

# education otherwise



Calendula – October's Flower

Rain in October  
Means wind in December.

When birds and badgers are fat in October,  
Expect a cold winter

When berries are many in October  
Beware a hard winter

**No. 178 – October 2007**

£2

**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS 1<sup>ST</sup> November 2007**

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 sae.**

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 below:**

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Vacant

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**Editor for next CHILDREN'S PAGES N.B. deadline 20<sup>th</sup> October 2007**

Please send all material to Jacqui Houlding, Children's Pages Co-ordinator (VERY TEMPORARY) who will forward it to the relevant Children's Editors. This is to ensure that if an editor fails to do the work, submissions from other children won't be lost.

**DISCLAIMER**

The opinions in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the editors, nor of Education Otherwise as a whole. This newsletter is edited by volunteers and its primary purpose is to provide support and communication between members.

All contributions (including advertisements) have been accepted in good faith and have not been in any way endorsed by Education Otherwise, which cannot be held responsible for the consequences of responding to any of them.

**EDITORIAL POLICY**

EO is legally responsible for the material printed in the Newsletter, and sometimes it is necessary to edit letters and articles to ensure that there is no possibility of legal action against EO. We try to consult with authors when this is necessary but we reserve the right not to print anything we consider puts EO at risk.

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*please contact the DATABASE ADMINISTRATOR (See inside back cover)*

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☺ ☺ ☺ EO Merchandise ☺ ☺ ☺

To gain the 10% discount available to members who use the Online Store, you must enter the code:

snowdrop

**If you forget to enter the discount code, you cannot claim the discount back later.**



Any Safeguarding Children concerns should be reported to the NSPCC.

NSPCC Helpline Telephone Number is 0808 800 5000.

If you are a child and you need someone to talk to, contact Childline on 0800 1111

## Co-ordinator's Note

This should be my last newsletter as a stand in co-ordinator. I hope that you've found them interesting.

I asked in the last for all sorts of different items and promised I'd twisted arms. The twistee's have come up trumps and we have a good range of articles this time including the first of, I hope, several articles which will help our young people find out something about career options which they may not have considered and ideas for hobbies.

We've got all the designs received for the Christmas card competition (sorry for the inadvertent 'non' which slipped in on the last newsletter on this item). Now – please vote for the winner and purchase a set of the winning designs.

This issue's special member offer is a pocket diary for 2008. Buy lots and give one to all your friends to see in the New Year. Local Contacts and Group Organisers, perhaps you'd like to get your group members to order some. Please spread the word about them so that seeing the name of EO appear in board rooms and staff canteens around the country will be the norm.

Even if you normally don't look at the inserts, please do this time. Council have produced a report bringing members up to date with changes that have happened and will need to happen to bring EO in line with recent legislation.

Finally, thank you to all the contributors over the past few months. Has made my job a lot easier. Good luck to Nikki and Martine who will be job sharing the newsletter co-ordinator role from now on.

*Jacqui Koulding*

# EO Business

## OPEN COUNCIL MEETING

to be held at 10:00 for 10.30 am start  
Saturday, 10 November 2007  
Intag Community Centre, 49 Whitby Avenue, Preston, P22 3YP

### All members are welcome to attend

To place an item on the agenda, it must be sent to Jacqui by midnight on Thursday, 18 October 2007. All agenda items must be accompanied by a report supporting the item you wish added to the agenda otherwise, unless the item is already part of the agenda due to it being a Matter Arising, it will not appear on this agenda and will not be discussed at the meeting. This is to enable all attendees to consider the item prior to the meeting and allow them to prepare their own thoughts on the issue.

If you place a supported item on the agenda, but cannot attend the meeting yourself, please nominate someone (with their agreement) to speak for you. If you do not have anyone to speak for you, please feel free to contact me (Jacqui Houlding, 38 Garwood Close, Westbrook, Warrington WA5 8TF. 01925 654856. [Jacqui@thecrystalball.org.uk](mailto:Jacqui@thecrystalball.org.uk)) with anything you want said but that may not be included in your report.

### Meeting Venue

A professional crèche has again been engaged. It is essential that places for the crèche are booked in advance. Please contact Pam Parkin, 2 Melia Close, Rawtenstall, Rossendale BB4 6RQ, 01706 215 585. [davidandpam@ntlworld.com](mailto:davidandpam@ntlworld.com) with the ages of your children and whether they have any special needs by 18 October 2007 which is the final date on which bookings can be accepted.



Train Station	Preston Fishersgate, Preston
Train Tracker	0871 20049 500
Virgin Trains Telesales	08457 222333
Station Access-ibility	<a href="http://tinyurl.com/217yv8">http://tinyurl.com/217yv8</a>
Preston Bus Ltd	01772 821199
AAA Taxis	01772 555666
Ace Ringway Taxis	01772 200200
Parking	Small car park & street parking

Station to Hall: 2.7 miles

# MEET THE COUNCIL

Many of you might have heard that there have been new members on the EO Council and there is a lot in this issue about what we have been doing, are doing and hope to be doing in the near future.

In order to help EO members understand better all the changes, as well as articles about those changes, we thought it might be helpful if you knew who we were!

There are 14 council members of EO. Below are short introductions to some of them.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Carla Macgregor  
\*\*\*\*\*

My name is Carla Macgregor, I live in Bristol, where I was local contact for a few years before Ian and Silke took over. I still get 'referrals' from them. I have been active in running various local groups and activities in Bristol. I started home educating when my eldest son was 7, he is now 16. I still have 2 boys aged 10 and 12 at home, my daughter is currently at school doing GCSEs. I have no hard and fast rules about how and why people should go about home education. My main principle is that every parent has the responsibility to meet the individual needs of their children and should be enabled to do so in the way that best suits them and their children. Although I have been pretty active in Bristol, this is my first venture into EO nationally.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Darren Braecklein  
\*\*\*\*\*

Hi, my name is Darren. Until lately there has been little heard from or about me within EO. I prefer to stay out of the spotlight and get jobs done, but I was asked to help out and I answered the call. I've had a decade's worth of experience managing outlets of a major multinational corporation. This has given me not only a strong managerial style but also a good insight in the changes in culture and law during that time. A lot has changed and it is my stated purpose to ensure that Education Otherwise not only survives, but thrives, in the rapidly changing political and legal position of the United Kingdom and the European Union. Whilst I have spent a long time within the Halls of Knowledge, I find that this alone does not prepare people for real life, just like it has been found that schools fail to prepare our children for a life outside education. It is real world knowledge that is the key. EO is now past the phase of high ideals alone. It has started to mature into a force for Home Educators not only here in the UK, but abroad as well.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Gail Borrows  
\*\*\*\*\*

I'm Gail, married to Peter and live in South Bucks. We have been members of EO for nearly 8 years and we home educated our son from age 11. He went on to achieve 3 very good A level passes and is about to go to University.

I've volunteered within EO for about the last 4 years, first as a Local Contact, then responsible for EO's Stationery, on Council I am also the Membership Secretary and I'm on the SDG and Publications small groups.

Like others on Council, I have been on a steep learning curve with all the current legislation and I hope to see all the hard work we've put in since February help bring about a strong and stable

organisation that can support present and future home educating families and defend the principle of home education.

I have a degree which bears no relevance to anything I do with EO. But I am passionate about Home Education. There is nothing I would love more than to help bring EO, once a handful of families, now around 4300 families, into the tens of thousands. What a force to be reckoned with, EO would be then.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Leslie Barson  
\*\*\*\*\*

I am Leslie Safran Barson. I am mother of two children who have never been to school aged 24 and 18, both doing very well. I have been a member of EO for nearly 20 years. I also founded and run The Otherwise Club, a community centre for home educating families in central London and I am writing a PhD on home education and how it effects parents. Even though I have only recently become a trustee of EO I am very excited about the changes that are happening and am glad to be working with such a determined and visionary team of people.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Rowenna Williams  
\*\*\*\*\*

Hi, I am Rowenna W. Williams. I live in North Wales and have home educated my son from the start. He is now 11. I had a few great years on the helpline and as a single parent contact for EO and have been active in organising local events, workshops and newsletter for a few years. My personal interests are mostly in the arts, gardening, camping, and walking. I enjoy advocating home education and am proud to be part of such a community especially in that it listens to young people and sees them as equally important individuals of our society.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Anne Rix  
\*\*\*\*\*

Hello, I'm Anne Rix and I've been a member of EO council since 2003, having joined EO in 1987. I've also been a local contact, a Helpline volunteer, Newsletter Co-ordinator, Publications Secretary and am currently Enquiries Secretary. Outside EO I've been a secretary/office administrator, lab technician, organic market gardener and teacher, in between continuing my own lifelong learning. I'm supposed to be retired now. My two children had some time at school, but were mainly home educated in a rather haphazard manner. I was constantly surprised at what they learned on their own – I just supported them in doing what they wanted (well, on the whole). They went on to higher education, doing very well, and are both making a grand job of life as young adults.

More Councilors will introduce themselves next newsletter.

Of course....

If anyone would like to be considered for the role of trustee or any other position in EO or are just interested in finding out more about what's involved please let us know!! We need YOU!! (see contact details at the back of this newsletter).

## **Informal summary of Open Council Meeting Warrington, 1 September 2007**

Sorry that these have been missing recently. Anyone who has frequented the online forums will be aware that there has been a fair amount of dissension and tension and, to be honest, the meetings have been as long and as boring as usual, but with undercurrents of unpleasantness as well.

However, the July meeting which turned into a Brainstorming Session rather than an Open Council Meeting (OCM), and then this last meeting in Warrington were very far from the depressing affairs of recent months. So...this report is on what was discussed and achieved on 1 September and an encouragement for people to come to the future meetings and help EO move into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

So, after settling the children into the crèche and introducing ourselves, the meeting began. One big issue was CRB checks for EO volunteers. Ideally, Council would like all our local contacts and group organisers to be CRB checked. However, there are strict rules for who is allowed to be checked...and wouldn't you know it...EO falls outside the defined boundaries of both 'allowed' and 'disallowed'. So, the trustees are getting professional advice and discussing with the Charity Commission and the CRB office to see exactly where we stand. EO is also likely to be liable for VAT payments now so there are also discussions going on with the Inland Revenue and approaches being made to the Chartered Accountants Association to find out all about this and amalgamating EO Association with EO Trading again. More professional advice is being sought from an employment law specialist about the where EO stands in relation to the two paid contractors (and possible future paid posts). I've probably forgotten something here...but an awful lot of specialist advice is being sought to bring EO in line with modern charities and compliant with the law. For those interested, some of the relevant laws are Data Protection, Companies Act 2006, Charity Act 2006...and not sure what employment laws are involved. Just know I'm not involved! Oh...and better yet, none of it is being paid for out of members' funds. There's all sorts of charities that fund pro bono specialists to help other charities...and this is what Council is drawing upon.

Not too much discussion took place on all the above. The Council are producing a booklet to go with the October newsletter which will inform all members what has been going on, so no need to waste space etc here.

There was also a fair amount of discussion surrounding OCMs and what they could reasonably be expected to achieve. The OCMs for 2008 have now all got provisional dates and locations. The AGM will not share the day with an OCM, but there will be a 'home education event', hopefully something like the HE Fair held in London in September for the past three years...but probably not as good initially. Leslie Barson, who organises the London event, will be involved so from small acorns...mighty oaks may grow.

The structure of the meetings will change as well. Many of the decisions made nowadays have to be made by Council and therefore, the meeting authorised quite a few points to be approved by Council via a teleconference. Also, instead of the OCM being involved only at the end of the decision making process when all the planning has been done elsewhere, it will become part of the process. With effect from the November OCM in Preston, the mornings of OCMs will be spent discussing business and the afternoons will be discussing a particular topic/theme of interest and relevance to EO. The November meeting will be looking at the pro forma 'remit, policies and procedures' for small groups and teams within EO. This process has been started by the Strategic Development Group and now, when most of the small groups have produced drafts of these policies and procedures, all attendees at the meeting will look at them and make recommendations, hopefully drawing on the experience of all in attendance. This should cut back on some of the tedium of meetings in the past. It should also cut the size of the minutes of meetings in half! Yippee (can you tell I'm the one who has to type these?)

This meeting also discussed the provision of crèches at meetings. Before the Government Policy Group (GPG) began running the Workshops to empower home educators to talk with their local authorities and make their own, independent responses to the Government Consultation, formal crèches for meetings were

unknown. Meetings usually took place within Gatherings and attendees at meetings would either make ad hoc arrangements with others not attending the actual meeting...or the children would run riot in the rooms outside the meeting room. (Oh I can hear the complaints already, 'they do not run riot'. Remember, I'm the one who Lize Stevens was less than pleased with at Langdale because I supplied all the glue that the children decorated the walls and floors of the youth hostel with!)

Anyway, costs of running a crèche are high, especially since we tend to have to bring in professionals. Most people who come to a meeting come to attend the meeting, not look after everyone else's children. It proved impossible at some of the GPG Workshop venues to get help and professional crèches had to be brought in. A professional crèche was brought in for Warrington and the children and parents in attendance were most impressed. None of the children had been in a crèche/nursery situation previously and all thoroughly enjoyed themselves; even the eldest child, who had commented earlier that the toys/activities provided by the crèche were a little young for them. It was noted that a crèche could be the make/break factor for someone deciding to attend the meeting so, for 2008 crèches will continue to be provided. The take up of these will be reviewed next year to see if they will be provided in 2009.

The issue of EO and Gatherings was raised. Due to insurance issues, it is quite possible that EO will not be in a position to run Gatherings in future. A small, time limited group is to be set up to investigate what options for Gatherings may be available to EO. Basically, we (make that a generic, non personal 'we', I don't camp any more) want Gatherings and camps to continue, but what happens if EO can't do them as an organisation any longer?

There's not an awful lot more to say about this meeting because the other 'stuff' will be covered in the Council booklet enclosed with this newsletter. So, whilst hoping to see lots of you at the Preston meeting in November, here are the provisional dates and locations for meetings in 2008. Make a note in your diary and be available to attend. ☺

AGM – Saturday, 23 February 2008, Birmingham

OCM – Saturday, 24 May 2008, Bristol

OCM – Saturday, 6 September 2008, Newcastle

OCM – Saturday, 22 November 2008, Wrexham

Jacqui H

9 September 2007

## Vacancies & Changes

### Newsletter Co-ordinator

**W**elcome to Martine Frampton and Nicola Haxell who are both taking on the role of Newsletter Co-ordinator on a job share basis. Good luck with it ladies.

### Local Contact Co-ordinator

**W**elcome to Carla MacGregor. Carla is the new Local Contact Co-ordinator. Her contact details are on the back page of the newsletter and, should you wish to join the local contact team and cover your area, please contact her.

## Children's Pages Liaison

**W**e still need a new Children's Pages Liaison person. If you have computer skills and can help the children to produce their newsletter and encourage them to bring interest and innovation to their newsletter, please contact Jacqui Houlding. Contact details in back of newsletter.

## Local Contacts

**W**elcome to Amanda Hirst and Fay Thomson, who have taken on the role of Local Contact and will be Acting LCs in Barnsley, Yorkshire South and Rugby, Warwickshire respectively. Good luck ladies.

Denise Wood, Gill Kilner and Fiona Sendall have all resigned from their posts as Local Contacts in Barnsley, Yorkshire South, Calderdale, Yorkshire West and Merseyside respectively. Thank you for all you did for your local members and EO during your time in post. Good luck with whatever you take on in the future.

The following areas all need local contacts to cover them. If you think you are able to be a local contact (remember, you aren't required to speak with local authorities and we encourage job sharing to reduce the load on any one person) even if your area does not appear here, please contact the local contact co-ordinator.

### ENGLAND

Bedfordshire  
Gloucestershire  
Herefordshire  
Lancashire – Bolton  
Lancashire (excl. Blackpool and Bolton)  
London – North West  
London West – Richmond & Kingston  
Merseyside

Norfolk - West  
Norfolk – Breckland  
Norfolk – Great Yarmouth  
Sussex East - Brighton  
Yorkshire West – Leeds  
Yorkshire East - Hull  
  
SCOTLAND  
Angus, Dundee, Perth & Kinross  
Argyll & Bute

Edinburgh & Lothians  
Inverclyde & Ayrshires  
Fife

### WALES

Glamorgan, Mid  
Glamorgan, Vale  
Glamorgan, West  
Flintshire

## Media Contact Vacancies exist for:

Can you talk with press and media? Can you help find families who will talk to press and media? If you'd like to know more and live in one of the areas below, please contact the Media Co-ordinator, Ann Newstead on 01689 826504 or [mediaco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org](mailto:mediaco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org)

Scotland  
NI  
Midlands  
London(1)

## Small job for someone(s) in the Warrington area.

Directories of information have been compiled for our local contacts. However, it takes nearly an hour to stuff each one in the plastic pockets! Due to the weight of these directories, materials cannot be sent elsewhere for compilation. Can anyone spare a few hours in Warrington to get the final 40 or so completed please? Contact Jacqui on 01925 654856, [jacqui@thecrystalball.org.uk](mailto:jacqui@thecrystalball.org.uk)

# Small Group Reports

Home Ed Groups for Everyone

from EO's Disability Group

Socialisation is often said to be a red herring in home education circles, stating that it is easy for children to socialise, and the multitude of local home education meetings is proof of this. In some areas, in particular the larger towns and cities. There can be two or three activities each day!

But for children with disabilities or Special Educational Needs and even adults with disabilities, things are not always as straight forward as just turning up at a meeting. Some children on the autistic spectrum find that anything that is unstructured and unpredictable is frightening and overwhelming, while others react very strongly to a rigid structure with unspoken rules which they don't understand. Some children whether they are on the spectrum or not find that the noise, sight and smell of so many people in close proximity overwhelms their senses. Still other children just don't want to or feel comfortable socialising with others and prefer their own company. For them remaining in a busy crowded room for several hours will be a big challenge. Sometimes there just aren't the facilities in the chosen venue to support physically disabled children and their parents, or disabled adults.

The problem is, a local group can't be everything for all people. The law recognises that it will not be reasonable for the group to change the entire way it operates on the basis that it is unsuitable for one family, if the new arrangement would now make the group impossible for many other members.

The Disability Right Commission booklet "Organising Accessible Events" outlines how people can make sure that events meet the needs of everyone, not just the disabled.<sup>1</sup>

So what would be a reasonable adjustment? First of all, just finding out what needs people have. Often there can be small changes easily made but if no one asks and no one offers then no one will know what is needed! Perhaps it is just a quiet place for children to go to when they get overwhelmed, or for an adult to facilitate and watch over free play. Approaching a structured meeting with flexibility, ensuring that children who have difficulty with moving from one activity to another have help, and creating some structured time are all ways of helping people to enjoy meetings, without spoiling it for others.

