

education otherwise



No. 181 – April 2008

£2

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE IS: 1st May 2008

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

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

Please send contributions via the most appropriate section editor listed below:

LETTERS & ARTICLES

Sue White ~ 01379 870036 ~ 2 Pretoria Villas,
Eye Road, Brome, Eye, Suffolk IP23 8AL ~
articles@education-otherwise.org

BOOK & SOFTWARE REVIEWS

Sally Hall ~ 01559 370798 ~ Nant-y-Gareg Farm,
Saron, Llandysul, Carmarthenshire SA44 5EJ ~
reviews@education-otherwise.org

EO BUSINESS

Vacant

COMPETITION

Tracy Mayer ~ 01253 858840 ~ 79 Cumberland
Avenue, Cleveleys, Lancashire FY5 2DS

ADVERTISEMENTS & FLYERS

(e-mail/envelope marked "EO Advertising" please)

Justine Kinney-Graham, ~ 020 7328 6433 ~ 11 Donaldson
Road, Kilburn, London NW6 6NA ~
advertising@education-otherwise.org

REGIONAL DIARY

Jo Borthen ~ 01392 438876 ~
regionaldiary@education-otherwise.org

CHILDREN'S PAGES CO-ORDINATOR

(Volunteers found pending CRB checks)

Children's Pages Co-ordinator, PO BOX 325, Kings Lynn PE34
3XW ~ eochildrenspages@education-otherwise.org

Editor for the next Children's Pages: Alice Beardsmith **Deadline:** 20th April 2008

Please send all material to the Children's Pages Co-ordinator who will forward it to the relevant Children's Editors. This is to ensure that if there is a problem submissions from other children will not 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

Education Otherwise 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 Education Otherwise. We try to consult with authors when this is necessary but we reserve the right not to print anything we consider puts Education Otherwise at risk.

Copyright

Any item published in the Newsletter may be reprinted in other home education magazines in the UK or abroad or on the Internet. If you do not want your contribution reproduced without your consent, please state clearly that you wish to retain copyright. If you send material to another source, please acknowledge this clearly.

IMPORTANT - EO's data is registered under the Data Protection Act. The contact details throughout this newsletter are for the sole and personal use of members. They are not to be used to prepare circular letters/emails or compose mailing lists for advertising, research, marketing, resources or any other purpose. Anyone found misusing this data will have their EO membership terminated.

If you change your address, phone number, e-mail or other details, or if your Newsletter does not arrive, please contact the Database Administrator (see inside back cover)

Contents

Articles	p.2 - 21
Diary of a HE Nobody	p. 2
Joseph's Himalayan Travels Pt.1	p. 4
Midlands LA Conference	p. 6
Flexi-schooling	p. 9
Teenage Reviewers Wanted	p.12
Walpurgis Night	p.13
News from Disability Group	p.14
The Children's Info. Sharing Index	p.16
Educating Archie	p.18
Early Years Foundation Stage	p.19
Book Review	p.21

Letters	p.22 - 26
---------	-----------

Crafty Corner	p.27 - 28
---------------	-----------

Business	p.29 - 39
Trustees Annual Report	p.29
EO Celebration of HE Day	p.31
EO Helpline with Legal Backing	p.32
Notice of OCM	p.34
Notice of AGM	p.34
Becoming a SUM	p.35
Articles & Memoranda of Assoc.	p.36
Local Contact Round-up	p.38
Vacancies	p.39

Advertising	p.40-43
Misc. Ads	p.40
EO Merchandise	p.42

Useful Information	
Regional Diary	p.44
Small Groups	p.52
Who Does What in EO (inner cover)	

EO MERCHANDISE

To gain the 10% discount available to members who use the online store, please enter the code: **Spaghetti Tree**

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

Welcome...

To the April 2008 edition of the Education Otherwise newsletter.

For the first time this year it seems like Spring is in the air (in South Yorkshire at least). I'm a bit of a fair-weather walker, so it's only now that I start to move outside the house to go on trips, although we did have an enjoyable visit to Sheffield over the winter (well wrapped up). We visited Endcliffe Park and then the Botanical Gardens. My daughter insisted on me taking a photo of pretty much every cactus in the glasshouses, plus the squirrels who will try and sit on your feet if they think they can get some food from you! We also had a walk around the Millenium Galleries, before making our way back to the train station and home.

I'm really pleased this month that we have a first round-up from the Disability Group. I look forward to seeing a regular column from them and hope to hear more of member's experiences of home-educating young people with SEN. If you would like to share your experiences of home-educating, please write in - typically people think that what they do couldn't possibly be of interest, but the feedback from past articles where members have talked about their experiences (including day-to-day life) has been positive - other people really do want to hear about your HE life!

