, Science, Fiction, each with their own enticing pristine pictures willing you to pick them up. I think what we use most at home acquired mainly from second hand stalls, and wonder whether second-hand book stalls at E.O. gatherings would also be a good idea.

For a while chaos reigns, no-one's sure where to go, the meeting is postponed and allocated to a later time - now it will be a general open meeting. Music or Art, I follow the music party - a fabulous range of musical instruments, Aladdin's cave of cymbals, glockenspiels, and drums are before us. Soon there is more noise than my two children can stand and they back out shell-shocked and we make our way to the clay modelling block. This is a success, later I am presented with an Indian canoe and a large pancake on a plate. Some one on a teacher training course is doing a project on E.O. and an interesting talk develops. The meeting at last is started. No one, however, is quite sure what is actually to be discussed. Introductions Iris Harrison and her daughter make mention of the latest events in their case history.

The room is warm, children dive in and out. The canteen is shutting soon. We all make move to find the canteen. A grand wedding reception is in process, we filter past the bride to an upstairs room. Here unimpeded by any formality and among spilt tea cups and tired kids, conversations start to become animated. Everywhere I look people are talking. Perhaps E.O. meetings need more thinking out - a notice board of things that people really do want to talk about.

At last the day winds to an end, a lone Magpie acts as sentinal by the Music block and the gathering disperses. The baby now is tired, we re-shuffle the clutter inside the car finding room for a clay canoe and pancake on a plate and four more passengers. The Park recedes gradually behind us and we re-emerge into the London traffic. The day ends on an optimistic note, our passengers are just embarking on their daughter's education under their own steam, having just removed her from school. I hope all is going well for them. The night has closed in. On reflection it has been a good day.

Education THRU' the Press

- TELEVISION** There's been a debate in the press recently about the merit of children's TV programmes. This unexpected quote came from the head of Thames children's television; commenting on the quality of it all: "..... feeding them a diet of repeats that would drive peaktime viewers to revolt pretending that children's television is just adult television without the dirty bits." (GUARDIAN 26 September). Despite these repeats "banal imports and second-rate pop shows" 13 million under 16s watch tv for an average of 25 hours a week. David Lusted of the British Film Institute criticised children's television for being completely under the control of adults (GUARDIAN 16 October) and thus limiting on ways of thinking about children. He asked why children were the only category to be separated from the rest of us and given special programmes.
- THE 3 Rs** A 16-year old semi-literate gypsy has written a book about his life and his lack of continuous education (GUARDIAN July)... Scottish primary teachers have been told that they concentrate on the 3rs to the neglect of arts and sciences (GUARDIAN 20 August)
- CASH** Cuts in the education budget of over £50 million have been ordered by the cabinet (GUARDIAN 26 August). This may mean increased bus charges or further meals cuts.
- OBIT** Professor Jean Piaget, the Swiss psychologist and father of modern child psychology, died aged 84 in Geneva (TIMES 17 September). "Ironically" says the TIMES "Piaget never obtained a university degree in psychology. He held a zoology degree."
- EURO-TERM** France staggered the start of the school year to alleviate traffic congestion and economic disruption. Says the TIMES correspondent (17 September), "One has to have experienced .. the French education system to appreciate the revolutionary character of this reform." Also, student unrest and teachers strikes, plus decline of standards, have led increasingly to a move from state into private schools.
- ETON'S LIB** The first female teacher in 540 years of Eton started the autumn term (GUARDIAN 24 September).
- VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS** Up to now, Scottish teachers could legally inflict the same punishments that a parent might reasonably use - which means the tawse (forked leather strap). But, following complaints made by two mothers, the European Court of Human Rights has condemned the continued use of the tawse in schools (various newspapers November 7th). It is a violation of human rights and contrary to the European-Convention said the Court. ILEA will extend its ban on caning from primary to secondary schools next February (SUNDAY TIMES 5 October) with 11 more local authorities moving towards abolition, despite teachers resistance to the ban. Apart

from the Irish Republic, Britain is the only country in Europe to use corporal punishment in schools.

POLITICS

Labour's plans to abolish private education were described by Carlisle as "a significant step towards a totalitarian state... an assault upon parental ... and family responsibilities ... Let me state categorically that we will defend the right of any parent who wishes to pay for his own child's education if that is his choice." (GUARDIAN 8 October) ... A letter to the TIMES (2 October) pointed out that private education may be essential in the future to protect the rights of the majority, and that opportunity must be provided for children to be educated according to parents beliefs.

TRUANTS



According to a report in the GUARDIAN (30 September) children who play truant are now likely to have their names recorded on police computers in some areas where the police have taken over the role of Education Welfare Officers. In the North Wales constabulary, a police officer responsible for a group of schools patrols the community to return truant children to their classes. A spokeswoman for Cheshire police said "We take them back to school or back to their parents, although we do admit that we do not have the legal power to do so it would be silly to say that (the children's) names are not recorded."

HELP

Norway may appoint an ombudsman for children next year (GUARDIAN October)

EO

The South Norfolk Journal and the Eastern Daily Press both carried stories during October about the Fearnley family in Suffolk and their way of practising home education. EO was also referred to in an article for THE LEVELLER (October) on parents choice in education. A Thames TV programme called 'LEARNING WITHOUT SCHOOL' featured the Kirkbride family from Norfolk. The DAILY MAIL's critic described the programme as "profoundly seductive to thousands of parents" (August 29)

PARENT TEACHERS

According to the latest research, teachers should not discourage parents from helping children to read (SUNDAY TIMES 9 November). They can be better than the most skilled and intensive teaching at school. Education officers in Haringey are so impressed by the research that they are urging all primary schools to involve parents.

Edited by Sarah Guthrie with contributions from Jean Whitfield, Lorna Bicchichi and Helen Fletcher.

Letters ~

Dear Education Otherwise,

Your newsletter 15 arrived not long ago. Thanks very much for printing my piece from the (as I recall) Times Ed Supplement. I had almost forgotten about it, and was glad to see it again. Makes some points that I don't think can be made too often. I think newsletter 15 looks very nice. And I think it is important for us, and any people who are trying to change things, within the limits of our budgets, to make our publications and materials look as good, as elegant, as professional as we can. In this connection I have to say that I am regularly distressed by the appearance of the newsletter of the A.S. Neill foundation. (I don't believe Neill would have been happy with it, either).