Some children with special educational needs may find following complex rules difficult or they may not have the manual dexterity to do some activities. Including some simple organised games without complex rules, art and craft activities that cater for different abilities, and making sure there is an adult on hand to facilitate and welcome a new child or a child that is unsure of themselves may make all the difference.

With regard to physical disabilities, most places for hire for public meetings now have to have

regard to the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA 2005)<sup>2</sup>, and meet current building regulations which should meet the needs of most disabled people. So the thoughtful choice of a meeting place will make it easier for all people to come, not just those with disabilities. A reasonable adjustment would be to take account of wheelchair users when deciding on the venue for a meeting, so that the meeting is held on the ground floor, access to the venue is level and smooth and not far from car park or public transport links, and the hall itself has wide doors and disabled toilets. Extra thought should be given to the choice and preparation of activities so that wheelchair users can join in games, or work at a suitable surface. Other disabilities that need to be thought about are visual and aural impairment. An room that echoes may make it uncomfortable for those with hearing problems, and a cluttered room may make it difficult for those with visual impairments.

If a local group really doesn't suit an individual family, and they have spoken to others, there is no reason why they shouldn't look into starting alternative activities, perhaps in a different venue or on a different day. Often children on the spectrum find large groups difficult to attend, and smaller groups may be the answer. but people mustn't think that they have failed if a group evolves in this way. Groups can't be everything to every one and if by making changes or creating more groups - if for the right reasons - we can meet the needs of more individuals, then that is a good thing.

The most important thing to do is to listen to the needs of the group. This is the one thing that we hear time and time again from parents with children with Special Educational Needs and disabilities; no one listens to them.

We can't always meet the needs of every single person that wants to come to a local group, but we can start by listening to their needs and often we will find that with just a small adjustment things will be easier for all the members of a group, not just a few.

#### 1 "Organising Accessible Events"

[http://www.drc-gb.org/library/publications/services\\_and\\_transport/organising\\_accessible\\_events.aspx](http://www.drc-gb.org/library/publications/services_and_transport/organising_accessible_events.aspx) or

<http://tinyurl.com/yv3ws7>

DRC main site: <http://www.drc-gb.org/default.aspx>

#### 2. Disability Discrimination Act 2005 <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/50013--a.htm>

*If you have an interest in disabilities or Special Educational Needs, or are disabled yourself, and would like to help EO in this area, the Disability Group is looking for new members. Please email Jennifer Skillen at [cyberbarn9@aol.com](mailto:cyberbarn9@aol.com) with a brief resume of what you could bring to this group.*

# Letters

I've heard this from quite a few people who have emailed me about the bit I wrote in the last issue about our experience of home education (177 - Our Story – Home Educated and Now Grown). I can't believe how many of us there were, all talking to each other on one level...but not knowing we're all dealing with similar disabilities and similar worries. In the age of communication and technology, this lack of knowledge and sense of isolation which still exists is so sad. I feel privileged to have been able to publish that article as it seems to have struck a chord with a lot of people. Thank you for letting me know you appreciated it.

Jacqui & Chris Houlding

## Contact wanted

I would be grateful to make contact with someone who is home educating their child with down's syndrome. I have a son who is nine; he has been out of school since Feb 2006. It would be great just to make contact as a touch stone as I cannot find anyone in a similar situation.

Telephone or email anytime: Jeanette  
(01872) 264681 Cornwall  
email : hejdavies@tiscali.co.uk

## Vacancy for media contact?

Just read that there is a vacancy for the Media Contact in the the North West. Just to say that I have been the Media Contact for the North West for at least the last two years, and continue to be so. See website for details, as they say. Perhaps you could print this letter so that whoever keeps putting the vacancy in the newsletter will see it and stop! Of course if someone else really wants to do the job I'm happy to stand aside.

Stew Eyres Tel: 01772 893742  
E-mail: spseyres@uclan.ac.uk

## Phonics- Good Or Bad?

Does anyone have any views on Phonics?

The reason I ask is that I wondered if there is a link between the soaring rates of children leaving Primary school unable to read properly, and the increased emphasis on Phonics in school reading programmes.

The most successful reading programme ever in the UK was the Ladybird 'Key Words' Reading Scheme. I gather this was phased out in schools as it was deemed too 'old fashioned'. I personally remember learning to read using these books, and have collected the whole set from the 1960's-70's for use with my own children.

In the Ladybird Handbook, it clearly states that too much emphasis on Phonics, especially if used too early on, can slow down progress and harm the child's attitude towards reading. Basically, Phonics complicates and 'breaks down' the language too much, when the child should be looking at phrases and sentences as meaningful language units.

From my own experience, I have a four-year old who loves books but is not particularly interested in reading as yet. My three-year old, on the other hand, started to read aged two, I've no idea how, I just taught him the alphabet and suddenly he was off. Certainly, he has never come across 'Phonics' as a method (I do, however, think his premature birth has something to do with it; he has an amazingly wired-up brain)!

I gather also that children in schools are rushed through the reading process, as, once they can

all read, it makes life easier for the teacher.

I'd be interested to know if anyone has had a positive experience of Phonics?

Sarah Turner, 27 Wallace Twite Way, Dersingham, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE31 6XY

Tel: 01485 541094

E-mail: sarah.turner3@tiscali.co.uk

### TV Opportunity

As an EO media contact I've been contacted by Mark Drake at the BBC. The following was sent to me advertising an opportunity to get involved in a series he is making. I'm not advocating it in anyway, just passing on the information!

BBC SMart is coming back for another series. We're going to squeeze, squash, squirt, and splash 60 minutes of art into every single episode and we need your help.

Each week our presenters and artists will create the most inspiring art seen on TV and we want you to help us make the show even more exciting.

Would you like Mark to teach you how to draw something that you think you can't? It doesn't matter if you're the not the top dog in art..... it's more important that you are up for having some fun!

To be considered you have to be able to -

- o Get your hands on the following
  - + Computer with Broadband internet
  - + Webcam
  - + Headset
- o You need to be between the ages of 7 and 12
- o Tell us what you'd most like to be able to draw and tell us how you rate your art skills out of ten?

If you are interested fill in the application form below

We will consider everyone that applies equally, but cannot guarantee that everyone will be successful. Only people who have made it to the next round will be contacted by the production team.

#### FORM

- o Name
- o Age
- o Location
- o Parent/Guardian's name
- o Parent/Guardian's telephone number
- o What would you most like to be able to draw?
- o How you rate your art skills out of ten?
- o Parental Consent

Send to smart@bbc.co.uk and mark the subject as SKYPE ART.

Stewart Eyres

Northwest Media Coordinator

E-mail: northwest@education-otherwise.org

Tel: 07792 777750 or 01772 893742

## To All Council Members

It seems that Education Otherwise is becoming more "business like", and as members we would appreciate a paragraph in the newsletter from each council member about themselves, nothing fancy, we would just like to know who you are. It is common practice for businesses to provide this information for its members. We are not asking for photographs, looks are not important, but we do feel that it is important for all council members to write a short profile about themselves. Basically this should state educational philosophy and qualifications and/ or experience in a managerial post.

George and Anne Weitz

*EO Council response: It's great to see that we are thinking on the same lines. As you can see on page 3 we have already started with a paragraph of introductions from council members. More will appear in the next issue.*

## Support for Education Otherwise

A Canadian friend of mine just mentioned that should one wish to, a Canadian citizen can elect to join a government funded support network which provides, amongst other things, CA\$1,000 (!) for spending on educational materials from their extensive book shop and a person to contact for any

information, support or assistance with home education. My friend has just signed up and is very happy with the materials that were available. I think the system is voluntary, but I don't really know.

My husband made the good point that a large proportion of taxes paid go towards the running of public schools (in all countries) and it did seem proper that people educating their children at home should also benefit from Governmental assistance. I was quite impressed that the Canadian Government has chosen to support home education in this way.

I'm sure that the systems other countries have will have been considered in detail when submissions were prepared concerning the current review of education legislation and, assuming that is the case, perhaps EO readers would, like me, be interested in hearing exactly what is provided for or allowed by Governments in other countries.

Keep up the good work,

Lisa Heath, 75 Headland Drive, Discovery Bay

Hong Kong

E-mail: [lisamark@hkstar.com](mailto:lisamark@hkstar.com)

## Filler Spot

I've got a space to fill...and nothing to put in it. So...hopefully these links will be of interest to you.

<http://www.todayinhistory.com> - Today in history. A page with different info every day (obviously!)

<http://www.scienceiq.com/> - Daily science facts

<http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/mwwod.pl> - Word of the Day from Merriam Webster's

<http://www.qotd.org/> - Quote of the day, can be delivered as an email to you

<http://www.deliaonline.com/recipes/recipe-of-the-day/> - Recipe of the day from Delia Smith

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/default.stm> - On this Day from the BBC

<http://www.ajokeaday.com/> - A Joke for every day

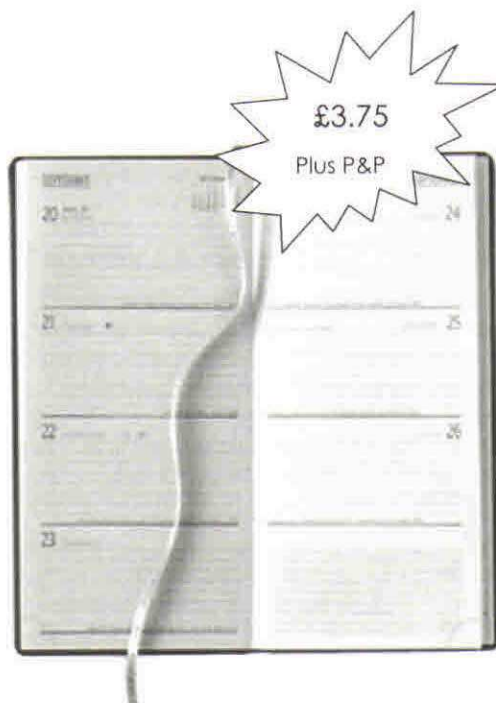
# Special Offer

## Limited Edition 2008 Pocket Diary

Draw everyone's attention to Education Otherwise in 2008. Have a diary to keep your dates in. Give your friends and family a New Year gift which gives the message that School Is Not Compulsory.

This diary covers 13 months and has perforated page corners so you always find the current week quickly and easily. Includes notable dates for 2008, 2009 and 2010, international holidays for 2008, planner for 2008, conversion tables, 250 year day/date reference guide, travel information and more.

It's a smart, black diary with gold lettering on the front exclusive to EO. Delivery should be end of November/beginning of December, giving you time to forward on for the holiday season.



Have a look at the Merchandise Order form. We've more now which can be used 'out and about' and make people realise that home education is not only legal, it's normal!

# Articles

## World Book Day 2007

In a survey to mark the tenth anniversary of World Book Day, a survey has been conducted to find the ten books the nation cannot live without. Over 2000 people voted.

Results revealed that *Pride and Prejudice* topped the list, with Tolkien's fantasy trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings*, in second place. Two of the Bronte sisters appeared alongside Charles Dickens, showing that classics are still the most essential reads. The Bible is also still relevant to many, coming in sixth in the poll.

The top ten are as follows:

- 1) *Pride and Prejudice* – Jane Austen 20%
- 2) *Lord of the Rings* – JRR Tolkien 17%
- 3) *Jane Eyre* – Charlotte Bronte 14%
- 4) Harry Potter books – J K Rowling 12%
- 5) *To Kill A Mockingbird* – Harper Lee 9.5%
- 6) The Bible 9%
- 7) *Wuthering Heights* – Emily Bronte 8.5%
- 8) *1984* – George Orwell 6%
- = *His Dark Materials* - Philip Pullman 6%
- 10) *Great Expectations* – Charles Dickens .55%

There are further details on the results as well as a breakdown by region in PDF format.  
<http://www.worldbookday.com/>

## Responses to Government Consultation on Guidelines for Local Authorities on Elective Home Education

Professor Roland Meighan, well known among home educators for his research and books on education, and home education in particular, responded to the recent Government Consultation on Guidelines for Local Authorities on elective home education. He has given permission for his ending summary to be quoted here.

*Home-based Education and the problem of the competence of inspectors*  
Education inspectors are rarely competent to judge home-based education, except in the minority of cases where families adopt school-type formal courses and structures. This was acknowledged over 25 years ago in *Harrison v. Stevenson 1981* where the judge accepted the submission of the Harrison family that the reports presented by Dr James Hemming and Dr Roland Meighan were valid, as against the Local Authority Inspectors reports, because they had a clear understanding of the logistics of autonomous education, and the LEA Inspectors did not.

The fact is that LEA Inspectors have only been trained in one approach to education - the authoritarian, based on crowd instruction and crowd control and the dictum of 'you will do it our way, or else'. When they try to evaluate home-based education conducted on autonomous educational principles, we have a situation where basketball experts are, in effect, trying to judge a game of tennis. Admittedly, both have nets, balls and a court but these similarities are deceptive and lead to absurd propositions like 'the tennis players did not produce evidence of

*dribbling skills', and the racquets did not appear to produce any scoring of baskets'. So, inspectors often report that 'little teaching was in evidence'. Autonomous education uses purposive conversation, a method on average, five times as effective as uninvited formal teaching. Next, 'they did not follow the National Curriculum'. No, because the appropriate curriculum for autonomous education is the Catalogue Curriculum. And so on, - I will not labour the point.*

*Those inspectors wanting to get up to date need to consult the 30 years of literature available on modern home-based education - they can make a start with Comparing Learning Systems by Roland Meighan.*

*Roland Meighan*

*May 2007*

## A'itude

At school they taught me a'itude  
And how to play the fool  
I closed off my horizons  
To survive the septic pool  
I find adults ignore me  
My family smile but sigh  
At four they thought me nice  
But then I learned to lie

I urinate in doorways  
And spit upon the flags  
When I'm on the drink  
I'll smoke two dozen fags  
Friday nights are boring  
So I have to smash and fight  
I search out all the nice kids  
And give the brats a fright

When the police drive by  
I puff up 'n just look hard  
They rarely leave their vehicles  
Fat lazy tubs of lard  
I vomit on the kerbside  
And swear all down the street  
Although my head is reeling  
I stay up on my feet

Society don't understand me  
Why I just don't know  
Shit! I kicked a bin bag  
The bastard stubbed my toe  
I need to call a taxi  
A phone box doesn't pass  
So then I punch the shelter  
And shatter all the glass

Why is life so hard for me  
I just don't understand  
I see a trail of blood

I'll sue, I've cut my hand  
I stagger to the hospital  
For fear that I might die  
The staff just turn and look at me  
They smile and then they sigh!  
JW Copyright

## Genius

Though I was born a genius  
They made me go to school  
I showed them I was clever  
They said I was a fool

As I struggled with the boredom  
The days run dull and grey  
Thus slowly all my talent  
Was chipped and worn away

I was hounded by a bully  
'Cause my marks were always high  
He taught me I should stop it  
With a dead-leg on my thigh

I never saw the picture  
Scraps of knowledge thrown my way  
My enquiring mind was neutered  
Still the teachers took their pay

One day when school was over  
They sent me out to work  
'Twas beyond my comprehension  
I'd only learned to shirk

Cursed and born an Englishman  
With brains that could amaze  
Now they've put me through the grinder  
I can barely string a phrase

So if you have sired a genius  
Prepare to face the curse  
For in England, education  
Just couldn't get much worse

JW Copyright

### Row Upon Row

Sent off to school  
Row upon row  
Then set out in lines  
Head toe, head toe

Industrial schooling  
Just factory farms  
To churn out a product  
So lacking in charms

They chop and they change  
On a government notion  
Bit still they are lacking  
A curable potion

These penal abodes  
Are the realms of the bully  
With access to knowledge  
Decidedly woolly

Like battery chickens  
They learn in a row  
Same age, same thoughts  
How little they know  
They pass their exams  
With grades all the same  
Again undistinguished  
But who is to blame?

Most take to the streets  
Once the sun is in bed  
Craving the toxins  
That close-down the head

All die in the end  
And guess where they go  
Dumped in the ground  
Row upon row

JW Copyright

James Wheatley, Church Cottage, Bulmer, Sudbury  
Tel: 01787 312022

### Response to 'Our Right to Home Educate' by C. Williams

I wrote to the DfES in London a while ago, questioning possible changes to Home Education Laws. In their first reply the DfES said they had contacted the Welsh Assembly about same but had received no response. In a further letter the DfES said the Welsh Assembly did not plan to make any changes.

Does this mean that the WAG has the freedom to decide whether they will follow England or not, should any changes be made?

If you write to the DfES in London about bullying in Welsh schools, for example, they will forward the letter to the WAG; you will get a covering note which basically says 'it is nothing to do with us, try the WAG'.

If the government does change the law on Home Education, forcing parent to comply with Gestapo-type tactics, will this mean that they also have to pay us the £6,000 per child, per year that schools get? It is a point that needs looking at; I did put this question to the DfES but they didn't answer it.

I agree that promoting Home Education is a double-edged sword, but we have to consider how many children suffer needlessly in schools because their parents don't know they can legally home educate. My child had to endure two years of bullying which has caused long

term problems simply because I didn't know I could teach him myself and didn't know who to turn to for help.

Sadly when you complain to schools or the LEA about bullying you are on your own. In an ideal world they would advise you of this legal right; they don't and even after you have made the decision to de-register they may try to persuade you not to. The school my son went to failed to stop the bullying, but they also failed to spot that he is dyslexic and in the 'more able and talented' bracket, despite our concerns being raised on numerous occasions. Staying in school would have totally destroyed him and denied him an education. Despite these problems the LEA (and school) put in writing that de-registering him would be a backward step. This is an example of gross stupidity and paranoia, by so called expert professionals.

While it is true that wide publicity could lead to mass de-registration, it is really likely? Parents I know, who have removed their children from school for reasons other than bullying (for example, wanting an alternative education) were all well informed on the law and their right to begin with. Others, in our situation, need the information before damage has been done.

My personal belief is that Home Education should be advertised. We don't need to go to the other extreme and say it is a 'must' if you care about your children, but every parent is entitled to know that they do have an option which could end a lot of misery and suffering and possibly save lives.

Incidentally, the WAG publishes excellent paperwork on Home Education (part of Pupil Support and Social Inclusion) which is unbiased, very helpful and informative and explains the Law as well. It is freely available to anyone wanting a copy. Pity that LEAs print their own version which is normally intimidating, misleading, untruthful and probably not lawful – but definitely designed to put you off trying.

The WAG advised us that they could take up our complaint against the School Governors (after the LEA failed to do so). They also said they receive very few complaints from parents about school bullying.

The Pupil Support department at the WAG has been very helpful. They have suggested circulars and other paperwork, which has proved to be of enormous value. They are happy to discuss things in detail and at length and are usually very cheerful and friendly. My bullying complaints would have gone nowhere without the information they gave me. (But don't say it too loud; they might decide they are being too helpful).

'Respecting Others' is the WAG publication on school bullying (also freely available). It is well thought out and well written, very informative and gives numerous contact details for other useful organisations.