I also want to take this opportunity to thank Lizzi who has stepped in at fairly short notice to edit The Children's Pages again. She has done a fantastic job and if you haven't looked at the Children's Pages for a while, please do!

Nikki Haxell, NL Co-ordinator

2008 Contact list - Is your entry correct?

This mailing contains your new contact list. Please have a look at your details and check that they're correct and also that your family is listed in the area you would like to be. If you have any changes to make to your entry, or comments or suggestions for future issues of this list, please let me know. Also contact me if you change your name, address, phone number, email address or wish to add or remove any children. Database Administrator - Lynda - database@education-otherwise.org (please put "EO" at the start of the subject line in your email) or Tel: 01553 617551 Thanks. Lynda

Diary of a Home-Educating Nobody

"But how do you get them to do it?"

I often get asked this question. Usually by parents with children in school who are having a nightmare battle every night to get them to do their homework.

Trouble is I never know the answer. This is because we never seemed to be in the position of motivating the children to do stuff they seriously didn't want to be doing. It's not that they always got to do what they wanted - no way. It's just that we saw no point in asking children to do masses of stuff that they could see no inherent reason for, which is often the situation children are in with homework. And that's the whole point with motivation - *having a good reason*.

Motivating small children is relatively easy. We have their curiosity on our side. Young children are so curious, want to see everything, try everything, and know the 'why' about everything and if you think about it, this all the motivation they need to learn. All we need to do is be a bit ingenious about guiding that desire towards the things we want them to learn and the skills we feel they should have. And we can often incorporate skills and subjects associated with the curriculum into young children's everyday lives in a way they see a point to, even if it's purely enjoyment as the point!

As an example, I used to look up a topic we might learn about, say food chains for example, but rather than just study it via a book suggest we go out for a picnic at a park or anywhere we might see some wild life, plant life, or birds, then look around and chat about what we saw in relation to the topic.

With maths we are surrounded all the time by opportunities to use number, weight, measurement, etc, just by giving children a variety of things to count, measuring jugs to play with in water, things to weigh, materials and tools to explore and therefore understand about the mathematical world through play. Shopping incorporates loads of maths! Maths doesn't always have to be done in books. In fact, the more physical experiences and discussion the children have with using maths, or any subject for that matter, the better they will grasp the concepts. And the easier they will find it to formalise on paper when the time comes. That's if they haven't been put off, of course!

This is the problem parents face when having to get children to do their homework after school, particularly older children. By then, they've probably been put off. They've lost their fascination with learning, often by overexposure to too much that has had no inherent purpose for them, not even enjoyment.

And it is also the key to 'how do you get them to do it'. Basically, you don't put them off!

I admit, this isn't easy! Firstly, the more you do something the more boring it becomes and children in school do academic exercises until they're bored witless.

Secondly, as they get older they are much more inclined to question, know their own mind and fight back, which makes it a lot more difficult. But at least with HE we have the opportunity to keep their learning experiences varied and fresh, which helps keep them motivated.

Academic study at home can be achieved much quicker than in a classroom where so much time is wasted with distractions, waiting for teacher attention and for others to settle. This gives our children more free time to develop their other interests and saves them from academic overkill.

We also have the chance to keep their motivation alive by varying the way in which they learn, giving them experiences that are more firsthand and therefore more stimulating than pure study. For example, much of a geography curriculum can be discussed out in the field, actually in situ. Much history can be learned from visits to historic sites. Science, by relating all topics directly to the child's own life and the effect it has. These first hand experiences relates children's learning directly to their lives and it has far more impact this way than simply studying the subject in a book. It also gives opportunity for questioning and discussion, another valuable route to learning. And since real experiences help the child with their understanding, academic study becomes more meaningful.

The subject of nutrition is a good example. Most children end up studying this in schools as part of the science curriculum. But so few seem to be able to relate it directly to them as Jamie Oliver has been finding out, to use their understanding of the subject to build healthier lives. HEing gives you the opportunity not only to study nutrition academically, but also to look at what you're eating at home, to look at food groups and see whether you're actually eating food from those groups, to shop and cook nutritionally balanced meals together, to actually make nutrition work for you. To make this subject real and relevant. Understanding of nutrition is something that affects us every single day of our lives. Yet most children don't see that. They fail to connect their learning to their life. And failing to make that connection they fail to find the purpose. Purpose is where motivation comes from.