I have completed a book about home-based education, to be called TEACH YOUR OWN. Delacorte will bring it out here next June. There are, as yet, no British publication plans that I know of.

The movement is growing here, but in the various state legislatures the education lobbies and teachers' unions are pressing hard for legislation that would make it much more difficult if not impossible for people to teach their own children. So far, these efforts have not had much success, and I hope they will not.

Good luck to you all.

Best wishes,
John Holt

GROWING WITHOUT SCHOOLING, Boston, Mass.

10.27.80

Dear Editor,

I've thought a lot about the Harrison case. What has stopped me so far from voicing my objections is the fact that you talk so much about freedom. If I go along with the LEA and demand that the children should be given a proper education - that seems to cut someone's freedom. But whose freedom is it? We can't ask the children, because most children will be on their parent's side. So it's really the parent's freedom we're talking about.

It seems to me that the children are learning to cope with a 16th Century life style - not ours! Of course their life is better than most children's who go to school and don't like it. But I don't think it's ideal and I sympathise with the LEA, so does my husband. We think that childhood should be spent playing and learning - not working.

Yours truly,

Sigrun Macgilchrist
35 Mayfield Ave
Stranraer

13.9.80

To the Editor

I read with interest a letter from Ann Stringer in Newsletter 15. She bewailed the addictive qualities of school and wished her son would choose to "avoid the mind-crushing system of education in this country." Dianne Cox replied that it would be "not 'practicable' and very unfair" to expect a young child to decide on education or otherwise. I disagree, and stand rebuked by my elder child for having assumed that school would not fulfill his expectations, and be a negative, or even destructive, experience.

I was poised to snatch Oliver from this grim fate the second he made the expected protests of boredom or unhappiness. I had been thrilled to hear of and join EO, and only persuaded (by Oliver) into opting for 'real' school by his obvious need for plenty of games, and an exceptionally lucky pre-school nursery experience.

Perhaps our infant/junior school is also an exceptional one. I don't know. But I do know that the headmaster, who I cannot praise too highly, encourages parents to take as much a part in the running of the school as they can. I also know that Oliver is not being brainwashed, oppressed or indoctrinated with useless or suspect information. The widely varying backgrounds of his peers have greatly enriched his experience, and one totally happy and intergrated little boy is completely blind.

I am eagerly poised to supplement or supplant my childrens' education - so far my children have firmly declared for school, and I think they have that right, even at five years old. I would like them to keep an open mind on the subject, but more than that I do not feel it fair to ask.

From Angela Montfort Bebb
18 Oswyth Road,
Camberwell, London, S.E.5.

Dear Editor

We as EO parents and children are going to need a "win" in court even more now. But ought we not, as an organisation, to be making representations to children's rights groups, etc.? Stop me if its been suggested, but could we EO parents not contribute on a weekly or regular basis to some sort of insurance scheme so that funds would be available to those of us who are finally cornered by the law thus enabling us at least to pay for 'expert' legal representation? I think also that if the situation worsens we must seriously try to arrange a network of boltholes for those of our children and parents who would sooner move in with, or move on to temporary accommodation or even swap homes again, (long enough to confuse the authorities) with other beleaguered children/families. I for one would accommodate any single parent and one child or any two reasonably independent children.

Jean Whitfield.

CHRISTMAS BOOKS FOR CHILDREN!

Special Offers!!



By SFG

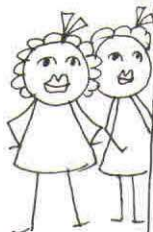
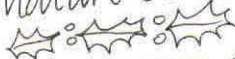
PANCREAS

the story of a lovable bear's fight against kidney disease



MRS WOMEN

follow the zany antics of Mrs Catarrh! Mrs Overdraft! & silly Mrs Mature Student!!



TIPSY AND TOM

kiddies will love the tale of what happens when crudely-drawn children take to the bottle



MUCKING ABOUT

3rd in the realistic "I cannot Read" reading scheme [with pictures to match] issued by the NSPCC (NON-SEXIST PUBLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN CORPORATION)



and a **HAPPY CHRISTMAS** to all our readers...



"Would you join me in a Local Radio broadcast?" That was the invitation from Dianne Cox who had agreed to go on Radio Derby to talk about E.O., and take part in a possible "phone-in". Though a relative newcomer to E.O. I was happy to agree.

Within 5 minutes of arriving at Radio Derby we were both on the air, with only our opening questions known. Di was to discuss the administration of E.O., the parts played by the Core Group and the Co-ordinators etc. and the legal position. We both then commented on the general points of Home Education.

Di was able to give the picture of a parent involved over a period of time educating three children in the younger age group, I was just starting - officially on the very day of the broadcast, my children are both older, one of Senior School age.

The interviewer was very gentle, did not ask any very difficult questions, but was obviously indoctrinated to the State System and was honestly puzzled as to why we should want to do this, and his questions tended to be the expected ones:-

Why take this step?

What if I came across a mathematical problem I couldn't solve?

How could I teach science?

What about the social aspect? Were we not depriving our children of friends?

Nothing we couldn't handle, in fact we both enjoyed the experience.

We were on the air for about 40 mins, it seemed much less, we both noticed a significant change in the attitude of the interviewer as the programme progressed, he was certainly more sympathetic to home education. I believe we made him think, possibly for the first time ever, on the lack of relevance of the State System to "life", the thing Home Education is predominantly geared to.

I can only say if you are approached to make a similar broadcast from my own experience "Go ahead", it is only in this way, through the media, we can advertise our existence.

If anyone is approached and would like to hear our tape, Dianne has offered, if you would send her a blank cassette and postage, she will re-record our tape.