It seems that most of us are being denied much information that we are entitled to. Either because authorities deliberately 'hide' it or information is not publicised. Had I known about Education Otherwise for example, my child would have been removed from school within the first 6 months. Governments do make Laws, but it has been shown in the past that public opinion (or demand) can force governments to 'un-make' them.

C. Jones, Penterfyn, Pontfaen, Fishguard SA65 9TS

## Never Too Early?

But he's only four! Yes, it did feel a little strange to us, applying for EO membership when our son was barely four years old - when we decided, a couple of years ago, that we were going to home educate, we assumed that the decision wouldn't impact upon us until he was five. We didn't realise then that school actually starts a lot earlier than that.

If we were following convention, our son would have already had a year in the nursery class of the local primary school, five mornings a week, wearing a little uniform and being taught the National Curriculum Foundation Stage. He would be entering the reception class this September, full-time, with worksheets and synthetic phonics mixed in with the sand and water play. Turning five now means the start of Key Stage One, not the start of school.

It's naive to point out that none of this is compulsory. If you intend to send your child to school at five, you have to send them at three to "prepare" them. If everyone else is doing it, you don't want your child to miss out: they have to learn how to stand in line, to use the toilet when they're told to, to paint what they're told to paint, to circle the words that start with 'b'. At a Mums and Tots group recently a mother told me proudly that the local private school had accepted her daughter at 2 years 8 months because she was "forward" - how else can pushy parents get a head start nowadays?

So, you're wondering, why does all this bother us when we've already decided to home educate? Well, the thing is that we're already having to explain ourselves. Health visitors and Toy Library staff ask which school he's going to. Everyone, from neighbours to strangers in the park, asks if he's in nursery. "When do you start school?" ask kindly old ladies. So we end up telling them about home education and facing all the comments and questions and astonishment and disapproval. And of course it's particularly hard for us to answer all these uninvited debaters because our child is only four and we can't say "well, we've been doing this for years and he's turning out just fine, thanks." We end up just smiling politely at those patronising comments about socialisation and the looks that say "you'll wake up and see sense soon".

How do we explain all this to our son? We don't want him to feel that society regards him as a freak. Neither do we want to indoctrinate him with polemic; we **really** don't want him to repeat our views on school to his friends' parents! Luckily he's very happy about not going to school - he's not the sort of kid who wants to conform - and is always eager to tell the little old ladies that he's home educated.

So here we are, members of EO even though our child isn't yet of "legal school age". We already need the support! I'm hoping that by the time he turns five, we'll have answered so many questions and objections from complete strangers that dealing with the LEA will be a doddle.

Sarah Healey  
greg@healeyisland.plus.com

## Diary of a Home Educated Nobody

I'm getting worried now! Worried that this newsletter is going to revert to what it was twenty years ago.

Not that I was around that long, I hasten to add. I've only been here about nine years. But my friend was HEing back then and she stopped being an EO member because all that she ever

found in the newsletter – and it was the only form of contact at that time - was conflict. Conflict of ideas, nearly always between autonomy and structure.

It is really sad to think that some people have been intimidated by what's written here, as some HEors have indicated lately. Very sad to think that we cannot all accept the variety of learning styles that other HEors adopt without anyone feeling intimidated. Or judged.

I don't think anyone writing in has specifically had the intention to judge or intimidate others who are HEing differently from themselves, I'm sure they haven't. But I know from personal experience how difficult it is to write passionately about your ideas without selling them and maybe trying to make others think they should be doing them too! However, I think most people write and offer their experiences here simply to illustrate other ideas. That's the way I'm taking it anyway. And that's always only ever been my own intention.

Never the less, it is a shame that some HEors have felt uncomfortable with their approach. And this has happened at both ends of the educating spectrum, both autonomous and structured styles. And the issue of how people treat each other in the HE community has also been raised within the n/l this year.

These issues though are perhaps no more to do with the specific HE community, than they are to do with community generally. For in all groups there tends to be opposing issues and people who would try and 'sell' ideas rather than 'display' them. That's natural to all communities. But perhaps what's most important for our HE community is that we all, always, need to remain respectful of how we treat one another, whatever style or approach we adopt. We need to respect individuality. We need to support the diversity of choices. And most of all we should remain united in our commitment to the HE community, without feeling the need to be united in an approach!

When it comes down to it, structure or autonomy are not actually what's important. And anyway I don't believe they ever exist in complete isolation from the other. I would guess that families adopting a structured approach would probably have some autonomous elements in their decision making and their day to day life. And I would guess that families adopting an autonomous approach inevitably at some point have some structure in their day even if it's only what time they stop and have dinner!

But an important point that is overlooked here is that there are thousands of us doing something in between, thousands of us doing something that has elements of both styles. Thousands of us that are focussing on something much more important than autonomy or structure: the needs of the individual child. That's where any educational focus should be, first and foremost.

Some children need and want a structured and organised way of working, a structured content of work, and daily routine. Some children balk at that and require a completely autonomous approach. But I would guess that most children and most families use a mixture of both approaches, remaining flexible and ever in tune with their individual child, their individual families, and their individual lifestyles. And that's perfectly okay. It isn't necessary to remain in one camp or another. A flexible approach must surely be the one that works the best. After all, children are flexible; in a constant state of transition. Therefore their education should be or it would not remain appropriate to their needs.

No one needs to feel intimidated by what others are doing. We do all need to remain open minded and willing to learn about the variety of approaches, in case one just might work better for us. But each of us is allowed to feel comfortable and confident about our choices.

I know it is tough sometimes to remain confident. It's hard to be confident in what we're doing when everyone else around you seems to be doing something different! It can make us twitchy about our decision when we enjoy the empty swimming pool whilst thousands of children are in school with their heads down!

But I would hope that here, within these pages and on the website, is a place where we can turn to, to help us boost our confidence. And not a place where we might feel judged.

Whatever you do, you must do what suits you. This may not be what other parents of school children are doing. It may not be what other HEors at your local group are doing. It may not be what the education inspector suggests you do when you had your last visit! It must be what suits your child and your family. Whether it involves structure or not. Whether it is purely autonomous or not. Whether it is a hotchpotch of styles, like most of us, or not! Do what suits you and your family best.

And lets continue to learn from each other, let's have a lot more about what you do here. Let no one feel criticised or uncomfortable about their individual way of learning - EO has always wanted to support the freedom to individually learn. Let's make sure that is what we are doing for one another here within these pages and elsewhere within the HE community.

This community here, this community of HEors is all about support. As Martine Frampton says in the August issue, let's focus on 'personalised education' rather than conflict of personal views, and that way we'll be able to show the rest of the school world another approach to children learning!

Ross Mountney.

I'd be most interested to hear about your different approaches so if you'd like to contact me you can do so at [ross.mountney@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:ross.mountney@tiscali.co.uk)

# Spotlight on the Regions

Local Group Growth

South Cheshire & North Staffordshire

When one of my daughters decided at 5½ that school wasn't for her I had no doubt at all that she was quite right... What I was less certain about was whether the alternative -home education- was what I wanted to spend my time doing.

I've always needed to be 'involved' in things, to be an organiser rather than an attendee. I'd got involved in my daughters' pre-school group and begun a training course as a playgroup leader. I helped out in their classrooms and did art projects with small groups. I stood and got elected as a parent governor, took on responsibility for implementing the Numeracy Strategy and went on governor training courses offered by the LEA... You get the picture.

I was enjoying life, being busy and involved, finding grown up things to do that related to my children. Home education seemed a rather lonely path to tread and the decision took some soul searching on my part.

Our nearest 'local' HE group was a 40 minute drive away and had no regular meetings, just occasional trips and walks, but my daughter and her younger sister were happy pottering about the house and garden so they didn't need much else.

It wasn't until my eldest daughter, then almost 8, decided that she'd had enough of going to school that I thought about setting up a local group. Fortunately a friend with lots of drive and enthusiasm decided to start home educating too and in no time we had found a community centre, advertised our new group and held our first activity afternoon with 15 families attending. South Cheshire And North Staffordshire Home Educators Activity Group was born and I had something to be involved in again.

The next few years were a blur of organising or attending activities and trips and making new friends. We made good use of education rates at zoos and museums by booking in like a school group, a local theatre ran a drama course for us, a local gym put on lessons for us, wildlife experts came to talk to us and the group grew to over 60 families receiving our monthly newsletter. Home education had become a way of life, we were totally submerged in it and all our needs were met by the activities and people within the group. That lonely path that I had imagined had turned out to be a varied and enriching journey.

In April this year we took the step of setting up a bank account and this has uncovered new pathways for us. A group of our teens came up with a list of things they wanted to do and we helped them to put in a bid for Youth Opportunity Funding. They were successful and will soon be taking part in a team-building day followed by a range of activities such as climbing, drumming, archery and skiing. Riding high on this success we put in a bid for Local Network Funding, and again were successful! Over twenty youngsters will be taking part in a fortnight of watersports courses this month.

As my children grow older their interests have become more focussed. Where a few years ago the key motivation for joining in with activities was simply the presence of a large group of friends, now it is more important to them what is on offer. Our group is changing and growing along with its members.

Many of the things my children spend their time doing nowadays are not organised through our local HE group, but have grown out of the opportunities the group created; My youngest daughter's place in a gymnastics squad is a direct result of our home-ed gym lessons; My eldest daughter, along with some other home-ed teens, is doing Young Leader training and voluntary work through the kayaking club that they joined after doing watersports with our home-ed group. Some of her friends are taking the watersports further and will be doing Adventure Sports Management courses at college. And the daughter who started this wonderful journey? Unsurprisingly, she was never much of a 'group' person but she dips in and out of the activities on offer, dismissing some and being inspired by others.

In this rich landscape of experience and opportunity our local group has been the soil that has enabled us all to grow in our own ways.

Carrie Pletscher

## Cam, Gloucestershire

Ram has never been to school, and when I first started home educating, I don't think there was anyone in my area in the EO contacts list. Slowly over the five years since Ram was of compulsory school age, I have seen the numbers grow, and we have gone from only one local group at the other end of my county Gloucestershire, to several groups, many which are close to me.

Ram is on the autistic spectrum, and he is of the variety that hates being around people. It is quite obvious to watch him change in personality when just one other person comes into the room. The least change would be when that person is his dad, and the most change is when it is a stranger.

Because of this I knew that group situations would be difficult. I had watched Ram struggle at toddler sessions, so I wasn't eager to seek out groups. If I did want to go to groups, I could have travelled far and wide, including to Bristol where there seems to be at least two things on ever day! Instead I just bided my time, and watched the email lists.

I had noticed that someone had posted about a new group in Cam, which is close to us. I then met the family that was running it in our local swimming pool. At first Ram wouldn't let me talk to them, but slowly we got to know them and their children. Eventually Ram felt brave enough to try the group out.

The first time we went there were only three other families, two of which he had met at the swimming pool. He took with him some of his beloved Bionicles to show the others. That turned out to be a good move because it allowed him a chance to talk to the others without worrying about what to say. Even today three years later he will often take something to show others as he feels more comfortable talking to people when there is something to talk about!

The group itself really suits us because it is very relaxed. There is no structure as such, but generally there is a craft or activity available as well as lots of free play. Some days if the weather is good and the boys just want to play in the woods beside the meeting hall, we don't even do what ever has been set up, but other days the children (and adults!) have enjoyed all sorts of crafts and activities. We even had a 'sports day' where each family came up with a different 'sport' such as dress up relay, and over under with the ball.

The meeting is usually held in the hall attached to a very old Congregational Church which has just been rewarded for its facilities for the disabled. The hall itself is carpeted so it isn't too noisy, and is always lovely and cool even in summer. If Ram becomes overwhelmed by all the people we have the option of going into the main church which is lovely and quiet. As the church is over 300 years old that in itself is an educational opportunity. When I said to the organiser that Ram was finding the group too large and noisy, she offered to go to the church owners and ask if we could have the use of another room upstairs for quiet play.

Refreshments include some healthy snacks, biscuits and hot drinks, squash and water. We started bringing healthy snacks of fruit and vegetables because several members have food allergies or are on special diets. Interestingly, the fruit and vegetables are often the first plates to be cleared!

We now have two meetings a month. The first is for all people, and we have a full age range from babes in arms to 14. We usually have around six regular families that come every month, and more that come when they can. Sometimes there is over 40 people! As this meeting was becoming very busy, we decided to start a second meeting mainly for the older boys to play war games such as Warhammer and Necromancer.

These meetings have become so successful that we are now wondering how long Ram will be able to carry on going with all these people. But we are keeping the communications open, both between me and Ram and me and the organisers. I know it would be selfish to expect the group to be much smaller, but at the same time, just having access to a quiet room for Ram to relax in when necessary can make all the difference.

Because we listen to Ram and his needs, he knows that we can leave at any time during the meeting, and miss out going all together if he is feeling overwhelmed.

And that is the best bit about home education for us; meeting the needs of the child, rather than the needs of the teachers, local authorities and so called professionals!

Abbie Green

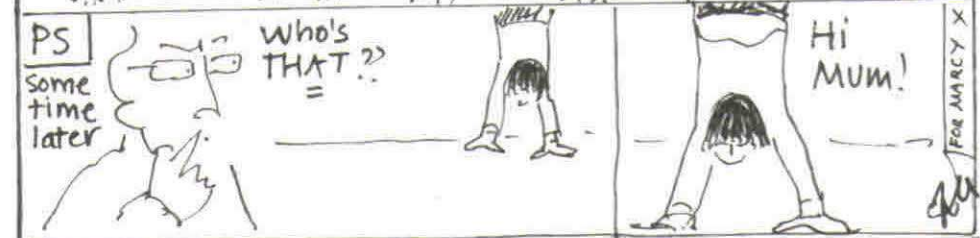
Abbieramgreen@aol.com

# EDUCATING ARCHIE

Through glasses darkly

5/24

MRS G and ARCHIE are at an autumn HE REUNION ...



# Crafty Spot

## Origami for Halloween

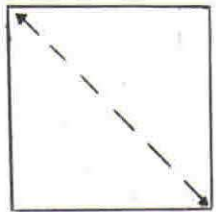
Hi, I'm Maria and have been home educating my daughters for the past two years. They are seven and nine and adore crafts of all kinds. They love to get messy with big projects but sometimes we just want something that can be completed fairly quickly. If it helps to reinforce their learning, even better.

My girls are just starting to get into origami and love making little people and acting out different stories and scenarios. They are really easy to make and you don't need a big old supply list and, even better, they don't cost the earth.

You will need paper, scissors and felt pens or crayons and in just five easy steps they will have a new friend to play with. I have drawn some rough pictures to guide you but I promise that they are very easy.

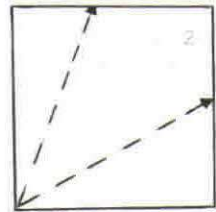


1. Take a square piece of paper and fold it into a triangle shape.



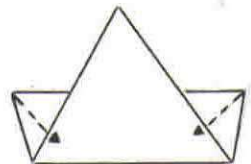
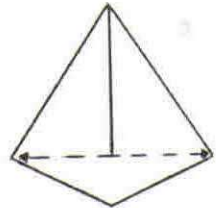
2. Open the paper back into a square and fold the two outer edges into the crease in the middle. This should give you a kite shape.

3. Fold the triangle at the bottom of the diamond up so that you have a triangle shape.



4. Fold the triangle near to the centre so that it now resembles a boat shape. Now, turn this over.

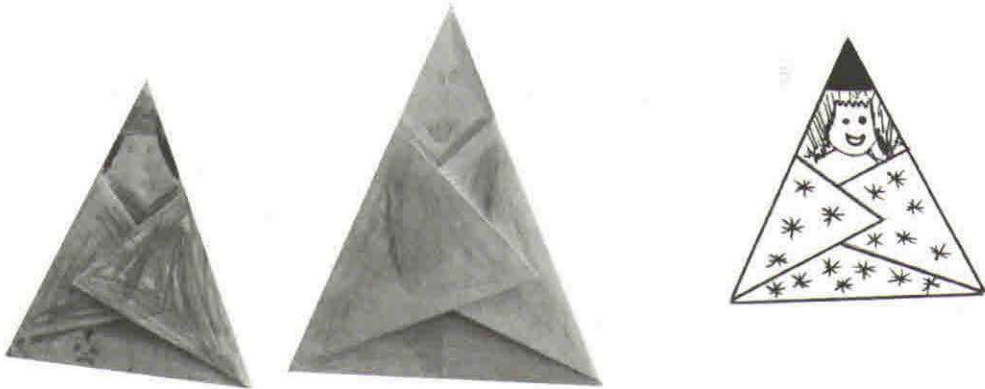
5. Fold the two outer triangle flaps in towards the middle. This gives you the basic shape of your person and you can draw the features and clothes on.



We have decorated ours for Halloween and they will be hiding all over

the house to scare our visitors.

So, a crafty way to spend an afternoon and it offers up lots of opportunities to talk about shapes and division. Playing and learning at the same time. Who would have thought it?



I do hope that you have enjoyed this and I am looking forward to sharing lots more crafty ideas in the coming months.

**Quote:**

"I have come to a frightening conclusion: I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate, humour, hurt or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, and a child humanised or dehumanised."

(Ginott, 1972: 15/15 – cited in Harber, C (2004) **Schooling as Violence** (London: RoutledgeFalmer)

This new publication has been reviewed on page 51

# EO Merchandise

(Members Only Prices)

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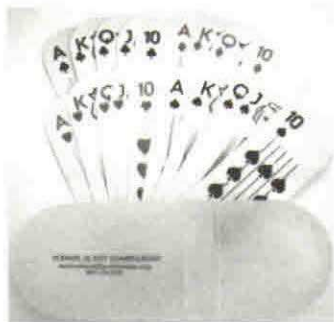
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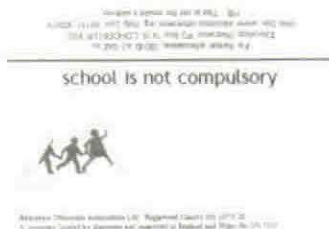
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Total (Sub Total plus Postage)					

Your Name: .....

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***Postage and Packing***

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# Christmas Card Design

The card designs sent in are shown over the next few pages. There are four sections relating to the age of the designers and you are asked to vote for one from each section. The one with the most votes from each section will be included in the 2007 Christmas Card set. Delivery will be end of November and pre-ordering is advised as this will be a limited print run.