We can only really motivate older children to learn by developing in them a sense of their *own* purpose - by nurturing in them a sense of 'why' education. The 'why' may be because it's interesting or they like it! The 'why' may be because it directly affects their lives and they see how it does, like the nutrition example. The 'why' may be because they have longer term goals like qualifications needed for university. Once they have charge of the 'why' for themselves then they will have all the motivation they need. It is then that they will see that education really is just for them. Not for parents. Not for teachers. Not because anyone says so. But really and truly just for them. Both for now and long term.

So our answer to 'how do you get them to do it?' is perhaps to do with the fact that the children haven't been dulled by endless hours of academics. They have had a wide variety of learning experiences with as many firsthand ones as possible to keep it fresh. They have had direct influence on choosing what they do, or don't do!

This is not to say that they have had no structure, no pressure at times, no encouragement or cajoling! They have. But we've also done our utmost to preserve their inherent motivation and hoped to show them what a life enhancing thing education is, how it is just for *them*, and been as careful as we can *not to put them off!*

Ross Mountney.

Email: ross.mountney@tiscali.co.uk

FREE packs from the RSPB

The RSPB is offering FREE 'Homes for Wildlife' packs with advice and ideas to help make your home, garden, patio, balcony or window box a better place for nature.

You can register at: www.rspb.org.uk/hfw

Joseph's Himalayan Travels Part 1.

Nepal: Elephants, Giant Stinging Nettles and Leeches

Last October my youngest son Joseph (aged 9) joined me on my 22nd scientific expedition to the Himalaya - his first time. As an 'old hand', I warned him that he was in for a 'roller-coaster ride' of emotions. Provided one is organised and prepares well, the 'downs' of independent travel in the Indian sub-continent very much heighten its 'ups'! I was confident he would cope with the demands placed upon him - indeed previous experience had taught me that travelling to such places with a child can be easier than escorting most adults; children usually adapt well and do not worry unduly. He flourished. Plans are underway for a trip this year to experience higher altitudes in the borderlands of Western Tibet.

I plumped for flights via Dhaka using Birman Bangladeshi, a 'no frills' airline (funds are always tight for 'freelance botanists'), but the staff were friendly. A lengthy wait for the connecting flight to Nepal did not impress (I had taken the precaution of *not* telling him just how many hours were involved). By the time we finally boarded the flight to Kathmandu he was soaked with perspiration, wishing he had not agreed to come...

Nowadays I mostly head off alone from the UK, making my own arrangements upon arrival. I was pleased that Til Jung Rai, a Nepalese trekking guide (who had assisted me before) was available to join us with the bonus of his eldest son providing Joseph with company, not least as an opponent for chess and cards.

Nepal had been plagued in recent years by a Maoist uprising with trekkers regularly accosted at gun-point to extract a \$20 'donation'. A cease-fire had been agreed during 2007 but there were serious concerns as we departed, following the break-down of negotiations over forthcoming elections.

Not the slightest difficulty transpired. I could have readily ensured our safety had the

situation deteriorated. Local police and military go to considerable lengths to prevent Westerners being harmed; they must behave irresponsibly to be at any significant risk. Overall, I judge India and surrounding countries to be amongst the safest of destinations (apart from the at times 'sheer lunacy' of drivers - my son perceptively inquired during one journey by road as to "Which side of the road are they supposed to drive on in Nepal?") I was regularly asked why more visitors do not bring their children with them...

Til Jung's wife provided lunch one day at the cafe she runs (his family are based in Kathmandu after moving from a village south of Everest) in a part of the city which few foreigners ever venture into. This was unlike anywhere Joseph had eaten before - with disconcerting odours all around! We relaxed afterwards in the single room above, where 3 sons, parents, grandmother, plus a visiting cousin or two sleep; he began to realise those required to share a bedroom in the UK have nothing to feel deprived about! The warmth of greetings somewhat overwhelmed him. He remains rightly proud of the silk scarf presented to him upon arrival.

Joseph's top ambition was to ride on an elephant - duly accomplished with Til Jung keeping him company (and safe) so I could act as photographer. We then undertook plant exploration in cloud forest, reaching over 2500m. My 'considerate' son delighted when I complained of unwanted attention from small beasties!

Being a dedicated botanist it is necessary to plunge into undergrowth to examine specimens closely, facilitating encounters with leeches. The best method of removal (no permanent harm to the leech and reducing risk of infection) is a sprinkle of salt (from my trusty

and extensive First Aid kit carried at all times) which causes them to rapidly let go. By the end of the day Joseph had also been 'bloodied'. Care was taken to avoid Giant Himalayan Stinging Nettles and aggressive hornets (large wasps) - packing stings many times more powerful than our native species! Such risks certainly make answering a 'call of nature' an anxious undertaking!