Life in school



1 Experiences of a Comprehensive from Audrey Hannan (Northampton)

"... It was the school situation that I found so galling - and frighteningly powerful. The teachers on the whole were pretty dedicated but they were totally blind. School was their whole world and yet they often spoke of "preparing children to go out into the real world", while continuing to build a frightening, unnatural world around them and insisting on people "fitting into it". I had no idea that teachers had so much power. A child could be labelled for the whole of his/her developing years simply because of the attitude of teachers. I saw the lists of new intakes of 13-year olds in July, and there were comments such as: "Gary Smith - a pest. Watch out for interfering Mother ...". My blood boiled over such things so much of the time I was there, that if I'd stayed on I think I'd have suffered a stroke! The Headmaster was only interested in his own glory, wanting his school to have the best exam results in the County ... the entire Summer term seemed to be taken up with preparation for exams, and in the 5th year only one child didn't take any exams. She spent most of her time hiding in the Library, trying to escape notice. As she was illiterate at 15, the Library was hardly the place for her and she is no doubt living on the dole now, bored silly. Her one interest in life was animals but there was no provision for that, of course, in a school. The teachers had brainwashed themselves and most of the parents into believing that the school was an enormous success and that they were doing everything possible to give the children a good start to "life", i.e. that they would get jobs. They all had to do "community service" but as for one another, they had absolutely no care or consideration for anyone. They were rude, vicious... cruel and nasty I could see that school was not a loving place and they behaved as they appeared to be expected to behave. I could never get used to the grabbing of a young boy by the ear by a male teacher, simply because he was wearing a forbidden ear-ring. Although the Head talked of "LOVE" constantly and called the children 'darling' most of the time, and didn't allow caning, I know that one (admittedly very disturbed and violent) boy was caned six times on the hands and I saw two P.E. masters assault boys on several occasions ... I feel really sorry for children in schools such as that the enormous expense of social workers whose one task each day is to visit a number of schools on a regular basis, find out who hasn't been 'clocked in' to school, and then check up with the families as to why the child isn't there (one) hated the task, admitted that it was utterly hopeless and was costing the ratepayers a fortune, but she still insisted that children "must be made to attend school" I came out (of the job) knowing that the whole fabric of the system was evil, brutalising and wasteful of human potential, and that the teachers claims to 'caring and loving' and the so-called academic results were fraudulent We must continue to help people to escape it."

2

I am in the middle of a teaching practice at a village school in Cumbria, a school with 3 classes and 3 teachers, including a teaching Headmaster. There are about 70 children in the school, and 26 in my class, the ten and eleven year olds and the nine to ten year olds. The class is almost exactly divided between 3rd and 4th years. The Head is generally thought of as being sound, the school has a fairly good local reputation, and the two assistant teachers are thought to be 'good' teachers. My tutor at college told the Head that he wouldn't have any problems with me and my TP tutors says I'll pass unless something drastic happens. (It might well!) So - an ideal situation you might think. And in many ways it is - the school is much like a big family and the teachers much like parents (which two of them are), but there are fundamental differences that make me very concerned for all children in similar situations (which is most schoolchildren). Most of them spring from what I call a power complex that nearly all teachers seem to hold and which one of these teachers at least does hold - not surprising because a teacher has a great deal of power over children.

Children are threatened with being smacked or otherwise treated as babies and are frequently in danger of being humiliated in front of the class or the school. In Assembly which often is dragged out from 9.00 am until nearly 10.00 am the children are expected to sit without talking or fidgetting, often when there is nothing happening that they should be listening to, and when the teachers are talking, and when most adults would be too. My cowardly response is to find some work to do and stay in the classroom - I can't bear watching and there is nothing I can do to stop it. Even if I were to speak to the teachers or the Head about it they wouldn't understand why I thought it was wrong. (Most teachers seem to think that children are a different species and certainly are not 'people' and that somehow miraculously they become people at a later date - basing this idea, apparently on the feeling that children are not capable of making responsible decisions.) Another strand of this power complex relates to parents, who I am told on good authority (one of the teachers - who is introducing me to the morals of teaching) we can be friendly to but with whom we must not make friends with on a social level e.g. we must not go to tea or for a drink with parents of children at our school - it just isn't done (I quote). I also find, sadly that much private and personal information regarding parents gets to the ears of these teachers - by official sources as well as from the children - and that this is a matter for some pride and one-up-man-ship, not to mention prejudice. Staff room gossip too.

My own worries and dislikes stem from the problems of trying to give time and patience to all the children when about 12 of them at once need my attention - absolutely impossible. I get on well with all the children and none of them avoid me in or out of class, but the friendly basis I try and work on means that the children are not afraid of me and when they are feeling boisterous they don't know how to control themselves and there is some chaos. Not too terrible but enough that I can't teach through it.

Self-control is just not on the menu - for although the staff work at discipline - it is based on their power and threats or promises and not on self-discipline.

It means that my teaching can only be partly based on self-discipline - when the chaos gets too much to handle I have to resort to threats or demeaning the children. I feel this is my inadequacy as well as theirs but I don't know any better yet - in one's own classroom time would be on one's side but there would still be the influence of previous teachers and other teachers in the school.

One lad I teach is hopeless in class - never listens to instructions, always fidgetting, chatting to his friends, interrupting, and so on - and therefore because he is disrupting lessons I am constantly having to tell him to be quiet or to sit down or worse - but when I give him a lift home he behaves well and he chatters normally and I respond normally and we get on fine. And then I wonder why we can't organise our schools so that we can always behave 'normally'?

It seems to me that the root of our school problem is the element of compulsion that exists for school registered children - this creates authority in teachers which gives them power, which is then open to abuse in minor and major ways. It also removes the responsibility for their children from the parents onto teachers, and gives teachers a measure of power over parents as well as children. Coupled with this is the elusive idea that we are providing an education for children - since education is neither defined by law nor easily definable it leaves teachers unaccountable for their work - if we could change the purpose of schools from educating to bringing children to a defined level of literacy and numeracy, and if we exempted all children from attendance who had proved their competence, and then provided a youth service for all parents who for whatever reason cannot spend all day with their children - then we might get schools beginning to earn their keep. I think teachers should be accountable for their employment and I think the baby-sitting function of schools should be hived off from the teaching aspect i.e. it should be carried out by different categories of workers. I also think that the moral teaching done by teachers should be strictly limited to controlling children within the classroom situation.

Perhaps some EO members are interested in the wider implications of schools, and not just how it affects their own children - if so perhaps we should be thinking about getting the law changed to benefit the majority, without eroding parental rights (preferably increasing parental accountability and responsibility).