A1



A2

Age 0-5



A3

A4





A5



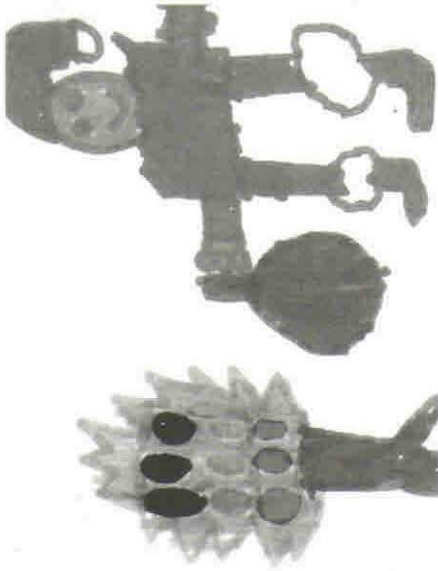
A6



A7



A8



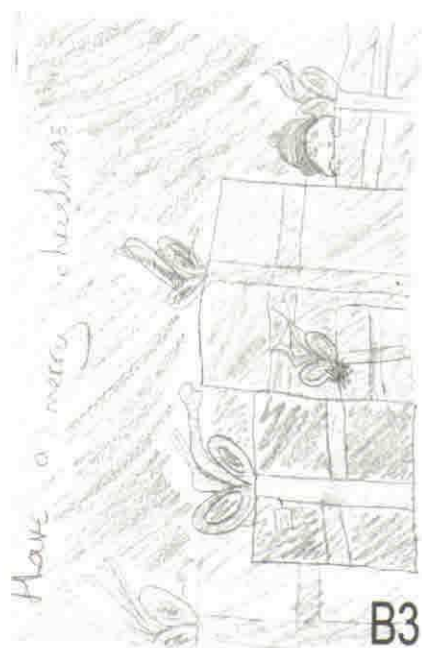
A9



A10



A11





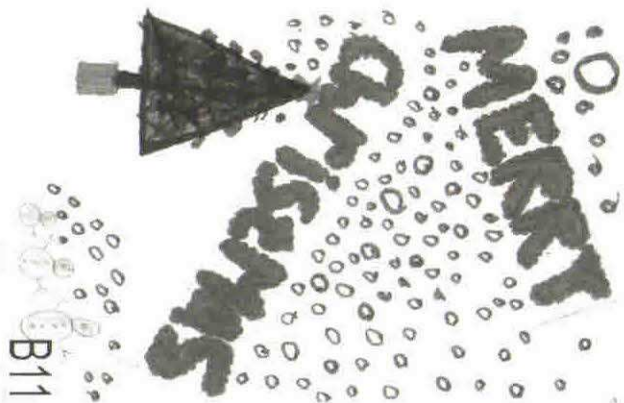
Sea Son's Tweetin'



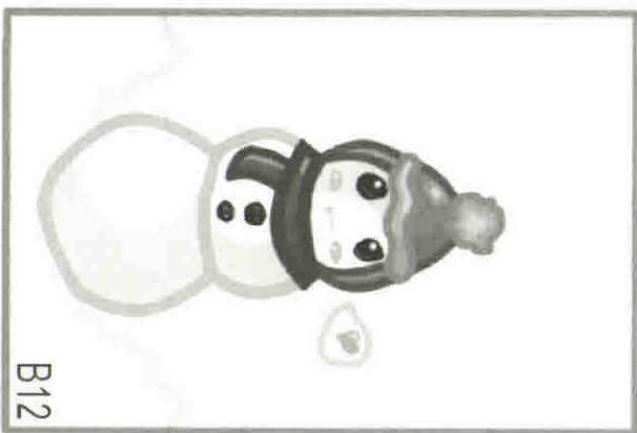
B9



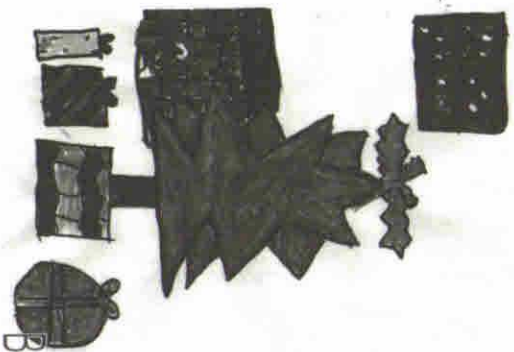
B10



B11



B12



B13

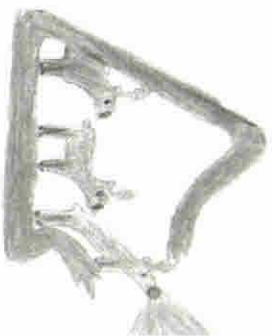


Age 11 - 14



P  
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a  
c  
e

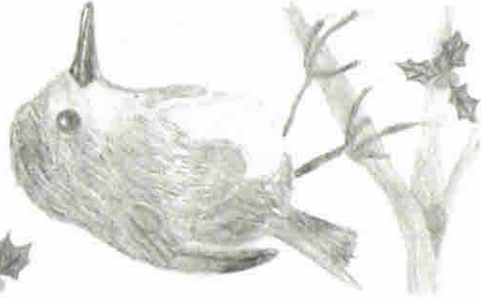
C1



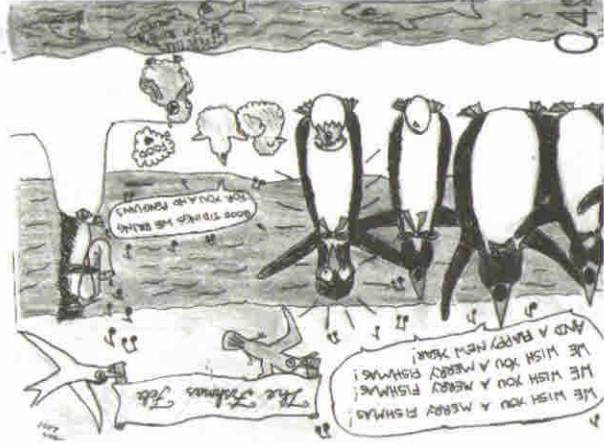
HOHOHO!

C2

HAPPY CHRISTMAS



C3



C4



C5



D1



D2

# Voting & Order Form

Please vote for one card from each section and place your order here.

A = 0 – 5 years

B = 6 – 10 years

C = 11 – 14 years

D = Over 15 years

Winning Design		Winning Design		Winning Design		Winning Design	
----------------	--	----------------	--	----------------	--	----------------	--

This will be a limited print run and will include the winning card from each section. Although October is early to be thinking about the holiday season, to guarantee having a winning set, orders must be placed now. Please complete the following and include a cheque made payable to Education Otherwise Trading Limited.

Please send me ..... packs of Christmas cards at £2.30 per pack plus postage and packing.

Postage and packing based on order value: £0-5: £1 £5-10: £1.50 £10-20: £2.50 £20-30: £3.50 £30-40: £4.50 £40-50: £5.50 £50+: £6.50	I enclose a cheque/postal order for £ ..... Name: ..... Address: ..... ..... ..... Tel (in case of queries): .....
Send your votes and order to EO Trading, 38 Garwood Close, Westbrook, Warrington WA5 8TF. If you wish to vote without placing an order, either this form may be used or you can cast your vote by phoning 01925 654856 or emailing jacqui@thecrystalball.org.uk	

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## EO Adverts

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Three ways to find out more: go straight to their web site [www.thephone.coop](http://www.thephone.coop); go to the bottom of the front page of the EO web site or phone 0845 458 9000.

### Learnpremium

This is an online educational service owned by the Guardian Newspaper. EO pays LearnPremium a lump sum and is making a small charge to each user to cover this cost.

Current subscription expires on 16 October 2007. Please contact [learnpremium@education-otherwise.org](mailto:learnpremium@education-otherwise.org) for new rates.

There are around 130,000 pages of online lessons and resources on a wide range of subjects including English to Design & Technology or Physical Education. It offers interactive lessons and resources, games and activities, video lessons, Guardian lesson packs, whiteboard activities, randomly generated tests, a daily news service for 9 – 14 year olds and the facility to generate tests.

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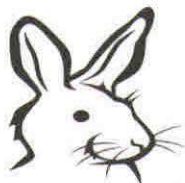
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North West Region

# Passionate Pastimes

## Passionate Pastimes

### Astrophotography *by AnnMarie Jones*

---

#### **"Always got her head in the clouds"**

I was six years old and sitting in the classroom of my local village school. It had a large window which looked out across meadows & farmland. Today was summertime and I was watching the buttercups nod in a light breeze, bathed in a beautiful golden sunshine. My mind wandered, how amazing it all is from the beautiful flowers to the Sun and heaven knows what other fascinating things in the sky above.

"Jones!" yelled the teacher, "You're not listening!"

"I am Miss" I replied, followed by a verbatim quote of the last 30 seconds of her lecturing.

Then I was punished, for showing off. I never really did get the attitude of schools & some teachers. What I did have was a fascination, a curiosity for all things 'nature', including the sky. Here started my voyage into Astronomy & Cosmology.

If you're out under a clear dark sky one night soon, move away from any artificial light, turn off your torch and stare upwards. Your eyes will gradually become accustomed to the dark and more stars will come into view. Look for the milky patch across the sky, that's the Milky Way, our own galaxy. It contains about 200 billion stars. The Universe beyond? Well there's more stars there than all the grains of sand on all the beaches of our planet. And stars don't account for half the matter out there.

#### **Pictures & a thousand words**

Another interest of mine is the use of cameras. I guess it really developed when I was a teenager but I have only fully indulged it within the last decade or so. Photographs can record a moment in time, a memory, that's what most of us use them for. But that's not all they can do. Some use them to provoke strong emotions, more than any passage of pros might do; take anti-war journalism for example. For others, the camera can show us sights that our eyes can't – this is where one of my interests lies. Freeze the motion of a running animal with a fast shutter speed, take a macro shot of an insect feeding on a flower, point the camera down a microscope to reveal the tiny world around us; all these techniques & more, expand our awareness, our comprehension of the things around us. I suppose it was only a matter of time before I wished to put camera & telescope together.

If you have a camera that can take long exposures (more than say 30 seconds), take it out on a dark starry night, put it on something secure preferably a tripod, set the zoom to wide angle & point the camera upwards about 50 to 55 degrees (in the UK) & northwards. Experiment with the exposure time but start with 15 minutes or so.

The resulting image will show stars apparently rotating around a point (the celestial pole) in the sky. You've just taken your first astrophotography picture and have also demonstrated the spin of our planet on her axis!

With just a camera & tripod you can also take good pictures of the moon, aurora (if you're lucky) and even record a few planets (Venus, Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars) but they won't look very big, for that you'll need a telescope.

#### **Stardust Fairies**

Tamsin (our daughter) has, like most children, a wonderful imagination and it helps her jump from one thought to another. This was the case here. She had been thoroughly enjoying reading a series of books

about "Stardust Fairies". Within the tales, each fairy has there own special star; Regulus being one of them. Tamsin wanted to see Regulus (Alpha Leonis) so we checked on its positioning, first star of the constellation Leo, and pointed it out to her. Did you know that Regulus used to be called Cor Leonis, the lion's heart, so it's a star for all you courageous home-ed families out there.

We then became involved in a project to survey the darkness of Britain's skies. To complete the survey you needed to count the number of stars that you can see in Orion's belt. Tamsin loved it and from here it was but a small step to her wanting a telescope to further her interests in Astronomy.

We bought a 6 inch Schmidt Cassegrain (SCT) scope & an equatorial mount to put it on. There are several different types of scope; the SCT is probably the jack of all trades. It is good for planet viewing & deep sky objects and suited to visual or photographic use. The equatorial mount allows the scope to slowly track across the sky counteracting the rotation of our planet (as you photographed above).



Figure 1 - Full Moon - Canon20D C6SGT

## The Low Down

So what do you need to get started? Well the great thing about astrophotography is that it's easy, simple & cheap; it's also difficult, complex and expensive. Did you get that? What I mean is that this is an interest that you can start off easily and grow it to become as involved as you wish.

Obviously some sort of camera is a necessity, your current one is probably sufficient for getting started. Modern digital cameras are great, they give you immediate feedback, are fairly sensitive and many have access to multiple settings. Read on for details of different techniques and what's involved.

## Techniques

### Wide field

Just a camera & lens can be used to take a broad picture of the night sky. Short exposures can be made on a tripod but longer exposures will need some sort of tracking mount. This can be as simple as a 'barn door mount' (search the web for plans on how to construct this for about £15) but is frequently done by 'Piggybacking' your camera on a telescope & mount whilst tracking. This requirement to track the sky for exposures above a handful of seconds is common to all astrophotography where you don't wish to see the effects of Earth rotating.

### Afocal

Your telescope is all set-up and you're viewing an interesting site through the eyepiece, the simplest way of recording this is to hold your digicam to the eyepiece & take a picture. There are things that you can do to refine this:

- Buy a digiscoping adapter to firmly hold your digicam to the eyepiece ~£30
- Match your camera lens to a suitable widefield eyepiece, specialist ones are available
- Set your digicam's aperture wide open
- Use your digicam's manual focus, set it to infinity & focus with the telescope
- Use a remote release or your digicam's internal timer – avoid vibrations

Most of all experiment with different settings & targets, get to know what effect each change makes & have fun.

### Prime

This is the main technique for serious astrophotography. The telescope is all set-up and the camera is attached via an adapter directly to the telescope. There is no camera lens between scope & camera; the telescope focuses light directly on



Figure 2 – Messier 51 - Canon 20D C6S prime f10 ISO3200 13exposures totalling 35mins 43 secs

to the camera's sensor or film. The camera itself may be a SLR (Digital or Film), a specialist cooled astronomy CCD, or in some cases a webcam type video camera.

## SLR

Most people would accept that the Digital SLR now has an advantage over film. You will need a 'T' adapter for your camera make, to attach it to the scope camera adapter. You will also need a remote shutter release cable. The ability to connect the camera directly to a computer is also helpful. A 90 degree viewfinder attachment can also help to avoid the need for limbo dancing lessons. (That or a good osteopath). Focussing can be awkward – autofocus is unlikely to work for all but the brightest objects. It is best to find a bright star & focus on that, then leave the focus alone for the night if possible – do take a test shot to check your focus. There are computer programs that can help you with this. Also worth noting is that most standard cameras have an infra-red filter (needed for normal daylight photography) and this reduces their astronomical sensitivity. Only Canon have made a specialist astronomy DSLR, the 20Da, but several conversions are available, particularly by a company called Hutech.

## Astro CCD

These devices are very sensitive to light; they are typically cooled to 20 degrees below ambient for noise reduction. They are however, very expensive & can only be used for this one purpose. At £1000 - £4000 this is definitely the hard core end of the hobby. They are controlled from a computer and can produce stunning images. Imaging is usually done by taking four sets of images using a filter wheel, 1 set for luminance & then 1 each for Red, Green & Blue; however 'one shot colour' CCDs are available. Do not however under estimate what can be achieved with a DSLR.

## Webcam/Video

This is a relatively new technique and is especially suited to planetary imaging. A short spell of video, perhaps 1000 frames, is recorded straight to PC. Each frame is then analysed by a computer program and the best are stacked together to build a detailed image. The advantage of this is that moments of good 'seeing' (i.e. when the atmosphere is still) can be caught and used, whilst more 'wobbly' moments can be discarded. The standard software for analysis & stacking is called Registax. You can build your own camera or buy a commercial one such as Celestron's Neximage (about £90).

## CCD / DSLR Processing

Typically when imaging a deep space object (DSO), you will be taking multiple exposures of the object. These exposures are called lights and they will be stacked together in a computer to create a far more detailed image. You should also be taking exposures called darks & flats. Darks are taken at the same temperature & settings as your lights, these will be used to correct the lights for hot pixels & circuit noise. Flats are taken at the lowest ISO setting of your camera and are of an evenly illuminated object, a lightbox or the evening sky just after sunset. These flats are used to correct your lights for vignetting and dirt on the imaging train. You should also take darks for the flats, no I'm not kidding! There's various software available to help you with this process some commercial some freeware, Deep Sky Stacker is an easy start but my preference is for Iris.

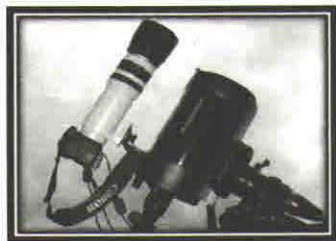


Figure 3 - Schmidt-Cassegrain with Canon 20D & 400mm lens

- Maksutovs are good visual instruments but can be a bit slow for imaging
- Schmidt-Cassegrains are a good all round scope that won't break the bank, this was our choice.

## Telescopes

I am not going to go into telescope choice very deeply here, everyone has there own preference & budget. But there are a few pointers:

- Don't buy a Department Store special, do buy a proper astronomical scope
- Refractors will give you stunning sharp images but they're expensive per inch of aperture and you'll want an APO version to keep colour issues to a minimum
- Newtonians are cheap for large apertures but don't always convert into a photographic instrument without hitches
- Catadioptrics are a large group that inhabit the middle ground and are my preference, there are different types:

- o Ritchey-Cretien are the desire of many an astrophotographer. Not cheap but superb for imaging – this is the basic design of Hubble.

## Guiding

Sooner or later you may wish to take images that require an individual exposure time of more than a minute or two & a reasonably long focal length e.g. 1500mm or more. At this point the tracking of your telescope mount may not be accurate enough, now you need a guiding system as well. This will either manually or automatically correct the telescope position at short intervals, on top of the equatorial tracking. The details of this are many, definitely beyond the scope of this article but you should be aware that several methods exist and there are several interest groups on the internet that will be willing to advise you.

## Summary

I have tried to give you a brief outline of Astrophotography. There are many wonders to see, they are inspiring, they put us into our proper perspective and they are beautiful. A telescope alone is a fantastic resource for any home educator, but add a camera to the plot and you will see many more beautiful wonders. For colour examples please do look at my blog (<http://annmarie.tamaris.org.uk>) lots of the images are clickable & tell you how they were taken. Do bear in mind that I'm a beginner; if I can take these images, so can you.

Resources:

Books:

<b>Stardust Magic by Moonlight</b>	Linda Chapman	ISBN 0141317795	Well, it inspired Tamsin
<b>Starware</b>	Philip Harrington	ISBN 0471418064	A guide to all the kit
<b>Digital Astrophotography The State of the Art</b>	David Ratledge	ISBN 1852337346	You really need this book
<b>Stars &amp; Planets</b>	Ian Ridpath	ISBN 0751327123	Finding your way around
<b>Astronomy Dummies</b> for	Stephen Maran	ISBN 0764584650	A crash course in the basics

Websites:

<b>AnnMarie's Blog</b>	<a href="http://annmarie.tamaris.org.uk">http://annmarie.tamaris.org.uk</a>	<b>My blog – images &amp; comment</b>
<b>Heavens Above</b>	<a href="http://www.heavens-above.com">http://www.heavens-above.com</a>	Satellite & Space Stn Tracking
<b>Society for Popular Astronomy</b>	<a href="http://www.popastro.com">http://www.popastro.com</a>	Advice, Spotlights, Discounts
<b>Campaign for Dark Skies</b>	<a href="http://www.britastr.org/dark-skies">http://www.britastr.org/dark-skies</a>	Please Support this
<b>Astro Cruise</b>	<a href="http://www.astrocruise.com">http://www.astrocruise.com</a>	Stunning Images with a Ritchey-Cretien, something to aspire to.