Important religious sites proved highly educational: Swayambunath Buddhist temple, dominated by a huge stupa topped by the watchful eyes of Buddha, impressed; whilst he observed respectfully as the faithful brought their dead to be cremated on funeral ghats beside Pushupatinath - a revered Hindu temple. Pokhara affords stunning views (arguably the finest in the Himalaya) of Fish-tail Peak (6993m) and surrounding Annapurna Range (over 8000m).

Joseph was excited to be permitted to swim in Phewa Lake (escorted by Ashiq, teenage son of Ghulam Rasool - Kashmiri guide on past expeditions, now based in town). The day spent at Ghulam's daughter's school attracted a disconcerting level of attention and curiosity, culminating in an impromptu football match where everyone else played bare-footed - he could not get over being passed to so much (sadly not the norm at UK schools).

As we headed home, Joseph (by now feeling something of an 'old-hand' himself) composed himself for a lengthy wait in Dhaka. Much to our dismay, the connecting Heathrow flight was delayed for an extra day. Hotel accommodation was provided, but Joseph (like many before him) was not taken with Bangladesh - being plunged into darkness at the international airport was the final straw. However, shortly after our return to the UK came news of thousands of deaths from a cyclone. A more realistic appraisal then hit home - how fortunate we are to live under more stable circumstances.

A joint presentation using high-quality slides (plus display materials and props) about Joseph's adventures has been prepared. Might EO groups be interested? We ask merely for our return Saver rail fares (from Slough) to be met plus a modest donation to The Britain-Nepal Medical Trust. We have travelled all over the UK to deliver my normal lectures, at times hosted overnight. We can consider *any* part of the country if similar arrangements can be made available. Please note I am an experienced public speaker having entertained and informed a wide variety of audiences (clubs, societies, schools) about my own travels in the Himalaya for more than 25 years. Tel. 01753 542823 for further details and availability.

Chris and Joseph Chadwell

HES FES 2008

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF HES FES 1998-2008

27TH JUNE - 4TH JULY

Price includes 7 nights camping with all workshops and events

For information and tickets:

www.hesfes.co.uk

PO Box 20284, London, NW1 3WY

Tel: 020 7388 5005

Mobile/Txt 0783 379 4062

Feedback from the Midlands Regional Local Authority Conference Tuesday 4th March 2008

Every 3 months there is regional conference in the Midlands for the teams or individuals in the authorities who have responsibility for Elective Home Education. It takes place in Stafford and is organised by the Home Education team in Staffordshire and the convenor is Olaf Hindmarsh. I accepted an invitation to the conference on behalf of Education Otherwise.

Staff from the Traveller Liaison Service may also attend, plus officers from the Education Welfare Service, so it isn't just the home education people. At the conference in early March there were also a few representatives from other regions who wanted to network with colleagues.

The authorities were : Birmingham ; Bristol (because the person from Bristol is the Chair of the South West Region) ; Cheshire ; Derby City ; Essex ; Hampshire ; Herefordshire ; Leicester ; Lincolnshire ; Nottingham City ; Nottinghamshire ; Shropshire ; Solihull ; Telford and Wrekin ; Warwickshire ; Wolverhampton and Worcestershire. As far as I recall, there were apologies from Derbyshire and also from Stoke.

There was a lot of interest in Children Missing Education and ContactPoint. I told the conference that Education Otherwise would be having a meeting with the DCSF CME team and the Home Education team in early April and I said we would be discussing the ways the statutory guidance was being implemented on the ground. We talked about the recent Capita CME in London conference and one of the LA representatives read some notes from the London conference and offered to share these, so they will be added to the minutes of the Stafford conference.

Denise Hunter and Iain Campbell of DCSF Darlington attended the meeting from 11-2. It was their first time at one of these

conferences, although I gather that their predecessor Elaine Haste attended a conference in 2006.

The LA representatives by and large were not happy with the guidelines and felt that they had not addressed the following : safeguarding issues ("what if parent won't allow us to see the child") ; "standards" ; "the voice of the child"; definition of suitable education. They said a chance had been missed. They offered case studies and also said "these are the ones we know about, but what happens with all the ones we don't know about." Victoria Climbié was mentioned, also "the Gloucester case". There were several people there who worked with Travellers and Fairground families. Several conference delegates said that Traveller Education Services had told them that when a traveller family was home educating, it no longer came under the remit of TES.