Jane Davies

22 Greta Street Keswick Cumbria

TALKING ABOUT SCHOOL

PHIL DRABBLE, broadcaster on country lore, admitted in a recent interview that he hated school and was always a rebel. He learned more about fieldcraft from rat catchers, gamekeepers and poachers who, he says, "knew more than any of the knobbedy-kneed academics who taught me biology at my public school." He added that he joined the Natural History Society in order to escape organised games ADAM FAITH, pop singer/actor interviewed in the SUNDAY TIMES (September) says he hated school talking on Radio Norfolk (October 26) a woman described her schooldays at the local village school teachers used to put the children in corners with dunce caps on their heads and whack them with rulers or canes. The woman used to come in for this more than others, she said, because she was often out down the meadow with the boys she liked cookery and maths but found the headmaster very strict KATE BUSH, pop singer, said that as soon as you leave school you learn things at three times the rate (SUNDAY TIMES 5 October) GARY NUMAN, punk star, admits "I was very unpopular with the teachers" (BBC TV October 4) "STING", lead singer with the group THE POLICE, says "I decided to become a teacher, largely through lack of imagination" (BBC 2 October 10) PAUL DANIELS, magician, was asked by a child what the most important thing was to learn at school in order to be a magician. "Leaving," he replied. (BBC TV Swap Shop October 11), "They give you maths that go on and on forever" he continued. "I could only add up when I left school."

PLAYGROUNDS The Teacher-Child Interaction Project investigated schools playgrounds and their effect on behaviour and learning problems (ILEA CONTACT 26 September). The deputy head of the school concerned described the playground as "a cage in which the children had to be contained at all costs" the difficulty of settling children for the afternoon sessions, often attributed to incidents which had occurred in the playground at lunchtime. A letter in response to this article (ILEA CONTACT October 24) recalled long-suppressed memories: "We had one ... dinner lady who used to dispense toilet paper one sheet at a time ... hours spent pressed against walls in feeble attempts to keep warm ... being reduced to tears by the boredom and pointlessness of it all my own little boy, not quite five, is now undergoing these same torments ... we have already abolished corporal punishment in our primary schools. Can we now not lead the country in abolishing the physical and mental punishment of cold, dismal playgrounds?"

About reading

by Lorna Biccicchi

At the Trent Park E.O. Meeting there was some inconclusive discussion about whether or not to teach a child to read and at what age it should be done, if at all. I shall here presume to give my opinion based on my experience of home education with my own two children (just 4 and 7). What I shall say isn't intended as a lesson to anyone, but may be helpful to home educators with very young children who haven't yet made up their minds about reading.

Reading has acquired such a mystique over the past few years that many parents are afraid of the subject and willingly leave it to 'qualified' teachers who supposedly are initiated into all the rituals and jargon of reading. Many teachers actually tell parents 'not' to do any reading with their children before they come to school in case they 'do it wrong'.

I don't see anything special in reading. To me it's just another activity which helps one survive and enjoy life. Among other things, babies learn to walk and climb, toddlers learn rhymes and songs and children learn to read. Reading is just another activity that goes on in the family and in which the child can eventually take pleasure. Some people might ask, of what use is reading to a child? Apart from books, I should say the ability to read would be quite helpful in reading notices of warning or of information, notices in museums, reading instructions on packets or on new games, and in travelling (timetables and destinations etc), in fact all sorts of things which would help a child to build his independence.

Some have the fear that whatever a child reads is second hand anyway and that he would be better employed in doing something of his own. To some extent I agree. I encourage my children to learn by first hand observation and experience and whenever we resort to a book for information, it is because we can't find out any other way. When Samuel asks me what ants eat, I advise him to go and watch the ants, (there is an ant's nest in the garden) but when he asks me which is the next planet after Neptune, we look it up in a book. But then aren't most influences on children second hand? We live in houses which some one else built and therefore have their design imposed on us. Most of us wear clothes designed by another; the ornaments and pictures in our homes are mostly bought and therefore influence our children's idea of art. The poems we read to them and the stories are second hand and therefore influence their idea of prose and poem structure. Are we never to read to them because it might stunt their poetic growth or their imagination?

Certainly I would never prefer reading to first hand observation or activity, but I do believe that books, used judiciously, have their place. In any case, books are nowhere near as insidious an influence as television. Pleasure and information may be extracted from books, whereas television throws it at you indiscriminately.

I am not afraid, in teaching my children to read, of putting them off reading. It is not a forced and timetabled subject (nothing is timetabled in our house, except dinner!) I read stories to the children and sometimes they read stories to me from what might be called their

reading books, as though all books aren't for reading! Some books have found useful in this way are:-

The Ronald Ridout series, starting with "I Can See"

"Methuen Story Readers" - amusing and whimsical

"Dr Seuss" books - hilarious

Helen Piers' animal stories - unanthropomorphic and beautifully photographed.

Stories by Shiela McCullagh - pirates, sea myths, boats, shipwrecks etc.



This is as far as we have reached. We do, of course, make use of other materials such as recipe cards, and very important, the children's own writing. In fact their first reading is done from the notices I write from their dictation for their pictures which go on the walls. These notices eventually stretch into stories which they can write for themselves. They sometimes go round the house reading their notices with self satisfied pleasure. The children make their own books on various topics of interest and read these to willing relatives and friends.

The actual beginnings of reading proper were quite painless. I sent for the 3, 4, 5, Kiddicraft reading pack, an investment well worthwhile.

When it arrived Samuel (then 3½) was delighted and wanted to start on this new game immediately. One could make all the constituent parts oneself but as I'm not artistic, I declined. The whole pack is divided into three folders, each containing nine words, word ladders and various puzzles, also two reading books. The mainstay of the pack are the three cylindrical clowns. The new words are hooked on the clowns' buttons and copies of these words through the appropriate clown's mouth. It is recommended that 10 minutes per day is spent working with the pack but we found we missed days and then Samuel would want to work on it for 40 minutes or more and even then cried occasionally when I wanted to put it away. After Samuel had learnt the 27 words provided, we moved on to all sorts of simple books including those he dictated to me and illustrated. I never force a reading session and stop as soon as the children show signs of tiredness, so it's always a pleasure for them and never a bind.

With Angelo the process has been somewhat different. Being the second child he has picked up a lot from his elder brother. Since he was 2½ and without any instigation from me Angelo has pointed at words in his story books and loves 'playing clowns' (345 scheme) almost every day. Although his concentration span is shorter than Samuel's at the same age, he asks for reading activities more often.

Reading must be tailored to the individual child. No one 'system' will succeed with all children. I have read that if reading is left till a child is 7 years old he will learn in two weeks. But then when the printed word is around us all the time, and your child asks what it means, how can one refuse to explain on the grounds that he is too young to know?