What are you waiting for? Go put your head in the clouds. ☺

# Career Corner

*In response to the appeal in the newsletter (No 177) for articles about jobs and careers, three people have been brave enough to put pen to paper. I look forward to receiving others and making this an on-going feature*

*(Letters and Articles editor)*

## Do I Really Want To Be A Dentist?

Young people have to decide at quite an early age – as soon as Year 10 options stage when in school – what they THINK they want to spend their working lives doing. A lucky few have a vocation, knowing exactly what career they wish to pursue. The majority are unsure & would benefit from more practical knowledge before making their subject choices.

I was asked to write a short article providing information about being a dentist, which you would not necessarily discover from the dental school prospectuses.

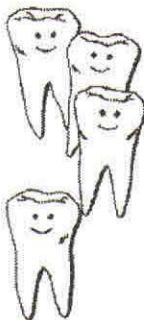
Having qualified over 25 years ago, I can give some idea of what being an ordinary dentist is about.

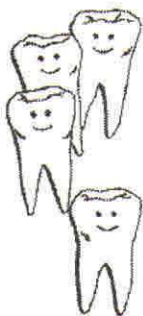
What made me want to be a dentist? This is the classic interview question, to which most prospective students probably produce the usual platitudes of “wanting to work with people & to help people”. I was interested in being a dentist from a very early age – about nine or ten years old – but, by the time I was taking my A-levels & applying for degree courses, I had convinced myself that I would not get the required high grades & applied for Biochemistry instead. I got A, A, A, B in my exams &, within a few weeks of starting Biochemistry, realised that I really did want to be a dentist. I was able to change to Dentistry conditional on passing my first year exams.

This raises the question – do dental students need to be very clever?

Nowadays, straight As seem to be a requirement at many dental schools &, as the number of A students increases, the selection process has to use other criteria to narrow down the numbers of candidates. Several hours of “work experience”, shadowing dentists in various aspects of their work, gives students an advantage, as does having many & varied interests. More rounded individuals, with diverse hobbies & talents, will be considered more suitable for the challenge of dentistry. Manual dexterity tests have been introduced to further aid the process.

So, do you have to be very clever & have excellent manual dexterity? I don't think the cleverest people necessarily make the best dentists. Yes, a certain level of intelligence is required, but if you are prepared to work hard, then you should be able to get through without being Einstein! Things may have changed since I was a student, but I can remember friends studying other subjects having only a few hours of lectures a week & terms lasting about 10 weeks. As dental students, once we started the clinical work from the second year onwards, we were working normal hours of 9am to 5pm, five days a week, attending lectures & seeing patients in the





clinics. We also had much shorter holidays. If you are not prepared to work hard, don't apply for Dentistry!

As regards manual dexterity, a reasonable degree is essential, although I have recently read an article showing that manual dexterity can be improved by teaching, & the general levels of dexterity of dental students increases as they progress through their course.

Essential to the role of a clinician is being able to interact well with people from all walks of life, treating them with respect & showing empathy. Most patients have raised anxiety levels when they attend the dental surgery. The clinician has to be able to put people at ease. Dentists, more so than other healthcare professionals, invade people's personal space when doing treatment. Their faces are only centimetres away from the patient, & their fingers & dental instruments are in their mouths – preventing the patient, already feeling vulnerable as they are supine on the dental chair, from communicating verbally any anxieties or fears. When performing procedures for the first time, the clinician may be nervous, especially when newly-qualified, so the dentist must be able to overcome any worries he or she may have, & present a calm exterior to the nervous patient. It can be quite stressful dealing with anxious people every working day, & this should be considered when choosing dentistry as a career.

The dental profession is constantly changing. The job I do now does not bear much resemblance to that which I did 20 years ago. From most people, on qualifying, going into general practice & being a "generalist" – doing a little bit of many aspects of Dentistry – there is a trend towards specialisation, with Specialist Registers being created to acknowledge those individuals with enhanced skills. Many dentists are finding that treatments they are doing on a daily basis are becoming more limited, with changes in the NHS payment system, & they may be concentrating on certain fields while making referrals to colleagues specialising in other branches of Dentistry e.g. orthodontics, periodontics, endodontics, paedodontics & prosthodontics.

Do not expect, on qualification, that your days of examinations & learning are over. Every day you will learn in the surgery. Postgraduate continuing professional education is now compulsory, with it becoming more prescriptive in terms of the core subjects to be covered. Recertification is likely to be introduced in the future, where dentists will have to complete log books to prove they are maintaining their skills & knowledge & to remain on the Dentists Register.

If you decide to pursue a career in general dental practice, rather than follow the hospital or community pathway, then you need to realise that running a practice requires business skills which tend not to be taught at dental school. If you are a dentist who is only interested in the clinical side of the job, you will need a good business manager, otherwise the practice may struggle. When you are an enthusiastic dental student, full of altruism & ideals, you do not think about having to ask an elderly patient who is not particularly well off, but not receiving state benefits, for a large sum of money for dentures when they think the treatment will be free because they are a pensioner. You won't be thinking about having to organise debt collection when the patient for whom you have done a beautiful full-mouth reconstruction does not pay their bill.

If you are thinking about applying for Dentistry you need to be intelligent, a hard worker, have reasonable manual dexterity, be able to interact well with people – especially when these people are in what they perceive as a threatening environment - & be adaptable. Dentistry is constantly changing & you have to be able to change with it. Spend as much time as possible shadowing clinicians in different spheres of Dentistry &, if you feel you have the necessary characteristics, GO FOR IT.

Dentistry is hard work, but it can be very rewarding

Name & Address Supplied

## **A Brief Guide to Becoming a Parish Councillor – Representing Local People at Local Level**

In 2003, I spotted a request for a new Parish Councillor in the village we'd moved to the previous year. Being a curious sort of person, and having discussed this with my family, I decide to look into it a bit further. I must admit that my limited view of Parish Councils had, sadly, been shaped by watching too many episodes of the Vicar of Dibley. I had to dig a bit deeper. I turned up as a 'member of the public' to sit at the next council meeting - to listen, learn and decide whether this was going to be for me. Yup, I was hooked.

A Parish Councillor is basically someone who volunteers to serve their community, make decisions, monitor services and get involved with local government. You need to be 18 to take office and be a British subject (or an EU/Commonwealth citizen). You need to have lived and/or worked in the area for a minimum of a year. You cannot stand as a councillor if you have been made bankrupt, been convicted, sentenced and imprisoned for dodgy dealings. The reasoning behind this is that you will be making decisions that are to do with public money and how it is spent, as well as being a local citizen who is seen as being an honest and upright person. A good reputation really helps here! You do not need to be a supported of any political party. In fact, it is preferable if you really are as politically independent as possible, in order to give a balanced perspective. You need to be an approachable person and available for people to bring their issues to you to raise at meetings.

In the last four years as a Parish Councillor, I have learned so much about the way in which my village community operates and what really makes it tick. Each village is unique, as is every Parish Council. I have complained (in the past) about how much money we pay in Council Tax. I now realise what the money is needed for. Someone has got to pay for (and monitor) street lighting, dog and litter bins, hedge and grass cutting, maintenance of cemeteries, crime reduction measures, footpaths, recreational areas, clean streets, allotments, bus stops, bridleway, village greens, traffic calming and much, much more.

As a 40 year old home educating mum (with a professional background), I know that I have added a different perspective to meetings, and added a balance to the school centric norm. My daughter understands that we are involved with the local community and have responsibilities to ensure the safety and care of all local citizens. She now has a significant growing understanding of local government.

I would encourage home educated young people to look into whether your area has a Youth Council. If not, how about getting one started? If you are old enough, I would highly recommend taking on this challenge. You could not really get any better experience at shaping a political career by starting at the very roots. It is certainly one way of finding out how 'community' works. We are all responsible for the environment in which we live. I can't think of a better way of raising the profile of HE by demonstrating that home educated young people care enough to roll their sleeves up and get stuck in! Go for it! And, if you have watched the Vicar of Dibley – it's nothing like it in reality.... well, maybe just a bit ☐

For more information:  
<http://www.nalc.gov.uk/>

Susanna and Chris have jointly home educated Asha (10) since birth. We live in Lincolnshire and are happy to be contacted via email [smatthan@gmail.com](mailto:smatthan@gmail.com)

## Archaeology

History and English were my best subjects at school and I enjoyed writing as an activity but I had absolutely no idea what I wanted to do as a career. I went up to Reading University to read history but there was, and is, a requirement there to take three subjects in the first year before making a final decision on a degree course. I had been on a couple of archaeological excavations as a volunteer, which I had found interesting and good fun, so I chose archaeology as one of my subjects. Within a few weeks I knew that I was going to abandon history and take archaeology as my degree. However, even when I had my degree I had no expectation of making a career in archaeology but I was offered a couple of temporary jobs. I must have done something right because offers of short term contracts kept turning up and for a few years I had a variety of work: supervising excavations, doing watching briefs on building sites, working for a Local Authority archaeologist and working in museums – all useful experience but even then I couldn't be sure that I was going to be able to construct a viable career. My lucky break was getting a job with the then Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (subsequently merged with English Heritage), another short term contract that became (after some tribulation) a permanent post.

My experience is fairly typical but routes into archaeology are extremely varied, with many people moving across from related disciplines or sometimes making career changes and coming in from completely different areas of work. Contrary to common belief (fostered by some TV programmes) archaeology is not about finding 'things'; that is just a first step. The real business is using the evidence that is found to build an understanding of the past. Therefore archaeological work is extremely varied. Many people think that archaeologists spend their whole time digging but this is far from the case; excavating is just one part, though an important one, of the process. I have specialised in surveying – planning and mapping archaeological sites and historic landscapes, and analysing the way in which the land has been altered over the millennia by human activity. There are many other specialisms within archaeology requiring a suite of different skills – environmental archaeology, palaeopathology, geophysical survey, scientific dating, and so on; so archaeologists may have backgrounds in physics, chemistry, the biological sciences, geography and geology as well as the more obviously linked disciplines such as history and the classics. This rich variety of experience amongst colleagues is one of the many factors that make archaeology so interesting.

Archaeologists are employed by government departments, local authorities, universities and colleges, museums and commercial companies (fulfilling planning requirements in advance of development). Archaeology is not a career for the ambitious, unless your ambition is to spend your life doing a job that gives you interest, satisfaction and the opportunity for some unusual experiences. The downside of archaeology is that there are not many posts available (and many of them are short term contracts) and in general it is extremely poorly paid. In fact I would not recommend anyone to take up archaeology as a career – only a few manage to win through to a reasonably well paid, reasonably secure and extremely satisfying job. But anyone who is



really passionate about the subject will do it anyway, without anybody recommending it to them.

Even for someone who has no intention of devoting their life to archaeology, though, it is worth thinking about archaeology as a subject to study at university or college. Most of the degree courses on offer are general rather than vocational so it can be regarded as similar to a degree in history or English, for instance. An archaeology course also has the advantage that it combines practical work with classroom work, adding to the variety of the experience.

Another great thing about archaeology is that it is not necessary to make it your career in order to contribute to it. Archaeology is more than just a profession – many people undertake valuable archaeological work in their spare time. There are farmers, doctors, military personnel, scientists, business people and many others contributing significantly to archaeological research.



If you want to find out more there are hundreds of books, magazines and websites available. A good place to start is the Council for British Archaeology (which also hosts the Young Archaeologists Club) at [www.britarch.ac.uk](http://www.britarch.ac.uk).

Mark Bowden

Senior Archaeological Investigator (West Territory)

E-mail: [Mark.Bowden@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:Mark.Bowden@english-heritage.org.uk)

## Education Spot

# Education Spot

### GCSE/GCE's and Private Candidates

Some home-educated students decide to study for, and take, GCSE/GCE examinations. It seems increasingly difficult to find a centre that will accept private candidates. As a home educator (my son has just taken 3 GCSEs) and the examinations officer for a centre (in Carlisle, Cumbria) that does accept private candidates, I thought it might be useful to share my experiences and thoughts on the subject. My centre deals primarily with AQA, but I believe can enter private candidates for the other 2 main awarding bodies.

Although AQA publishes a list of centres that will accept private candidates, often, when approached, these centres cannot accommodate a private candidate. The paperwork for an examinations officer is extensive and a private candidate has different paperwork to students registered at the centre. Sometimes a private candidate studies a different specification (e.g. GCSE English), which will increase the workload for an already busy examinations officer. In my experience as an examinations officer, potential private candidates enquire far too late in the process. A centre has sent in Intention to Enter and Estimated Numbers to AQA a full year before the examination. I would suggest that home educators need to plan well in advance and if they are intending to sit exams in June, should contact centres in the July of the previous year. This would ensure that the necessary paperwork arrives at the centre.

Only certain GCSE/GCEs are available to private candidates. Again AQA provides a comprehensive list of all subjects stating whether or not they are available to private candidates. In my experience as a home educator, I have found AQA extremely helpful if contacted directly. They have a dedicated staff for private candidates who will answer queries. I also found the staff for each subject (Maths, English etc.) very approachable. I would advise private candidates to really know what is expected in each subject (coursework requirements etc.) and not rely on the centre knowing everything. Most examination officers would probably not be aware of all the special arrangements for private candidates.

Cost is an issue! AQA charge centres for each module of an exam (possibly details on the AQA website – [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)). In addition a centre will charge for their time in handling the paperwork for a private candidate. They may also charge for 'hire' of the space for a written exam and the cost of an invigilator. I'll elaborate. I run a dance studio where we have students registered with us who study for GCSE/GCE Dance and Drama exams. These would not be private candidates. In addition, last June we had private candidates taking GCSEs in Maths, English, English Literature, History, Geography, Science and Environmental Science. For these, we needed to make the studio available for the written exams and pay invigilators even if there was only one candidate sitting the exam. These costs would be passed to the candidate concerned.

I hope this is useful to those interested in studying for and taking GCSE/GCE exams. If you have any queries you can contact me: [renelbl@cumbriadance.com](mailto:renelbl@cumbriadance.com) or 01228 599440.

Barbara Renel

## The Sheffield College

We have been Home Educating our son since Matt was 12 and he has achieved his GCSEs by various long distance learning courses and college based courses.

I can highly recommend the Sheffield On Line English course, Matt has just finished the GCSE course this summer. The care, warmth and dedication of the tutors is superb. The On line course has won: 2002 NILTA innovationAward, LSDA Beacon Award for E-Learning, 2006 E learning Age Award for the best support for on line learners. They have two intakes a year September and January, and have had 100% A\*-C pass rate for those who take the exam.

This summer there was 100% pass at A\* A and B. Considering Matt is dyslexic and had not passed either of his English SAT papers we were delighted that he received a B grade. According to the national statistics for English only 28.8% of boys are within the A\* A and B grade bands, and for Matt to be within this percentage speaks volumes for Sheffield College On Line English Programme. I am more than happy to talk to anyone who would like more information. He has enjoyed the experience so much that he is enrolled for the AS course starting in September.

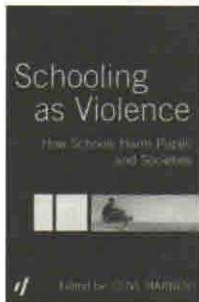
The course is free for 16+ and so is the A level if you are under 19 and not in full time education. I have negotiated with the college that he has done ceramics, physics and chemistry and for him to do AS physics and chemistry as a part time student, leaving him to study maths and English by long distance. This means he will only have to attend college for 10 hours a week.

Liz Jolly

*Online College at the Sheffield College can be found at <http://www.sheffcol.ac.uk>*

*If you have any recommendations for educational resources, please share your knowledge. With alternative resources in particular, it is often difficult for people to find what they/their children are interested in and there are things available now that some of us have never dreamed of.*

# Book Reviews



**Schooling as Violence: How Schools Harm Pupils and Societies**

**Clive Harber © 2004**

**Published by RoutledgeFalmer**

**ISBN: 978-0-415-34434-0**

*Schooling as Violence* caught my attention immediately upon opening it. The chapter headings alone were enough to evoke strong emotions from me, for example, 'Schooling as Terrorism', 'Schooling and Learning to Hate the Other' or the chapter on sexual abuse in schools. The book is by Clive Harber, Professor of International Education at the University of Birmingham, and is therefore written in an academic style. There are lots of references to, and quotes from, research journals and broadsheet newspaper stories. He has selected some very harrowing and also some very inspiring quotes, and many of the latter would be ideal for home educators, or anyone with children, to pin up around their home as daily reminders.

Although the academic approach could lead to the book being dry, Clive Harber has avoided this by weaving the concepts together to tell a story which flows from one chapter to the next. At the end of each chapter Professor Harber draws his conclusions about violence in a multidisciplinary way – biological, sociological, psychological, political. He also allows the reader to reflect and consider the information from their own perspective.

The book is international in its outlook and not only addresses issues faced in UK schools (bullying, illness through stress) but also those in the USA (military recruitment), South Africa (rape), former Eastern bloc (warfare), South Korea (suicide), India (racism), Communist China (totalitarianism) although none are exclusive to each country. I've read up on the history of schools elsewhere and this book confirms that schools were originally intended as places to ensure control over children and thereby the population/society and to produce workers. *Schooling as Violence* examines our colonial past which brought the concept of schooling to 'developing' countries, often at the expense of other cultures and the needs of the local population. This has continued to this day and it was interesting to read quotes, for example UNICEF, which conflict with politicians' soundbytes on the importance of the school model in education.

I found many of the issues raised to be familiar to home educators. Many of us know of the problems with 'bullying' (the euphemistic term that really means assault, criminal trespass, abuse and so on) or have experienced it firsthand. However, the book delves into many areas that our society too often accepts as the 'norm'. The reader is taken deep within, in order to realise that some of the beliefs held stem from the violence and indoctrination received at school.

*Schooling as Violence* is an ideal read for home educators. It would be a great reference library book to deal with negative comments and views. All you would need to do would be to hand it to the 'naysayer' and tell them to comment after they have finished reading it. It would be useful as a reference in legal cases too.

The book has the potential to change the way people think about education and society and should be informed choice reading for those undertaking PGCEs or working in or forming policies on education. It has the potential to take readers out of their comfort zone and to re-examine their own belief systems. It would help them avoid making the same mistakes and remind people to be compassionate about those in their care.

Although I home educate, part of me wants to believe that it is through choice; that is I still have the choice of school. The final chapter discusses ways of resolving this violent model of schools that has allowed violence to escalate by referencing democratic and human scale educational models, which, of course, includes home education. *Schooling as Violence* shows that home education has the potential to free us and, most importantly, our children from much of the violence, atrocities and restrictions of school-based education. As home educators we have the power and ability to change the way our children are educated and perhaps through them our society and reading this book assists with that awareness.