Edward at home

by Geraldine Lockington

Edward has been learning to tell the time. He has a goal! When he asked recently if he could have a watch, I said that when he understood time and related it to a clock, I would buy him one.

He has spent a large portion of the past few days ogling at a mail order catalogue to decide the type he wants. It has taken him one day to come to terms with the clock and it looks as though next week we shall have to go and buy that watch.

Edward is just 7. He has never been to school and all the important things (important to him that is) have been learnt in this matter of fact way. Edward is a realist when it comes to what will be of advantage to him.

I used to occasionally buy lolly ices for the children when out on excursions, but I resented that they always chose the expensive ones. I have solved the problem; they have an allowance. Edward's allowance is on paper and he deducts everything he spends to find his latest total. The advantages are two fold - he now buys the less expensive lolly but also is getting very good at subtraction. Vicki who is only just 5 has the real cash to use as she needs to see the money going. Perhaps it sounds harsh for Edward to work it out on paper but there would be no learning value for him to deduct the cash, as he came to terms with handling real money over a year ago.

I have gone into this example to indicate how we attempt to turn all real life situations into an opportunity to learn. My opinion as to the way the children should learn is mid-way between letting them discover and teaching them. I very much prefer discovery, but I do not want them to miss the chance to 'discover' anything, and so I create opportunities for experiences to take place.

An example of this is the use of graphs. We grew three sunflowers in different positions in the garden. The sunflowers alone gave us pleasure but plotting their different rates of growth on a bar graph gave us some information we would not have obtained if we had just watched but not recorded.

We do sit down sometimes and have structured sessions on the 3 Rs, but not regularly and not for very long. A lot of our learning is done when the children and I are out and about during the day.

Already I see the signs of Edward working things out for himself and forming his own opinions. Recently, on the radio he heard the term credit mentioned and asked my husband what it meant. When it had been explained to him he gave the matter some thought and said "I don't really think credit is a good thing". Another example occurred the other day when a group of children were gathering acorns in the garden to use in a game they were playing. One little girl complained that Edward was not working. "My job is making sure you work" was Edward's sharp reply.

I could go on for ever with examples of spontaneous learning and understanding of life. The reason I joined EO was because I had noticed the way Edward learnt things up to age 5, and I became increasingly concerned

that this easy uncomplicated way of learning would have to stop when he went to school.

We hadn't planned home education. The initial seed was sown a couple of months before Edward was 5 and dismissed as something others do. The final seed was sown and grew in one week just as he was due to start school. Once the decision was made a letter was written to the authorities immediately. A little rash perhaps, but I think my subconscious had been playing with the idea for years.

I was very wary - I felt it must be the right thing to do but knew no-one else who felt the same way. I won't pretend that every day is rosy. We all have our bad days but also we have lots and lots of good ones. I regularly challenge myself as to my motives but I still come back with the same answer, that this is true learning related to our real life.

Barbara Clolesy sends this extract from THE SCHOOL BOY, by William Blake

'How can the bird that is born for joy
Sit in a cage and sing?
How can a child, when fears annoy,
But droop his tender wing,
And forget his youthful spring?

O Father and Mother, if buds are nip'd
And blossoms blown away:
And if the tender plants are strip'd
Of their joy in the springing day,
By sorrow and care's dismay, -

How shall the summer arise in joy
Or the summer fruits appear?
Or how shall we gather what griefs destroy,
Or bless the mellowing year,
When the blasts of winter appear?'

Barbara writes: 'My daughter's first (and last, I think) year at school has certainly been a blast of winter! There is nothing, however, that can be added to this 18th century poem.'

ALTERNATIVES IN LEICESTERSHIRE

from Paula Theobald

An "Alternative Education Seminar" was held at Bosworth College, Desford, Leicestershire on Saturday 6th October. It was arranged by Geoff Edwards of the college's Community Education Department (himself a member of EO) and attended by about ten EO families, single members, local families practising home education but not EO members and others, including students of education. At the same time there was a drama workshop for 7 to 11 year olds, toys for the younger ones.

The morning session consisted of a number of EO members with different experiences talking about home education - their problems methods, reasons, hopes and aspirations. Lively discussion and questions followed on, as the EO members revealed a variety of approaches: formal, laissez-faire, individual, family and group, but all with the same basic reasons and purposes - to provide a form of education not available elsewhere.

Some participants not practising EO were concerned that we were too individual and appeared not to be contributing to changing mainstream education. It was pointed out the EO contains members teaching in 'ordinary' schools and trying to make changes. Also many of those who had opted out had tried to change the system in the past, but realising that their own children would never benefit as change is so painfully slow, decided that, for them, the best way was outside the system. They hope that by showing that there is a viable alternative, change may be effected.

During lunch a film about Summerhill was shown, and afterwards, the group divided into two. The first group talked about The Harrison family's legal difficulties, and the second talked about group education outside school. The seminar finished about 4.00, but some stayed for folk music in the evening.

SINGING **CAROLS** THIS YEAR? then
please remember DING DONG!
MERRILY ON HIGH, for it's 2nd
verse:

"E'en so here below, below
Let steeple bells be swungen
And **EO, EO, EO** by priests ♪
And people sungen"

[with apologies to GR WOODWARD]

Some rumblings in North Herts

Gleefully, in mid-September, our local paper led its front page with "PARENTS IN SCHOOL REBELLION". What could be behind this dreadful message? The article began "Several parents in Hitchin are breaking the law by deliberately not sending their children to school".

It turned out this was because their first-choice school was full up. "The parents of one eleven-year-old say they will keep her at home and give her private tuition for the rest of the year, until she is offered a place at Hitchin Girls' School for the past week she has been having private tuition at home and by qualified teachers".

The article then explored the issue of policy regarding choice of schools, and ended by quoting the Divisional Education Officer: "I very much regret that this is the decision of parents. They are breaking the law when there are alternative places available in other schools in the area, I or my deputy have spent hours talking to them and giving them advice".

The following week this generated a refreshing breeze through the columns. " 'Illegal' charge angers parents", the article announced. "Angry parents this week challenged a statement by the Divisional Education Officer that they were breaking the law by keeping their children at home while awaiting a place at the secondary school of their choice.

"They claimed that if they were educating their children at home, or by private tutors, and keeping proper records and timetables, they were not in breach of the 1944 Education Act the Education Act states 'it is the duty of parents to ensure that their children of comprehensive (sic) school age receive efficient full-time education'....