### **The Thief Lord by Cornelia Funke**

This book is about two orphaned children, Prosper who is 12 and Bo who is 5, who escape from Germany to Venice when their mum dies as they don't want to live there with their Aunt Esther.

Bit winter has come early in Venice and they don't have a place to stay. They hide by crumbling canals and misty alleyways in the maze of Venice. Prosper is about to give up when they meet a gang of children and their mysterious leader, 'the Thief Lord'. This book has lots of twists and turns and loads of surprises, but watch out as it has an off-beat ending which keeps your mind whirring! I recommend it for ages 8+ as it can sometimes be a bit scary but it also makes you laugh out loud. But you need to be older as well as it is sometimes complicated to work out! But I loved it anyway as it is very descriptive, well written and full of surprises!

Isabella (12)

£5.99 ISBN 1-903434-77-7

### **The Hut in the Forest – a Grimm's Fair Tale**

A woodcutter and his family live in a forest. Each day one of his daughters takes him his lunch. They get lost and end up at an old man's house. The old man is actually a prince, and when the last daughter manages to break the spell he becomes a prince again and everyone is happy. It was a good story and great illustrations.

Isaac (7)

£9.99 ISBN 978-086315-615-1 Floris Books

### **Moving Pictures by Terry Pratchett**

Terry Pratchett is my favourite author and with this book he has outshone himself. As its says on the back cover '... a gloriously funny saga set against the background of a world gone mad'. It is set in the Discworld which is flat and carried through space on the back of four giant elephants, which in turn are carried on the back of the great sky turtle, 'Great A-Tuin' (sex unknown!). This is the story of Victor Tagelbend (can't sing, can't dance, can handle a sword a little), an apprentice wizard at the Unseen University. When the alchemists find out how to make pictures that move, now everyone wants to be in the moving pictures, but something strange is happening – words are being said that people didn't say, animals are talking –

and if that wasn't bad enough CMOT Dibler (Cut My Own Throat Dibbler) has just ordered 10000 elephants! A truly extraordinary book. Now, lights, picture box, action!

I get all my Terry Pratchett books from our local second hand book shop at great prices.

Keith (13)

ISBN 0-552-13463-5 Corgi

### **First Girl by Gloria Whelan**

This is a much better book than I thought it would be from the cover. It taught me a lot about what life is like in China and it is so different to living in the UK. In China there is a policy that says you can only have two children and boys are preferred so when another baby girl is born into Chu Ju's family and her parents decide the baby is to be given to the orphanage so they can try for another boy Chu Ju decides to do something herself as she loves her new baby sister. Just a young teenager herself she runs away from home to start a new life so her baby sister can stay with her family. She meets and stays with some wonderful characters and does a range of jobs which are really hard work. It is really exciting how she goes from place to place until she settles down to live with an old woman who has always wanted a girl but her problems don't end here but she gets through the problems and gets to see her own family again before moving away to a settled life. A lovely ending and a brilliant read.

Jenny (13)

£5.99 ISBN 978-1-84507-594-1 Frances  
Lincoln

### **Blue Print Maths**

This book covers all the topics included in the National Curriculum. It explains each well and gives lots of practical ideas for learning. There is a teacher's resource book (ISBN 0-7487-6373-2) and a pupil's resource book (ISBN 0-7487-6372-4). The latter has work sheets, which can be copied. These contain lots of pictures and the activities are quick and enjoyable to do,

eg measuring angles involves measuring monster's mouths. It is a good book but a bit expensive so definitely worth asking your local library to get it.

Hilary

Nelson Thornes 01242 267280

### **Up to the Hall by Mario Marco**

This is an excellent book about a boy who goes to a Roman Catholic boarding school for boys but which half way through is turned into a mixed school! The characters are well created – Father Stilton – a major who has a habit of staring at every boy before giving holy communion; Brother Tim Oldfield – the football mad craft's teacher; David Duster – the boy who looks after the bikes and is the butt of most of Charlie Poggo's jokes (he is the main character). These characters and more are brought together in this hilarious book which my dad likens to the Billy Bunter books he had when he was a child. I hope the writer does some more books based at the Hall. Only one criticism, expensive, so ask your local library for a copy.

Patrick (11)

£16.99 ISBN 978-1-84624-126-0

### **Small Steps by Louis Sachar**

This is the sequel to the 'Holes' novel about Armpit. Two years after being let out of Camp Green Lake he comes home but finds life hard when you have been in a detention centre. Most people think he will turn out bad but Ginny, his ten-year-old disabled friend truly believes in him and he would never let her down. A fast paced story of how circumstances can bring about trouble but also happiness. A great read and the sort of story that stays in your mind and makes you think.

Rosie (11)

£12.99 ISBN 0-3857-3314-3 Bloomsbury

### **Prison Ship by Paul Dowswell**

This is the second book in a series. The first book was called Powder Monkey. The two books are as good as each other. The series is about a boy called Sam Witchall who was press-ganged in to the navy at just 13. I don't want to give away too much about the story. The first book tells of his adventures on the ship and this book tells of his journey to Australia where he is to be a prisoner. It's a very fast moving story with lots of good characters. I couldn't put it down. I wouldn't advise this book to someone with a weak stomach, as some of the details of violence are a bit graphic.

Jake (13)  
£6.99 ISBN 0-7475-7705-6 Bloomsbury

### **Magyk by Angie Sage**

This book is the first in a trilogy. It is about a family of wizards by the name of Heap, and an evil wizard called Dom Daniel. The evil wizard is making claim to the Castle and the Heap family are trying to protect the princess. In this book there is a problem around every corner and no answer until the next corner. This book keeps you on your toes with tales of all the members of the family. Unfortunately I think it has quite a poor ending. The story is suitable for 9 year olds upwards who like fantasy stories.

Steve (10)  
£12.99 ISBN 0-7475-7926-1 Bloomsbury

### **Flyte by Angie Sage**

I loved this book because it's got witches, wizards, Bogarts (water creatures) and glow in the dark bouncy balls! It's quite a predictable story but fun to read all the same - the second book in a trilogy and I thought it was quite a bit better than the previous one. The story still involves the Heap family but includes more interesting characters, telling the tale of Septimus Heap who is the seventh son of a seventh son and therefore very magical. The ending of this story is much better than the previous one ending

with a bit of a bang. I am looking forward to reading the third book, which is called Physik.

Steve (10)  
£12.99 ISBN 978-0-7475-8449-0  
Bloomsbury

### **Aztecs by Catriona Clarke**

I liked this book because I like the Aztecs and I thought that it was funny that all the Spanish soldiers had the same moustache. I learnt a lot about the Aztecs that I didn't already know. I want to know why the god 'Hummingbird on the Left' had that name. Hopefully it is on one of the websites listed in the back. And I am interested to read more in the series such as Pirates and Elizabeth the First. But apart from that I enjoyed this book.

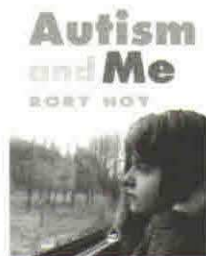
George (11)  
£3.99 ISBN 978074607472-5 Usborne

### **Dino Doggy by Tony De Saulles**

This is a very good book. It is easy to read and very funny. The pictures are very funny and make the book better to read, I really like the pictures of his mum and dads faces. The story is about a boy called Jake who wants a puppy for his birthday but gets a giant egg instead. When the egg hatches he gets a big surprise. I like books that I can read by myself that are funny stories. It is 48 pages long but I could read it very quickly.

Ben (8)  
£8.99 ISBN 978-0-7136-7752-2 A & C  
Black

### **Autism and Me by Rory Hoy**



Rory talking about various aspects of how autism has affected him as a child and

This DVD and book set is a useful brief introduction to autism - from the perspective of a teenage autistic boy. The DVD is almost 20 minutes long, and features

teenager, and how he has had to learn behaviour which most non-autistic people develop naturally. The accompanying book is short, with useful headings, and photos taken from the DVD. The film has pleasant guitar music and songs as a backing track – written and performed by Rory's family: not as cheesy as it sounds! Overall, I think the book and DVD set provides a very helpful résumé of the important characteristics of autism, and this knowledge should improve understanding and relationships between autistic and non-autistic people.

Margaret

£18.79 ISBN 978-1-84310-546-6 Jessica Kingsley

### 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. Some contact details are set out below but many titles can be ordered from your local book shop. *The Book People* (0870 6077780

[www.thebookpeople.co.uk](http://www.thebookpeople.co.uk)) and Red House (0870 1919980

[www.redhouse.co.uk](http://www.redhouse.co.uk)) are good, economical sources for books where you can order what you like, when you like (at prices well below publisher's rrp). Postage / packing is usually free on orders over £25 but if you are ordering less tell them you are home educating and you may 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.

**If you are buying any books or software from Amazon, Education Otherwise receives a small percentage for everything purchased using the link from the EO website. The link can be found at the top of the publications pages.** Dorling Kindersley [www.dk.com](http://www.dk.com) offer a 20% discount to home educators. Follow the online instructions to register and contact [bodcustomerservice@penguin.co.uk](mailto:bodcustomerservice@penguin.co.uk) if you need any help.

Send in your reviews to Sally Hall, Nant-y-garreg, Saron, Llandysul SA44 5EJ or email [sally@aecb.net](mailto:sally@aecb.net)

### BIRD ATLAS 2007-2011

The British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) is looking for volunteers to help record birds for the *Bird Atlas 2007-11*. This book will map Britain and Ireland's birds in the breeding season and in winter. The information will be crucial to bird conservation and there are two ways you can help:

- Roving records – record any bird, any time, anywhere
- Timed counts – record all the birds you see and hear in a two by two kilometre square. Visit for an hour or more in the breeding season and in winter.

To get involved visit [www.birdatlas.net](http://www.birdatlas.net) or ring 01842 750050

### BOOKTIME

700,000 children starting school across the UK this Autumn term will receive a free copy of *Funnybones* by Janet and Allan Ahlberg from Booktime, a programme to promote the pleasure of reading. This is also available for home educated children.

Resources, including activity sheets, session ideas, a short Booktime film, and a podcast of the author Allan Ahlberg will also be available to download via the Booktime website

Further information is available on the Booktime website:  
[www.booktime.pearson.com](http://www.booktime.pearson.com)



# Regional Diary

Please fill in the details required and email/send to Jo Borthen, [jo4eo@aol.com](mailto:jo4eo@aol.com) or at 57 Florida Drive, Exeter, EX4 5EX by 1 September 2007. **The Regional Diary Editor will, if necessary, adjust the information sent.**

County	
Town/Village	
Day/Time (Optional)	
Contact Name	
Telephone ☎	
Email Address (Optional) ✉	
Website (Optional) 🌐	

All regular meetings listed below are included automatically in every issue, please let us know of any changes. New members attending their first meeting should phone to check it is happening as shown. Events organisers please remember when giving details of events that the newsletter can be read by people who are not EO members, and please check your details.

Please call the number given for further details of the meeting/event in your area.

## ENGLAND

### BEDFORDSHIRE

Luton Home Education Group, for a copy of latest newsletter contact Fran on 01582 515458

✉: [franticfran100@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:franticfran100@yahoo.co.uk)

**South Bedfordshire** Home Education Group, covering **Houghton Regis, Dunstable & surrounding areas**. We meet regularly with a variety of activities. Bernie 01582 866207 or

✉: [southbeds.homeed@ntlworld.com](mailto:southbeds.homeed@ntlworld.com)

### BERKSHIRE

email list for home educators in **Berkshire & surrounding counties**.

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

Varied activities & HE events for all ages most days, details & list of all **Berks** activities from Gail: [gborrows@gmail.com](mailto:gborrows@gmail.com) or 01628 483895

**Hero's Education Centre** 4 days/wk, workshops, lessons, activities, Dawn 01628 783107,

✉: [thirdEye1@compuserve.com](mailto:thirdEye1@compuserve.com) or website

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

**Lambourn** Meeting weekly on Fris on an organic farm for play, activities & support. Tracey, 01793 813325 or ✉: [roge.tracey@virgin.net](mailto:roge.tracey@virgin.net)

### BRISTOL

Thurs meeting at St Paul's Adventure Playground, Ian or Silke 0117 9412707. Email list for Bristol &

surrounding areas at:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BristolHomeEducation> Also local group website for more information about home ed in Bristol: [www.bristolhomeeducation.org.uk](http://www.bristolhomeeducation.org.uk)

### Bristol Home Education Learning Place

meeting Mons & Fri pm, Carla 0117 935 4389

### BUCKS

#### Newsletter for Bucks/Northants & Milton

**Keynes home educators network** extends a warm welcome to all. Local Contact Georgeanne 01908 662256 [www.mkhen.co.uk](http://www.mkhen.co.uk)

**MKHE** - Milton Keynes Home Educators, friendly group welcomes all, monthly newsletter + online discussion room. Georgina 01908 371945

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

**South Bucks:** meetings for craft, activities, play, speakers, drama, trips etc. Jackie 01753 886924 or Gail 01628 483895, ✉: [gborrows@gmail.com](mailto:gborrows@gmail.com)

**High Wycombe**, Hughenden Village Hall, 1.30-4pm every Tues, Claire 07841 474398

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/highwycombehomeeducators>

### CAMBRIDGESHIRE

**Cambridge:** regular meetings & outings, Jane: 01223-241925, ✉: [JLHellings@aol.com](mailto:JLHellings@aol.com)

**Alconbury** monthly activities run by Christian group. All welcome, Audrey Hull 01480 219881

**Peterborough** weekly meetings, Sarah 01733 265043 ☎: sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com

**Peterborough Muddle Puddle Group** The group is primarily for under 8s & meets 3 Fri afternoons a month. To contact the group see Yahoo list at: <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/PboroMudPud/>

**Cambridge/Norfolk border**, North Cambridgeshire: Fortnightly at **March**, Jane 01354 677869 or Sarah 01354 688245 or ☎ Pat: [Northcamps@chauntryhouse.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:Northcamps@chauntryhouse.fsnet.co.uk)

#### **CHESHIRE**

**Chester area Outside Education Group** for details of all events contact Clare 01490 412167 ☎: cefarrall@corwen.net

**Delamere** Weekly alternative education programme with Delamere Forest Rangers, 01490 412167

**Chester**, meetings every other week for music crafts & educational activities, 01490 412167

**Frodsham** Social meetings & Youth achievement/DoE award meetings every other week, 01490 412167

**Deeside** Monthly ice Skating, 01490 412167

**South Cheshire & North Staffs** Contact Carrie 01782 786720, ☎: home.ed@ntlworld.com

**CLEVELAND & DURHAM** (see also DURHAM) email list: <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/tvthe/Billingham>, Linz, 01642 800940

#### **CORNWALL**

Free events sheet bi-monthly via email or SAEs. Contact Helen, Pro-Tem, West Pentire Road, Crantock, Newquay, Cornwall, TR5 8RZ Phone 07779 559535 or email Beth on [bethany.sampson@talk21.com](mailto:bethany.sampson@talk21.com) Local information on our local home ed website:

[www.freewebs.com/cornwallhomeed](http://www.freewebs.com/cornwallhomeed)

**Menheniot near Liskeard**, Home Grown Small School, Kath 01752 851091 or Tania 01822 835902.

**Pensilva**, Forest Day. Last Mon of the month. Ele: 0845 345 8596.

**Penzance** PZ HOME ED Mon pm, Ruth Boulton 01736 350887 ☎: tboulton@phoncoop.coop

#### **CUMBRIA**

Cumbria Otherwise Newsletter, for full details of events throughout the county contact Martin, 01539 732918 ☎: cumbria.otherwise@dsl.pipex.com

**Kendal** 3rd Fri each month Contact Jayne 01539 534541 or ☎: [jaynewoodbank@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jaynewoodbank@yahoo.co.uk)

**Kendal** alternate Mons, Jo 01539 567005.

**Penrith** alternate Tues, 1.30-3.30, Sarah 01768 896019

**South Lakes**, Weds, Lex 01229 885206

#### **DERBYSHIRE**

**Chesterfield Home Ed Group** meet Weds.

Outings & activities, Yvonne 01246 555645, Suzy 01246 240917, Alastair 01246 520820

**Chesterfield - Hasland Village Hall**, Art Class, age 10 & over, 4<sup>th</sup> Thurs of month 12-2pm, Term time only, Sian or Marek on 01246 473902

**Derby Group**, 4<sup>th</sup> Thurs of month, Andy 01332 752998 or ☎ andy@derbyhe.co.uk

**Amber Valley**, Alfreton area, meetings, 30 minute drive from Derby, Nottingham, Matlock & Mansfield, Deborah 01773 778380 or Helen 01332 883545

#### **Derbyshire**

Family group including tai chi & French plus playtime, ☎ Ian: [lanalderson7758@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:lanalderson7758@tiscali.co.uk) Family swimming sessions, Wed pm, ☎ Ian: [lanalderson7758@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:lanalderson7758@tiscali.co.uk)

**Derbyshire & beyond - AHEAD**. Meet weekly on Thurs for French, tai chi, special events & time for playing/chatting & Weds for swimming. Website <http://www.geocities.com/aheadhomeeducation/>

#### **DEVON**

**EO Devon Newsletter** for details contact Kate, ☎: [katefernhill@aol.com](mailto:katefernhill@aol.com) or 01392 851370

**National Trust (Devon) for details ring Neil 01363 82314**

**East & Mid Devon** Local Contact Kate 01392 851370

**Okehampton** Mon, alternate weeks, Barbara 01837 55805

**Exeter** Wed, Free Range Learning for all ages contact Annie for details 01392 434167

**Exeter** Thurs, fortnightly Pottery, Neil 01363 82314

**Exeter** Fri Green Woodworking, Neil 01363 82314

**Exeter** weekly teenage group,

Erinn 01392 434167

**North Devon** local Contact: Jo 01237 478211

**Bideford area** fortnightly social meetings on Tues, Louise 01237 441786

**North Devon Home Grown Kids**, twice weekly meetings & events.

**Swimbridge** Wed 2pm-5pm, 01271 830456

**Barnstaple** Fri, Funderzone, term time only,

[www.homegrownkids.co.uk](http://www.homegrownkids.co.uk) 01271 830456/830804

**South Devon** Local Contact Bridget

01803 862158, ☎: [bridgetmeadows@onetel.com](mailto:bridgetmeadows@onetel.com)

**South Devon Home Education Group;**

**Mons:** swimming at Totnes, Ivana 01803 840830

**Tues:** outings, museums + camping trips,  
Sally 01803 551955

**Wed:** weekly meetings in hall near **Totnes**,  
Helen 01803 665604

**Thurs:** workshops, Sara or Helen 01803 665604  
see Devon Newsletter (details above) for more  
info.

**South Devon, Dart Valley H.E. Network** regular  
meetings & one-off events. Gordon/Hannah:  
lindnich@tesco.net or 01803 762788, for more  
details see Devon newsletter.