"One parent said: 'as far as we are concerned we are providing tuition and are not breaking the law. Keeping your child away from school is not breaking the law, it is not providing education that is breaking the law'".

The paper then quoted the Divisional Education Officer who stressed that such home arrangements must be scrutinised and that "if the education received was insufficient or non-existent, a parent could be taken to court". He also stated "there was now only one child out of school in the North Herts Division".

The same edition published no less than three letters on the subject; one concluded 'if that is what these parents want for the girls, then they have a right to teach the girls at home. It is not illegal to do this'".

A second rebuked the Education Officer for his "gross error", quoted the 1944 Act rather more accurately - including the 'or otherwise' clause and stating 'the last two words indicate quite clearly that children can indeed be legally educated at home if that is the parents' wish'".

The third letter announced reassuringly "any child will get on in any school if they are prepared to work hard".

Perhaps chastened by this ambitious claim, the rebels, a week later, were no more: "School row is settled", ran the headline. One vacancy had suddenly arisen at the first-choice school, but the other parents seemed to have come to heel.

The same edition published our letter:

"Perhaps there is only one child in North Herts being educated at home.

"However, there is a surprisingly large number of families throughout the country involved in home education. Some have home tutors, some make use of correspondence courses, whilst others work in a more informal way, the children being encouraged to pursue their own interests and learning for the best possible reason - i.e. because they want to.

"All these parents, many of whom are members of Education Otherwise, clearly believe that this sort of education has a good chance of producing happy, confident, friendly and adaptable people who know what they are good at, who are not afraid of their weaknesses and who feel comfortable with children of all ages, as well as with adults.

"Surely the aim of the 1944 Education Act is to ensure that all children are educated. Wouldn't it be better for parents choosing home education to work in creative partnership with the education authorities, rather than have to defend themselves against accusations of lawbreaking?"

I've quoted the letter in full, as background to a revealing incident that occurred the following day. I'm the fostering specialist in the North Herts Social Services Dept. The Head of a local school phoned my office very worried about a problem concerning one of my fostermothers. The secretary who took the call suggested that he speak to me. "Is that the one who doesn't like schools?", he retorted, refusing to discuss the matter with me.

How vulnerable we can all be. Our letter was hardly anti-school, and pretty conciliatory in tone. But it stung him - a man notoriously self-confident in his public image. And I too: so clear and sure, eloquent and passionate about our children's home education - and yet I confess to a ripple of nerves each time I glance at the polite letter from County Hall requesting a visit to "discuss your arrangements".....

It's certainly heartwarming to feel the support and understanding of you out there who feel the way we do.

TREVOR STURGES

CORE GROUP & PUBLICATIONS GROUP

MINUTES OF THE EO PUBLICATIONS GROUP 25th October 1980

Present Dianne Cox, Sarah Guthrie, Bruce Cox, Dom Sweetman.

Apologies Dick Kitto, John Elenor, Joan Hoare, Helen Fletcher, Helen Holland, Jane Davies.

Bruce in the chair, Dom taking minutes.

1 The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted.

2 Matters Arising

2.1 Digests. Halina McHale had not completed the Digest of NLS 9-12, due to difficulties with preparing it for printing; and Helen Fletcher had not been able to do the same with 5-8. Bruce will try to help Halina with her printing, and if that goes OK perhaps the same team will do 5-8.

2.2 Resources. The informal list of resources produced by Betty Ball from the questionnaires was felt to be useful. Betty will continue to accept questionnaires as they come in from new members.

2.3 Letter to local co-ordinators. Discussion deferred to the Core Group.

2.4 Curriculum booklet. The anticipated meeting to discuss the booklet did not take place. One person is needed who will take on the booklet, organise meetings and steer it to publication; a volunteer is sought. We apologise to those who have contributed writing for the lack of progress.

3 Prices of publications. Prices to non-members are currently:- First Steps, 80p; Early Years, 50p; Newsletters, 40p. The difference between the price of FS and EY is a historical accident.

4 EO logo redesign. The EO logo is the circular symbol which appears on newsletters and in all sorts of other places. A friend of Sarah's has offered to redesign the logo and to provide a variety of titles and lettering styles to go with it. Sarah will invite him to produce some proposals for the next meeting.

5 Posters. The handbills offered at the last meeting have not appeared. We are still looking for a member who is willing and has facilities to print some sort of EO poster suitable for libraries, bookshops etc.

6 Book Reviews. Sarah has received a review copy of a book; if we wrote to publishers we could probably get more. Sarah expressed willingness to do this; if she gets inundated with books to review others (Bruce & Di, Dom) expressed a willingness to write reviews.

7 Last newsletter (15). Bruce and Di Cox organised it and found it hard work. Brian Guthrie got it printed. Dom reported that we need to print 600 copies of newsletters, not 500. Minor points: we felt we would prefer to use a thin card cover, and we try to keep the colours

of current E0 publications different (NL15 looks too much like First Steps).

8. Next newsletter (16): Sarah has taken on the central role. We noted that it should contain as enclosures a new contact list (done by Dom & Ros), and a membership renewal form (done by Sarah, who will consult with John Elenor). Bruce will ask Roland Meighan for a report on the progress of the Harrison family's case.

9. Introductory letter reprint: The stock of intro letters is too low for us to send some out to each local co-ordinator, as planned. We decided that it should be repinted (rather than reduplicated), possibly with a smaller typeface. Dom will retype it and get it printed, Di & Sarah will decide on any minor changes. We will print 1000.

The meeting closed at 12.53 pm (digital time).

MINUTES OF THE CORE GROUP

25th October 1980

Held at: Field House
Mellis Road
Thrandeston, Diss
Norfolk

Present. Bruce & Di Cox, Sarah Guthrie, Dom Sweetman, Liz Sturges, James & Jackie Fearnley, Cherity Laniado, (Geraldine Lockington and Sandie Cottee - taking minutes)

Apologies. Dick Kitto, John Elenor, Helen Fletcher, Helen Holland, Joan Hoare.

- 1 Minutes of last core group meeting (July) were accepted.
- 2 Matters arising
 - 2.1 Dom reported on publication group minutes
 - 2.2 Legal Status of E0 - John hadn't completed the investigations and will report later.
 - 2.3 Legal Situation in N.Ireland - In a letter to Sarah, John reported that relevant clauses of the Northern Ireland Act were identical to those in the 1944 England & Wales Act (but differently numbered) however, Northern Ireland should refer to 1947.