**Devon East/Dorset West** Lyme Regis, Axminster,  
Bridport, Chard, Habiba 0845 4582984

**South West Dorset/South East Devon/South  
Somerset**, every Mon from 10-2.30 term time, all  
ages welcome. Mary or Danny 01297 560342

**Dorset/Somerset/Devon borders**  
Regular meetings on Tues, Karen 01460 30461,  
on Thurs, Ali 01297 443816

**DORSET**  
Rosemary 01747 853593

**Bournemouth** area: local website  
www.he-ed.org.uk  
Meeting every Mon, Vicki, 01202 302275,  
☎: vck\_skinner@yahoo.co.uk

**Durham**  
email list: <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/tvhe/>  
or [http://groups.yahoo.com/durhamhome\\_ed/](http://groups.yahoo.com/durhamhome_ed/)

**ESSEX**  
**Chelmsford** monthly meetings, third Thurs, 2-4pm  
☎ Sarah: [tower@tesco.net](mailto:tower@tesco.net)

**Colchester** Bowling & Swimming monthly on last  
Wed, term time, Sharron: [sharron@brainydata.com](mailto:sharron@brainydata.com)  
**Southend OTHENA** - Older children/Teens News  
& Activities (11+) for details contact Michelle:  
[ab006h6097@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:ab006h6097@blueyonder.co.uk) or 01702 307834  
<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/OTHENA/>

**Tiptree** monthly meetings, last Tues of month 2-  
5pm, ☎: [julie.ashton@ntlworld.com](mailto:julie.ashton@ntlworld.com)

**Various venues across Essex**, New Teens  
Group, meeting monthly,  
Sally@brisleys.freeseve.co.uk

**Around Essex** Educational visits twice monthly  
Thurs. Details of Essex groups & events in  
Epicycle available from Corinne ☎:  
[epicycle@wavy.org](mailto:epicycle@wavy.org) 07802630693

**Southend Home Education**. Regular meetings,  
Shirley 01702 308698 or ☎: [indigoshirl@gmail.com](mailto:indigoshirl@gmail.com)  
[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SouthendHomeEd  
ucation-FREYA](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SouthendHomeEducation-FREYA)

## GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Monthly social meetings open to all. Regular  
workshops & outings. Website:  
[http://members.lycos.co.uk/GlosHomeEducators/in  
dex.html](http://members.lycos.co.uk/GlosHomeEducators/in<br/>dex.html) also Email list for events & forum. Rob &  
Fiona 01684 290087 [openhORIZONS@ntlworld.com](mailto:openhORIZONS@ntlworld.com)  
Caroline 01242 890351 [cambrose@ieee.org](mailto:cambrose@ieee.org)  
Beverley 01242 524091 or Mhairi 01452 384104.  
**Gloucester** meetings & swimming. Dawn 01452  
540019 [dawnandmike@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:dawnandmike@blueyonder.co.uk) or  
Tracy 07941 612092

**Stroud** regular meetings, 1<sup>st</sup> Tues + 3<sup>rd</sup> Thurs  
every month, Nick 01453 840036 ☎:  
[nick.weir@freeuk.com](mailto:nick.weir@freeuk.com)

**South Gloucestershire**  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SouthGlousHomeEd>  
**HAMPSHIRE**

**Petersfield**, ACTIVEO, 5 events a week within 20  
miles, all welcome. 01428 712394 website:  
[www.activeo.org.uk](http://www.activeo.org.uk)

**Fareham & Gosport**, FAREGOS HE meets twice  
weekly for craft, swimming & other  
activities. Tracey 02392 551870 or Julie 01730  
261468, email: [jkbarr1955@myrealbox.com](mailto:jkbarr1955@myrealbox.com)  
**North Hampshire**, NHEO. Open to all home  
educators in North Hants & surrounding  
areas. Regular meetings in **Oakley**, ice skating &  
other activities.

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/NHEO/>,  
Carol 01264 357650, [eo@azakit.com](mailto:eo@azakit.com)  
**Farnham/Aldershot area**, friendly group for under  
10s; fortnightly meetings & occasional outings,  
Paula: 01252 316497 [paula.oakley@talk21.com](mailto:paula.oakley@talk21.com) or  
Emma: 01483 426277

☎: [emmajeavons@supanet.com](mailto:emmajeavons@supanet.com)

**Romsey/New Forest area**, fortnightly,

☎: [anniemax1@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:anniemax1@yahoo.co.uk)

**Southampton & area**, SEEDS meetings at least  
weekly, Lyn 02380 487879 [lynb@dsl.pipex.com](mailto:lynb@dsl.pipex.com)  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SEEDS1>

**HERTFORDSHIRE** (see also N.London)

For events List for Herts Home Educators

☎: [karenbartlett@btinternet.com](mailto:karenbartlett@btinternet.com)

**St Albans**, Social group meeting at Sandridge  
village hall, mornings 2<sup>nd</sup> + 4<sup>th</sup> Thurs,  
Carolyn 01727 851073

**Stevenage Swimming Pool**, Swimming Lessons  
every Thurs 10.30am, term time, Barbara 01707  
891021 or ☎: [babs.mcdonald@ntlworld.com](mailto:babs.mcdonald@ntlworld.com)

## ISLE OF MAN

Isle of Man Home Education Network. Meeting  
monthly, ☎: [hen-iom@manx.net](mailto:hen-iom@manx.net)  
<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/hen-iom/>

## ISLE OF WIGHT

Local Contact Shara 01983 562313

**I.W.E.O. Group:** craft sessions, visits, swimming, theatre, picnics, barbecues, mutual support, especially older EO kids but new members & visitors always welcomed, Jude 01983 531680

**Isle of Wight Learning Zone,** Sue 01983 241095  
**KENT**

**Wealden Home Ed website:**

[www.when.omnia.co.uk](http://www.when.omnia.co.uk) & email group:  
[wealdenhomeeducatorsnetwork@yahoo.groups.com](mailto:wealdenhomeeducatorsnetwork@yahoo.groups.com)

**Ash, Sandwich, Dover, Canterbury, Ramsgate** & surrounding areas, Leanne 01304 814498

**Isle of Thanet,** Vanda 01843 842629

**Medway towns,** Bridget 01634 234938

**Tunbridge Wells** group meet every Mon from 10-4, Kim 01892 863941

**SEFLAGS Edenbridge, Kent; Sussex & Surrey**

Weekly sports & meetings, Karen 01732 864 524  
website: <http://www.flags-education.org.uk>

**Leham** anyone wanting to meet in this area please contact Jayne 01622 859882

**Medway Towns,** regular meetings & visits,  
Liz 01634 323959

## LANCASHIRE

**Old Cobblers,** Pam 01706 215585

☎: [davidandpam@ntlworld.com](mailto:davidandpam@ntlworld.com)

For comprehensive list of monthly events please email Pam at: [davidandpam@ntlworld.com](mailto:davidandpam@ntlworld.com) or send SAE to: 2 Melia Close, Rossendale, Lancs, BB4 6RQ.  
**Blackburn** Ice Rink monthly,  
Jackie 01695 424220

**Botany Bay,** Angela 01204 659634

**Preston** Badminton/Swimming,  
Angela 01204 659634

**Lancaster,** monthly meetings, Thurs 12-3pm,  
Gillian, 01524 62918,

☎: [kenworthyfamily@talktalk.net](mailto:kenworthyfamily@talktalk.net)

## LEICESTERSHIRE

5 regular meeting venues across Leicestershire.  
Alex Caldwell 0116 2720209 or

☎: [alex.caldwell@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:alex.caldwell@tiscali.co.uk)

**Leicester area-Syston** Group for the under 8s.  
Tammy on [mattamsam@btinternet.com](mailto:mattamsam@btinternet.com) or  
0116 2692499, or Vikki on [martinvikki@aol.com](mailto:martinvikki@aol.com)

## LINCOLNSHIRE

Activelincs Home Education Group, Helena 01724 720595

**Central Lincoln,** Bluebells, regular meetings,  
Ruth 01522 804583

Variety of informal events & get togethers,  
Christine 01507 338070,  
[christinehalse1@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:christinehalse1@yahoo.co.uk)

**Lincoln Cathedral Home-educators - Central Lincoln,** regular meetings, Ruth 01522 804583,  
Christine 01507 338070,

☎: [christinehalse1@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:christinehalse1@yahoo.co.uk)

**South Lincs** Regular meetings & activities,  
Lorraine 0845 458 3004

**South Lincolnshire,** drama group, Brothertoft Village hall, 10 - 12 Tues, 01205 821044  
[Krisistevens@aol.com](mailto:Krisistevens@aol.com)

## LONDON

**Ladbroke Grove/Queens Park** group, Mon & Wed, Sarah 07816 872841 or Gigi 020 732 88990

**South East London/Kent borders** regular meetings, Ann 01689 826504

**East London HE Group** alternate Weds in **Leytonstone** 1-4pm, Call Jo: 020 8520 5709

☎: [acoo@mirehall.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:acoo@mirehall.freeserve.co.uk)

**East London Home Educators, Forest Gate,** Meeting Fri 1-3, Annalise 0208 5001053

**Bromley/Croydon** Chrysalis Group,  
Jenny 020 8654 3972, [jen9@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:jen9@blueyonder.co.uk)

**Dulwich,** Weds, Gina 020 8299 1135

**Forest Hill** contact Denise 020 8699 6866

**Grove Park** group meets every other Fri,  
Claire 020 8402 5831

**Kidbroke** rollerblading, Fiona 020 8852 9756  
[bettleslake@clara.net](mailto:bettleslake@clara.net)

**Lewisham** Thurs 11-1 then to park afterwards,  
Joolz: 0208 2895026 [teachyourown@hotmail.com](mailto:teachyourown@hotmail.com)

**New Cross,** term time swim on Tues at 12.30,  
Denise 020 8699 6866

**Sydenham,** Chrystia + Keith 020 8776 8597

## NW London Otherwise Club

Leslie 020 8969 0893

**Chelsea** Open House Project SW London, Mons afternoons, call Sophie on 020 7581 5238 to book

**Stanmore** events on Tues & Weds. Programme available from Vivienne, ☎: [timsharkey@aol.com](mailto:timsharkey@aol.com), call 020 8954 1885 or Vicki ☎: [Aceva@btinternet.com](mailto:Aceva@btinternet.com)

**N London, Hornsey Home Educators Club,** Mon mornings, Tina 020 8340 4212

**N London Barnet Group,** Mon, Mirelle 020 8449 7868, or [lance.e@virgin.net](mailto:lance.e@virgin.net) or  
Lynda 020 8368 9046

**West London (& Middlesex) Home Ed group**  
Tues, Betsy 020 8993 0677

[betsyhomeed@yahoo.com](mailto:betsyhomeed@yahoo.com) Contact Betsy (EO West London Local Contact) to join West London Home Ed yahoo group,

**West London**, Wed 12-2.30 pm fortnightly during term time, Alison 020 8569 9398 or Kathryn 020 8566 0543 or kathrynvlynn@hotmail.com or Alison@rothwell1973.fsnet.co.uk

**West London (Chiswick & Ealing)** Tues, Naomi 020 8567 7589 or [naomisandler@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:naomisandler@yahoo.co.uk). Also contact for details of yahoo group membership - discussion & information about events in the area.

**Greater London**, meetings, [fizzatmuslimhomeed@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:fizzatmuslimhomeed@hotmail.co.uk) <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MuslimSistersHomeEducationNetwork>

#### **MANCHESTER**

**Manchester**, Sue 0161 881 4830

**Madcow Manchester + District**, events & support email list from Lesley:

[lesley.blackshaw@ntlworld.com](mailto:lesley.blackshaw@ntlworld.com)

#### **MERSEYSIDE**

"Saxophone with Eddie" Young, home-educated tutor offers tuition at various venues in Liverpool. Home-educating families are especially welcome. Eddie 01517331460

#### **MIDDLESEX**

**Hayes**, meetings every other Thurs from 10.30 to 1.30, Jenn 0208 573 9042,

[Jenn@shadowdale.demon.co.uk](mailto:Jenn@shadowdale.demon.co.uk)

**Pinner**, Meadowsweet Home School, Tues-Fri, qualified teachers, 10am to 3pm, Deborah 01895 623640

#### **NORFOLK**

##### **West Norfolk**

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/WestNorfolkHomeEducators> Lynda 01553 617551

**Norfolk, Mattishall** The music club here runs fortnightly, [alisonbrennan@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:alisonbrennan@tiscali.co.uk)

**Downham Market** bimonthly social meetings, [www.freedom.org.uk](http://www.freedom.org.uk) or [info@freedom.org.uk](mailto:info@freedom.org.uk) or Nicola 01366 385380.

**Norwich** area - Free Wheel for under 10s, activity group Weds fortnightly 07760 203728

**Norwich** Yoga Bugs, Sally 01603 279832

**Thetford**, Swimming, indoor sports/play at Leisure Centre Term-time, Thurs 2.30-4.30, Fay 01953 681785

**Norwich**, Fri, fortnightly activities run by Christian group, Sue: 01953 454278

#### **NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

[www.northantshe.org.uk](http://www.northantshe.org.uk) Imogen 01604 781316 or 07756 011189 [info@northantshe.org.uk](mailto:info@northantshe.org.uk)

**Northamptonshire**, Local home ed teens, Lynne 01604 454240

#### **NORTHUMBERLAND/NORTH EAST**

<http://groups.msn.com/EducationOtherwise>

#### **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**

**Nottingham** Weekly meetings, for full list, Local

Contact: Damian 0115 9603005 or

[damian.carnell@ntlworld.com](mailto:damian.carnell@ntlworld.com) or

Louise 01773 780634

**Amber Valley** area, meetings, contact: Deborah 01773 778380 or Helen 01332 883545

#### **OXFORDSHIRE**

Group meets alternate Thurs for varied timetable of activities. Children split into 3 age groups.

Workshops & regular speakers. Contact:

Wendy 01865 514973

#### **RUTLAND**

Weekly meetings & activities, Jackie or Iain 01572

755 959, [jackiecrac@bluebottle.com](mailto:jackiecrac@bluebottle.com)

#### **SHROPSHIRE**

**South Shrops** regular meetings every Tues,

outings & workshops, Maria 01588 630314

**Newport Nr Telford**, meetings & outings, Fri from 12.30, Julieann 01952 401571,

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

#### **SOMERSET**

**Bath H.E.L.P.** group meets regularly for outings & activities. Louise: 07957 618988

[jensen-thomas@clara.co.uk](mailto:jensen-thomas@clara.co.uk)

**Bath Meetings** 3 days per week for semi-structured child-centred learning activities with parents & a teacher, Andy & Rachel 01373 464754

**Frome & Beyond (FAB)** home educators' support group. Social gatherings, group activities, outings & newsletter, Sally 01749 674842 or Jennifer 01373 813830

**Wiveliscombe/Taunton** area - regular get-togethers & outings, Maggie 01984 624651.

**Wells & Glastonbury** area, regular social meetings, Lesley 01749 689241, Tanya 01458 83487, Steph 01749 812959

**Somerset North** - Regular get-togethers & activities, Vicky 01275 848425

**Somerset North W.A.V.E.S** group meeting fortnightly for crafts & activities in Weston-Super-Mare. Friendly group. Viv 07957 580935

#### **STAFFORDSHIRE / S. CHESHIRE / N. SALOP**

**Stafford HESEO**, meeting 2nd + 4th Wed each month 11-3pm, bring lunch, karen 01543 422577

[karen@karisto.co.uk](mailto:karen@karisto.co.uk)

**Staffs North & South Cheshire** newsletter, Carrie 01782 786 720, [home.ed@ntlworld.com](mailto:home.ed@ntlworld.com)

## SUFFOLK

**Woodbridge**, Foxburrow Farm, activities organised by Suffolk Wildlife Trust, to book call Jenny on 01394 380113

**Wetherden** meetings 3<sup>rd</sup> Fri 10.30-2pm, Heather 01953 688128

**Wild Meadows**, Ringsfield, regular meetings, Mell, 0845 337 0282

## SURREY

P.A.C.T. Surrey's home education group. Monthly newsletter containing information about activities, outings, events etc, [pact@jellyed.com](mailto:pact@jellyed.com) or Jeremy on 01483 546515

**Surrey**, Bloo House providing a unique learning environment for primary aged children. Piers 01932 228940 [enquiries@bloohouse.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@bloohouse.co.uk) / [www.bloohouse.co.uk](http://www.bloohouse.co.uk)

**Guildford** Spectrum skating, Fri, Rachel 01483 565703 (No Sunday calls please.)

**Cobham** area, Learning Group for parents + children 0-7, Rachael: 01932 706191 [rachael.underwood@classicfm.net](mailto:rachael.underwood@classicfm.net)

**Guildford** area: Theatre bookings: Tisha 01483 898575.

**Guildford**: Under 10s: Nicky 01483 232080

**Dorking/Reigate** area, Helen Burnett 01737 243606

**Farnham/Aldershot** area, friendly group for under 10s, fortnightly meetings & occasional outings, Paula: 01252 316497 [paula.oakley@talk21.com](mailto:paula.oakley@talk21.com) or Emma: 01483 426277 [emmajeavons@supanet.com](mailto:emmajeavons@supanet.com)

**North Surrey/Croydon** meetings, contact Jenny 0208 654 3972 ☎: [jen9@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:jen9@blueyonder.co.uk)

## SUSSEX

**Regional Contact for East Sussex:**

Winnie Durdant-Hollamby: 01342 826087

**Sussex Newsletter for Home Education**

Monthly newsletter gives full details of news, groups, events & activities throughout the County, for details, Roslyn: 01323 848973, ☎: [rossi@screamteamuk.com](mailto:rossi@screamteamuk.com) or ring one of the following local events organisers:

**Lewes:** Jan 01273 514528

**Hastings HEDGE Group:** Ali 01424 814175, Rachel 01424 422178 or Emily 01424 719570

**Brighton** Lucy 01273 699099 [lucygulland@hotmail.com](mailto:lucygulland@hotmail.com)

**Brighton**, meetings, Elaine 01273 581852 or [elaine.haslip@btinternet.com](mailto:elaine.haslip@btinternet.com) for details.

**Eastbourne 'SHINIES' home ed. group:**

Loretta: 01323 509283

☎: [madboys@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:madboys@tiscali.co.uk)

**Worthing/Shoreham Beach:** Avis:

0127 542589 or 07703 647954

**Forest Row** Area: Winnie: 01342 826087

**Petersfield ACTIVEO:**

[www.activeo.org.uk](http://www.activeo.org.uk), 5 events a week within 20 miles. For details call 01243 552472

**Wealden Home Ed website:**

[www.when.omnia.co.uk](http://www.when.omnia.co.uk) also email group: [wealdenhomeeducatorsnetwork@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:wealdenhomeeducatorsnetwork@yahoo.co.uk) [oups.com](http://www.oups.com)

**TYNE & WEAR & NORTHUMBERLAND**

Regular, frequent & varied activities. Age range from 1 to 17yrs. New members welcome. Website: [http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/home\\_ed\\_tynea\\_nwear](http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/home_ed_tynea_nwear)

Music – Rosemary: 0191 2853707 or

☎: [paul@thenews.icom43net](mailto:paul@thenews.icom43net)

**National Trust & English Heritage Visits + Woodland visits**, Deborah: 01434 674713

## WARWICKSHIRE

**Coventry & Warwickshire** Monthly meetings held at the locations given, plus monthly outings. Full details of meetings & outings given in HELM (see under West Midlands).

**Bedworth**, meetings 1<sup>st</sup> Tues 10.30-1.30pm, Alison: 07769 740925

**Coventry**, meetings 4<sup>th</sup> Tues 1-4pm, Sarah: 024 7627 9633

**Wolston**, meetings 2<sup>nd</sup> Thurs 10.30-3pm, Sue 024 7654 3801

## 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 & covers HE related articles & events throughout the West Midlands & surrounding areas. All entries for Helm should now be sent to: 01562 720046 or [helmeditor2112@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:helmeditor2112@blueyonder.co.uk)

**Birmingham** HE Group, regular meetings, Linda 0121 742 7368, [linda@tustin2532.freemove.co.uk](mailto:linda@tustin2532.freemove.co.uk)

**Coseley, West Midlands**, Meeting monthly, 10am, Fri, Debbie 01902 570787 or Glenda 0121 556 0189 or ☎: [highwaygirl@supalife.com](mailto:highwaygirl@supalife.com)

## WILTSHIRE

Becky 01985 840174

**Biddestone, Chippenham, Out & About Learning**  
Centre: Tues, term time, 10am-2.30pm, age range currently 0 to 11yrs, Rachel: 01249 890525 or Amanda: 01380 739845 or  
✉: [info@outandaboutlearning](mailto:info@outandaboutlearning)

**Warminster** meeting each Mon from 2.30,  
Beccy, 01985 840174

**Salisbury** meeting Tues afternoons,  
Vicky, 01722 324863

#### **North Wiltshire**

To link up with almost 100 HEers in North Wilts,  
✉: [NWILTS\\_HE-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:NWILTS_HE-subscribe@yahoo.com).

**Swindon** (term time) Mon swimming at Oasis,  
from 1:30; 2nd & 4th Weds ice-skating at Link  
Centre, 1:30-3:30

**Swindon** Weds, Shena: 01793 686433 or  
Mandy: 01793 644472

**FLI Robotics** team, phone Shena: 01793 686433

**Calne** book club, contact Janet: 01249 818672

**Devizes** Thurs, 11.30 - 2.30, contact Janet: 01249  
818672 or email Janet for this + book club:

[janet@eldevkist.com](mailto:janet@eldevkist.com)

#### **WORCESTERSHIRE**

LC Sue, meetings, events, trips out etc happening  
all through the month throughout the county,  
01905 458423.

**Worcester Home Education Group** meeting  
Tues, Jayne: 01905 424451

**North Worcs/Kidderminster** meetings, Gail  
Tutcher 01562 822034, ✉: [gail@tqmi.co.uk](mailto:gail@tqmi.co.uk)

**YORKSHIRE EAST** Regular meetings & visits,  
Alison 01405 769902

**Bridlington**, for meetings, Jacqui 01262 679769  
or Alison 01377 240324

#### **YORKSHIRE NORTH**

**Regular** meetings & outings. Karen 01904 400317  
[kkarensandy@aol.com](mailto:kkarensandy@aol.com)

**Near York**, new group meets Weds for various  
educational activities, crafts & social contact.

✉: [contact@yorkeo.co.uk](mailto:contact@yorkeo.co.uk)

**North/West Yorkshire Group**, Steeton Church  
Hall. Fortnightly meetings on Fri, Sarah Thomas  
01535 655405

**Skipton Home Ed Group** Meeting monthly on  
Fri, Judith Hargreaves 01756 791356

**near Malton**, meeting weekly on Mon, Tess,  
01947 825772 or ✉: [tess@chrisgeall.com](mailto:tess@chrisgeall.com)

**Scarborough**, Meetings on Fri contact Tess:  
01947 825772 ✉: [tess@chrisgeall.com](mailto:tess@chrisgeall.com)

**Harrogate, Hookstone Chase community  
centre**. Tues 1-3pm, Liz on 01423 320341,

✉: [Blessingway1@aol.com](mailto:Blessingway1@aol.com), or Kate on  
01423 865777, ✉: [ksbtscott@aol.com](mailto:ksbtscott@aol.com)

#### **YORKSHIRE SOUTH**

Regular meetings for arts/crafts, visits, swims,  
hanging out & more. Jo 01709 820866 or Denise  
01226 733478 or Gary 0114 2585702.

**Sheffield, Highfield**, Tues, Annette  
0114 2583502 or Fiona 0114 22751142

#### **YORKSHIRE WEST**

**Bradford** Weekly meetings & activities. For a  
monthly schedule of activities, Sarah,  
01484 361206 or ✉: [sl.marshall@ntlworld.com](mailto:sl.marshall@ntlworld.com)

**Halifax**: Mon in term time, Gill, 01422 311876,  
✉: [Gill.Kilner@aol.com](mailto:Gill.Kilner@aol.com)

**Huddersfield**: Swimming, Wed,  
Tracy 01484 317176.

**Huddersfield** monthly meeting, Wed,  
Helen 01484 841041 or Jane 01484 645034.

**Huddersfield**, "Lunch & Chat", monthly, Thurs,  
Tracy 01484 317176.

**Huddersfield** Art Gallery, Art Workshop, Thurs,  
contact Jane 01484 645034.

#### **SCOTLAND**

**ARGYLL**, Home-Ed Group, regular meetings,  
Joanne 0845 345 2291 or Debra 01631 730469

✉: [debra@celtic-soul-music.com](mailto:debra@celtic-soul-music.com)

**FIFE**, Fri fortnightly meetings, Nicola  
01334 478530 [nicola.stubbs@btinternet.com](mailto:nicola.stubbs@btinternet.com)

**HIGHLANDS/MORAY**, Toni, 01463 831574 or  
✉: [tee.kay@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:tee.kay@hotmail.co.uk) or

Rebecca 01343 542245

**IRVINE**, Rhona 01294 273644,

Shirley 01563 540063, Vivien 01563 537428

#### **LOTHIAN, CENTRAL & S.E. SCOTLAND**

fortnightly, meetings + outings,

Jane 01835 862118

#### **WALES**

**SOUTH WALES**, South Wales Home Educators  
Network, weekly meetings in **Llantrisant &**

**Swansea**. For information & support ✉:

[SWHEN@aol.com](mailto:SWHEN@aol.com) or [bev1.french@btinternet.com](mailto:bev1.french@btinternet.com)

or Louise 01443231362 (Llantrisant), Bev 02920  
797628 (Cardiff), Juliet 01639 760987 (Port

Talbot), Amanda 01792 862305 (Swansea) or see:  
[www.swhen.netfirms.com](http://www.swhen.netfirms.com)

**Mid Glamorgan - Rhondda Cynon Taff**,  
meetings on a Fri, Lisa 01443 772278

**PEMBROKESHIRE & Cardigan area**, for local  
information contact Yvette 0845 458 9251

#### **CEREDIGION & CARMARTHENSHIRE**

**Lampeter**, weekly meetings on Tuesday,  
Laura 01545 580528

**Aberaeron** weekly meetings on Friday,  
Laura 01545 580528

**Llanddeusant** monthly meeting.

Laura 01545 580528

#### **GWYNEDD**

**Bangor & area home ed network**, contact

Heather 01248 352336

**Tregarth** meeting every Wed, free weekly

newsletter of events, Julie 01286 678181

jdchapmanmaurice@aol.com or

Nick 01407 811049.

#### **POWYS**

Local Contacts - Dave & Dee 01938 590098

d.yeoman@tesco.net, e-mail list for home ed info:

david@visionetics.com, home ed camps, activities & outings

**Brecknock/South Powys area** occasional events,

Hela 01874 610190 ☎: [ry.ella@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:ry.ella@tiscali.co.uk)

**Newtown area:** Fortnightly in Newtown, Sue

01686 688748 ☎: [smw5@tutor.open.ac.uk](mailto:smw5@tutor.open.ac.uk)

#### **N.E. WALES / BORDERS**

**Oswestry/West Cheshire/NE Wales** local

newsletter of events please send your details & £2

payment to; HENWOS, Berllan Gron, Llanycil,

Bala. Gwynedd LL23 7YG

**Froncsyllte** fortnightly meetings

Sam 01978 861011

# Inspirational Inspirational

## **October**

Black History Month

1-31 – The Big Draw

1 English Pudding Season starts

1 – World Architecture Day

1 – World Habitat Day

1 – 7 National Childrens Book Week

4 World Animal Day

4 National Poetry Day (theme is **dream**)

5 World Smile Day

11 World Sight Day

14 Seed Gathering Sunday

21 Apple Day

21 Trafalgar Day

24 United Nations Day

28 British Summer Time ends

31 Halloween

### **4 October – St Francis Day**

On St Francis Day swallows are supposed to fly to the bottom of ponds and hibernate through the winter. In the days before the idea of migration was understood, this seemed a reasonable explanation for their sudden disappearance. The fact that swallows skim the surface of ponds for insects may have been the starting point for this particular folklore.

## **November**

1 All Saints Day

5 Guy Fawkes Day

5 – 12 Road Safety Week

5 – 12 National Adoption Week

5 – 12 Dyslexia Awareness Week

11 Armistice Day

14 Remembrance Sunday

19 – 23 Anti Bullying Week

### **5 November – Guy Fawkes Night**

Bonfire Night is the most widespread and flourishing of all British customs. The day was declared a holiday by decree of Parliament after Parliament was saved from being blown up by Guy Fawkes in the Gunpowder Plot of 1605. Until 1859, all parish churches were required to hold services this day.

Just as in 1605, a new session of Parliament in London is still opened by the reigning monarch at the beginning of November. If there has been a general election in the same year, the opening of Parliament is in May.

# Small Groups

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  
ebirkenshaw@education-otherwise.org tel 0113 2172795

## Small Groups:

### Strategic Planning Group:

Phil Hicks, **Laurie McAulay**, Sarah Cook, **Gail Borrows**, Lynda Hitchman, Jacqui Houlding, **Joss Nowell**, Celia McDonagh, **Janet Wilkinson**, **Jo Berry**, **Leslie Barson**

Finance: Lynda Hitchman, Ann Samuel Till, Janet Simpson, **Janet Wilkinson**

Enquiries: **Anne Rix**, Geraldine Adams, Iris Harrison, Jo Borthen, Edwina Theunissen

Publications: **June Wilson-Billing**, **Gail Borrows**, Jacqui Houlding, Lynda Hitchman, **Joss Nowell**, **Jo Berry**, Ross Mountney

Core Govt. Policy: Fiona Nicholson, Annette Taberner, Betsy Anderson, Carole Rutherford, Ann Newstead, Karen Bowlzer, **Anne Rix**, **Jo Berry**, **Emma Birkenshaw**, Ann Samuel Till, Kira Patefield-Smith, Natasha Arthur, **Janet Wilkinson**

LA/EA Group: Sarah Cook, Priscilla Park Weir, Kathleen Thompson, **Jo Berry**, **Gail Borrows**, **Joss Nowell**, **Janet Wilkinson**

Scotland Group: Ann Samuel Till, Fiona Chaff, Rebecca Kail, Jill Fisher

### Grievances and Complaints:

**Pauline Butterworth** 6 White House Croft, Long Newton, Stockton on Tees, TS21 1PJ 01642 570786  
pbutterworth@education-otherwise.org

Lynda Hitchman, 22 Lewis Drive, St Germans, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3FB 01553 617551  
database@education-otherwise.org

**Anne Rix** Hembury Orchard, Frithelstock, Torrington, EX38 8JT 01237 451535  
arix@education-otherwise.org

### EO Email Lists & Forums

EO runs four email lists with Yahoo Groups. The 'Yahoo! lists are open to all, members or non members. The forums are available in the Members Area of the EO Website. See ([www.education-otherwise.org](http://www.education-otherwise.org)) to join one of the Yahoo lists

**Jo Berry** c/o 38 Garwood Close, Westbrook, Warrington. WA5 8TF 07986 461719  
jberry@education-otherwise.org

### 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: Ann Newstead, 01689 826504  
mediaco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org

**Scotland:** (VACANT) *Volunteers please!!*

**NI** (VACANT) *Volunteers please!!*

**North West:** Stewart Eyres 07792 777750  
northwest@education-otherwise.org

**North East:** Eva O'Rourke, Wilsden  
01535 274520 northwest@education-otherwise.org

**Midlands:** (VACANT) *Volunteers please!!*

**Wales (S):** Celia McDonagh, Cardiff,  
07763 729055 wales1@education-otherwise.org

**Wales (N):** Edwina Theunissen, Wrexham 01978  
661 882 wales2@education-otherwise.org

**East Anglia:** Ali Willer, Sprowston, Norwich  
01603 401020 eastanglia@education-otherwise.org

**South West: (Acting)** Kay & Simon Smith,  
01726 842057 southwest@education-otherwise.org

**South East:** Ann Newstead, Kent 01689 826504  
southeast@education-otherwise.org

**London:** Winnie Durdant-Hollamby,  
01342 826087 london2@education-otherwise.org

**Isle of Wight:** Shara Ouston, Ryde  
01983 562313 iow@education-otherwise.org

To access the Forums, send an email to  
**forums@education-otherwise.org** giving your preferred User Name which should be between four and fifteen characters, your Full (real) Name, the email address you wish to have associated with the forum and either your EO Membership Number or your full postal address.

## WHO DOES WHAT IN EO

### Council Members

**Leslie Barson** (London) 0208 969 0893  
lbarson@education-otherwise.org  
**Jo Berry** (Cheshire) 07986 461719  
jberry@education-otherwise.org  
**Emma Birkenshaw** (W Yorks) 0113 217 2795  
ebirkenshaw@education-otherwise.org  
**Gail Borrows** (Bucks) Tel: 01628 483895  
gborrows@education-otherwise.org (Membership Secretary)  
**Darren Braecklein** (W Yorks) 0113 217 2795  
dbraecklein@education-otherwise.org  
**Pauline Butterworth** (Cleveland) 01642 672370  
pbutterworth@education-otherwise.org  
**Carla MacGregor** (Bristol) 0117 935 4389  
cmacgregor@education-otherwise.org  
**Imogen Cooper** (Northants) 01604 781316  
icooper@education-otherwise.org  
**Joss Nowell** (Staffs) Tel: tba  
jnowell@education-otherwise.org (Publications Sec)  
**Anne Rix** (Devon) 01237 451535  
arix@education-otherwise.org (Enquiries Sec.)  
**Janet Wilkinson** (Peterborough) 01733 554436  
jwilkinson@education-otherwise.org (Company Sec)  
**Rowenna Williams** (Gwynedd) 01678 521348  
rwilliams@education-otherwise.org  
**June Wilson-Billing** (Dorset) 01258 471949  
jwilsonbilling@education-otherwise.org

### Membership

Membership and newsletter subscription enquiries, membership cards, address changes, new member packs, other queries or missing newsletters contact : Database Administrator, Education Otherwise, Lynda Hitchman, 22 Lewis Drive, St Germans, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3FB  
01553 617551 or 0870 765 3650  
Email database@education-otherwise.org

### Stationery

Leaflets, posters, letterhead, compliment slips, membership forms, car stickers etc: free (donations toward postage welcome); reuse labels £4.00 per 100 (free for EO business use). Debbie Barker, 19 Cedar Drive, Worlingham, Beccles, NR34 7EW 01502 714413 email: eostationary@education-otherwise.org

**Truancy Cards (HE cards)** (free on joining). Extra or replacement truancy and membership cards SSAE + £1 per card. P.O./cheque (payable to 'Education Otherwise' or in 50p or £1 stamps, to Lynda. hecards@education-otherwise.org

### Publications

Books, information leaflets and back issues of newsletter. For a full list send SAE to : Debbie Barker, 19 Cedar Drive, Worlingham, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 7EW 01502 714413  
publications@education-otherwise.org (please ring to check availability of items before ordering)

**Website & Email Lists** Jacqui Houlding  
01925 654856 website@education-otherwise.org

### Useful Contacts

#### **Contact with LA / Member Support / Other Problems**

If you need help in dealing with your LA/EA please ring your Local Contact or any Council Member.

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

**Anti Bullying Support** (Acting) Jacqui Halson (Kent) 01227 277869 12a Clifton Road, Whitstable, Kent CT5 1DQ

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

**Campaign Team Contact:** Fiona Nicholson  
campaignteam@education-otherwise.org 0114 275 1142 205 Leverton Gdns, Sheffield, S11 8FD

**College Contact:** (Acting) Roger Scaife, Glen House, Cragg Vale, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire HX7 5SQ 01422 884682

collegecontact@education-otherwise.org

**Company Secretary:** Janet Wilkinson (See CM List)

**Coordinator for Enquiries Secretary:** Iris Harrison (Worcs.) 01584 781341 esco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org

**Enquiries Secretary:** Anne Rix (See CM List)

**EO LA/EA Bridgebuilder:** Kathleen Thompson  
Kathleen Thompson 01942 795975  
la-eabridgebuilder@education-otherwise.org

**EO Stalls:** Jacqui Houlding 01925 654856  
website@education-otherwise.org

**GCSE Contacts:** Geraldine Adams 0207 263 4922  
Sarah Cook: 01768 896019  
gcsecontact@education-otherwise.org

**General Secretary:** Vacant

**LearnPremium:** Lynda Hitchman (01553 617551)  
learnpremium@education-otherwise.org

**Local Contacts Co-ordinator:** Carla MacGregor  
(See CM list) lcco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org

**Membership Secretary:** Gail Borrows (See CM List)

**Newsletter Coordinator:** Martine Frampton (01608 812411 and Nicola Haxell (01302 863195) nlcco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org

**Publications Secretary:** Joss Nowell (See CM List)

**Research Contact:** Sue White, 2 Pretoria Villas, Eye Rd., Brome, Eye, Suffolk IP23 8AL 01379 870036  
research@education-otherwise.org

**School Induced Anxiety Support:** Kathleen Thompson 01942 795975  
AnxietySupport@education-otherwise.org

**Single Parent Family Contact:** (Acting) Cal Bailes: 0191 241 4870 (for address: see contact list for Tyne & Wear)

**Small Jobs Coordinator:** Emma Birkenshaw  
smalljobs@education-otherwise.org 0113 2172795

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

**Treasurer:** Pauline Butterworth (See CM List)

# 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 sae to:

PO BOX 325  
KINGS LYNN PE34 3XW

Helpline 0845 478 6345

(the 0870 number will be phased out over the next year or two)

**Web Site:** <http://www.education-otherwise.org>

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