3 Reports

Treasurer - A good financial situation was reported.

Enquiries Sec. - There has been an increase in enquiries over the last year, including a few from the States. Sarah pointed out that the quantity of enquiries at the moment was manageable for herself and Di but this would not necessarily be the case next year.

Membership Sec. - Dom reported that membership had increased from 380 - 450 from June to September, possibly helped by an article in the Guardian. Typed County lists of members had been given to Sarah & Di - copies of the relevant parts are to be sent to local co-ordinators. Dom reported that he was running out of contact lists, First Steps and newsletters prior to March 1980.

4 Local Co-ordinators

To enable co-ordinators to play a more active role, a package will be prepared to be sent to them and will consist of compliment slips, headed paper, introductory letters, a copy of Early Years and a local membership list. (Eventually this will include phone numbers - Dom will compile this when possible). Also an information letter covering items not covered in First Steps, is to be prepared by Sarah & Di and will include the address of ACE and various other agencies such as PNEU, Dyslectic Association etc to assist co-ordinators with any enquiries they receive.

There are a number of areas not yet covered by Local co-ordinators and Bruce will be contacting members personally asking for volunteers. A list of areas not already covered by a co-ordinator is also to appear in the newsletter to highlight the problem.

5 DHSS Problems

A few members have brought up the fact that they are having difficulty claiming child benefits when their children reach 16 as there is no proof that these children are receiving full-time education. There was discussion as to whether EO should investigate this matter, and it was decided that while EO will not take it up as a cause, these members would be supported morally. Bruce suggested that more information and first hand experience would be useful. An item is to appear in the news-letter on this subject.

6 Book Reviews

Sarah has received a book to review and it was felt that it would be a good idea to write to other publishers requesting that suitable books should be sent for EO to review.

7 Electric typewriter

There are two possibilities. Sarah has one that requires reconditioning. If EO is prepared to pay for the cost of this she would donate it to EO. Jane Davies can also obtain one for £50. Sarah is going to make further enquiries and make a decision.

8. Address of EO

It was confirmed that John Elenor's home address would be the published address for EO and that he would redirect all mail to the relevant people. Bruce suggested that John's address should be printed on EO headed paper. James suggested that stickers should be printed to put on stationery. It was decided to leave the stickers for the time being.

9. Review of Trent Park (and other events)

The Trent Park get-together was generally considered to be a success and although it was felt that the organisation of the short meeting was a bit lacking, the general attitude was very favourable. Members felt that it was worthwhile for these get-togethers to take place and that Trent Park gatherings should become a permanent fixture for the last week in September. Thanks should go to John Elenor who made this function possible. Anyone with offers of help or ideas for future events should contact John Elenor.

Dick Kitto suggested that following the success of Trent Park it should be considered reviving Residential Meetings such as those that had taken place at Lower Shaw Farm. Discussion took place on this subject and it was decided to organise an EO May/June Gathering to take place next year. It is to be an informal weekend of camping in East Anglia and it is hoped that people will come from all areas (not just East Anglia), but it was felt that those unable to travel to East Anglia could follow this example in their own areas and organise similar events. Details are to appear in the newsletter.

It was reported that a successful meeting had been organised by Jeff Edwards at Bosworth College, Desford.

10. Chairman for next meeting to be appointed.

11. Next meeting

To be held at Helen Holland's, Horsgate Farm, Cuckfield, Haywards Heath, Sussex on 24/25 January 1981. Overnight accommodation is available and travelling expenses will be paid to people who need them and can be claimed from John Elenor.

12. Any other Business

Supply of EO Publications to Bookshops

Dom is no longer able to supply EO Publications to bookshops as stocks are not high enough at present to allow for sale and return, but it was felt that a definite policy is needed to supply bookshops as it is an advantage having these publications available to the public. It was agreed that there is a need for a volunteer to take over the distribution and that there is a need for a volunteer to take over the distribution and financial side of EO Publications to bookshops or possibly enroll the help of local co-ordinators.

James suggested that a new title would be an advantage for the First Steps publication as the present one is not self-explanatory (First Steps to What?). The possibility of a new format was discussed for it but as there are only 90 copies left it was agreed to reprint the same production for the moment as there is not time to redesign it before the copies sell out.

It was also agreed that a poster to promote EO would be an advantage for members to place in public places i.e. libraries, citizens advice bureaux (schools !!!) etc. It was agreed that a request would be made to members for a volunteer to design one.

Jane Davies has kindly compiled a booklist and copies can be obtained by sending a s.a.e. (17p - it is a long list) to Geraldine Lockington, 3 Meade Close, Billericay, Essex, CM11 1DF.

As an organisation EO are members of the National Council of Civil Liberties and James Fearnley has offered to liaise between the two organisations. The offer was accepted.

APPEAL FOR CO-ORDINATORS

EDUCATION OTHERWISE is now in the strong position of having voluntary co-ordinators in three-quarters of the British Isles.

Many parents who have experienced taking their children out of school (or simply never sending them) are now voluntary co-ordinators for EO. This means that they make themselves available to answer queries and to put local people in touch with one another. It's not a very demanding task, but it can be immensely satisfying - with the bonus, of course, of making new friends along the way.

If you feel you might like to do this, and you live in one of the counties listed below, get in touch with Sarah Guthrie, Field House, Thrandeston, Diss, Norfolk and she will tell you more about it.

And many thanks to those who have acted as co-ordinators up until now, but who have had, for various reasons, to drop out.

These are the counties not covered at present:

AVON	LANCASHIRE
DERBY	MERSEYSIDE
DORSET	NORTHUMBERLAND
GLOUCESTERSHIRE	OXFORDSHIRE
HANTS	SHROPSHIRE
HUMBERSIDE	STAFFORDSHIRE
KENT	WEST YORKS
LINCS	NORTHERN IRELAND

LONDON: We would welcome any extra coverage for London.

NOTICES

Mike and Chris Freeman ask members in Sussex with children 1-5 years to ring Brighton 415315 if they'd like to meet to exchange ideas and perhaps to arrange activities for their children.

The Birth Centre, Leeds produces a newsletter for 25p plus postage 10p from Anne Tracy, 49 Hartley Crescent, Leeds, 6. Information on all aspects of birth.

EO NEWSLETTER The life of the newsletter depends on us all writing for it. If you feel you'd like to say something, please send your contribution to John Elenor, 18 Eynham Road, London W12. It doesn't have to be typewritten, or "clever", and it could be to do with any aspect of EO. We would really welcome your views. Closing date for the next newsletter will be January 25th, 1981.

RESOURCES LIST We need to know how helpful this list has been to EO members, as a guide for doing it in the future. So if you have been able to use, could you let the Editor know (c/o Field House, Thrandeston, Diss, Norfolk).

REVIEWS Read any good books lately? There are a lot around that are about education in its myriad forms, that members may know of and have enjoyed. If so, could you send us the details and what you thought about the book? c/o John Elenor, 18 Eynham Road, London, W12.

DHSS Has anyone encountered problems with claiming benefit for children over the age of 16 who have not been registered at school? EO hopes to investigate this, on behalf of our members. Details to Dick Kitto, 27a Sydney Street, Brightlingsea, Essex.

TRENT PARK RALLY, September: Any suggestions/criticisms/ideas about this would be welcomed by John Elenor (18 Eynham Road, London, W12) in time for next year's event! Meanwhile, we are hoping to hold an

EO SPRING GATHERING sometime in early June, 1981. This is for all members, everywhere to gather in East Anglia and camp/be entertained/have craft stalls/children's stalls/enjoy themselves. If you cannot get to East Anglia, maybe you would like to organise your own local Gathering? What do people think of the idea?

BOOKLIST Jane Davies, student teacher, has found time to compile a lengthy booklist for EO members. This is titles of books on aspects of education that might be useful for further reading. It's available from Geraldine Lockington, 3 Meade Close, Billericay, Essex CM11 1DF price 17p plus sae.

Sandra Blacker is writing a dissertation about EO. She's looking for families educating children out of school in Kent or London. If you could help her, please contact Sandra at 22 Manor Park, Tunbridge Wells, Kent (telephone Tunbridge Wells 35905).

MEETING MEETING MEETING MEETING.....

The next core group meeting will take place at Helen Holland's house, which is HORSGATE FARM, CUCKFIELD, SUSSEX. She is happy to provide overnight accommodation (bring sleeping bags) for parents and children, provided that you let her know in advance (telephone Haywards Heath 54259). She will also provide road maps for those who'd like, and advise on how to get there. The meeting will be held on January 24th, 1981.

If you would like to attend, but cannot afford the fare, then E0 may be able to help you with expenses. Contact John Elenor, 18 Eynham Road, W12.



Know small ads are
free?

send your ads and notices
to E0 at 18 Eynham Road London W12.

deadline 25 JAN



Since teaching my children at home I have become interested in maths and science, in how one might approach these areas, and to what purpose. I would be glad to hear from anyone with views about this matter. I am in the process of writing to the people who listed a mathematical or scientific skill in the Skills List, but would be glad to hear anyone's opinions about the teaching and learning of science and maths. (I am not a scientist or mathematician by training.) Please contact me at:- 25 Moor Oaks Road, Broomhill, SHEFFIELD S10 1BX.

JOAN HOARE

HELEN FORD, of Hafod Ysppyty, Ffestiniog, Gwynned, North Wales would be happy to accommodate (and feed) anyone from E0 passing through, in exchange for some advice and moral support (especially someone with a bit of experience).

Devon

Chris Stokes, EO member from Devon, has written to the CAMPAIGN FOR STATE-SUPPORTED ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS suggesting that schools allow children to enrol part-time, for courses they'd like to follow. "In future" writes Chris "we might be able to venture even further and persuade LEA's to give parents a grant towards their children's education (as in Sweden, is it?). That too, would be a move towards state-supported alternative education if not state-supported alternative schools. So perhaps you could change your label to make it less exclusive? Yours, Chris Stokes."

EO in Devon seems to be a flourishing affair, with its own newsletter issued 2-3 times a year (5 issues to date). Members there exchange resources, information, hold meetings and outings. If you're interested, contact Chris Stokes at 110 Pilton Street, Barnstaple, Devon.

SITS VAC STOP PRESS! MONKTON WYLD, the alternative co-educational boarding school in Dorset, needs a female Arts & Crafts teacher (or a couple) who can work in an informal setting with all kinds of children. Pay is: live in + £25 pw plus full expenses or £60 a week + live out. Interested? Contact STEVE WEBSTER at the school, near CHARMOUTH, DORSET DT6 6DQ, tel. Charmouth (0297) 60342, straight away.

Our present EO logo (the design we use of the cover of newsletters and elsewhere) has served us well, but some of us feel that it could be redesigned. What do members think?



Send copy for
the next
newsletter
to JOHN
ELENOR by
Jan 25



18
EYNHAM
ROAD W12?
Right-oh...

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL All subscriptions are due on 1st January.

(* delete which does not apply)

either: * I enclose a cheque/PO for £5 payable to EDUCATION
OTHERWISE
Name (CAPITALS)
Address

or: * I have completed the Banker's order form below

BANKER'S ORDER

Please pay Barclays Bank, Holland Park, London, W12 (code 20-41-56) the sum of £4.50 now and on the 1st January 1982 and annually thereafter until cancelled, for the credit of Education Otherwise (A/C No. 10351369)

SIGNED:

DATE:

Name and address of your bank
(CAPITALS)

Your name and address
(CAPITALS)

Note to bank: when making payments please quote No. E0

Please send to

John Elenor (EO Treasurer),
18 Eynham Road
London
W12

Happy New Year Happy New Year Happy New Year Happy New Year Happy New Year

EDUCATION OTHERWISE

18 Eynham Rd, London W12

Education Otherwise is a membership organisation whose principal aim is to provide a support and information network for families whose children are being educated out of school, for those who are contemplating such a step, and for those who wish to support the freedom of families to take proper responsibility for the education of children.

Our principle aims are as follows

- To encourage the provision of alternative learning situations outside the school system for those children who are not benefitting from school.
- To re-affirm that parents have the primary responsibility for their children's education and that they have the right to exercise this responsibility by educating them out of school.
- To establish the primary right of children that full consideration, with due allowance for their age and understanding, shall be given to their wishes and feelings regarding their education.

For further information send 9"x4" sae to the above address.



40p