David Williams from Helping Learning also gave a presentation to the Midlands conference about a new service where families can register for a small administrative charge and then pose questions via skype and webcam to registered teachers in real time. I gather it will operate on pay as you go system and I hope to give further details in the June newsletter.
www.HelpingLearning.co.uk
DavidWilliams@HiddenIdeas.com

Helping Learning, Yew Tree Cottage, Bisterne Close, Burley, Hampshire, BH24 4BA
01425 403292 or 07970 816974

DH and IC listened to what the authorities were saying about the guidelines. They themselves were non-committal. They restated the same message they gave to EO at the November meeting, ie that they don't make policy, that the guidelines are non-statutory so they can do no more than to describe the law, whereas the local authorities were asking for the guidelines to introduce new

powers "which would require new laws". As it happens, this was the same point I had been making to the local authority representatives on my table and also to the wider meeting. I said firstly hard cases make bad laws and secondly to bring about the huge changes they would require for the minority of cases where they say they have concerns wouldn't just be a minor regulation it would affect a whole raft of other areas of legislation.

DCSF told the conference that they had consulted with 10 other policy teams in the formulation of the consultation report and final guidelines. I gather that one of the main policy teams was in the area of Attendance.

There was an interesting debate about School Attendance Orders. DCSF kept saying if it appears to you that education is not taking place you have powers you can use. The local authorities all insisted that no, they DIDN'T have powers and they couldn't understand why DCSF didn't grasp this.

Further questions on this after lunch revealed that a/ authorities say they might issue SAO but parent might not comply, might move out of area, might send child for short time and then de-register again so what was the point and ; b/ the Education Welfare Services were apparently requiring EVIDENCE that education was not taking place, so if the parent offered no information then there was no proof of lack of education/unsuitable education.

I thought there were several really interesting aspects to this. Firstly I thought it was significant that the Education Welfare Services were not backing up the Home Education staff when the latter wanted to issue a School Attendance Order. This bears out recent experience we've had in a Yorkshire local authority where we cut out any dialogue with the Home Education person and went directly to the head of Education Welfare and explained very clearly how the authority could

not win a court case over a School Attendance Order.

Secondly I thought it was an unusual and surprising reading of the law which did not take into account Lord Donaldson's judgement about how the parent would be unwise not to supply information about the education being provided. There is a page about Donaldson's judgement on the EO website <http://www.education-otherwise.org/Legal/donaldson.html> for people who would like more information about this area.

The relevant quote from Donaldson is as follows : "If parents give no information or adopt the course adopted by Mr Phillips of merely stating that they are discharging their duty without giving any details of how they are doing so, the LEA will have to consider and decide whether it "appears" to it that the parents are in breach of s 36 [nb this referred to the old 1944 Education Act ; the new reference is section 7 of the 1996 Education Act] . In this context there is no reason why it should necessarily accept the parents' view - opinions differ on what has to be done in discharge of the duty - and if the parents refuse to answer, it could very easily conclude that prima facie the parents were in breach of their duty...")

Denise and Iain from the DCSF said that SAO was not an issue of lack of powers for authorities and that the powers did exist. This statement was not at all well received by the local authorities.

The morning session ended at 12. Theo took ages to shut down and pack up his laptop so we were the last people to arrive at the cafeteria. I spotted two empty places and headed over to the table, which I then found we were sharing with Denise and Iain. I was sort of surprised the LA people had not taken up the opportunity to share their pain about the guidelines with the Department over lunch but I inferred that

they wanted to catch up with each others' news and they also seemed to feel that it was all doomed.

So Theo and I did some accidental but fortuitous networking in plain sight of all the Local Authority Home Education Consultants.

The afternoon session included an interesting discussion about flexi-school and the codes for the school register. I've written another article specifically about flexi-schooling because EO gets lots of questions about this.

There was considerable interest at my table in finding out what we had been doing with the local authority in Sheffield. I related the initial confrontation over truancy sweep procedures and how this had come at a time when the authority was going through the Joint Area Review process, which several authorities are due shortly. I said that the authority had recently recognised that they knew very little about children and young people who were not on a school roll and that we arrived at exactly the right time to tell them about home education. I said that the DfES had visited Sheffield twice during the guidelines consultation to learn more about the working partnership between the local authority and representatives of the home education community.

There was also quite a lot of interest from the conference delegates in GCSEs, both over the issue of access to exam centres (and the

EO/HEAS/DSCF meeting with the Independent Schools Council in January) and also with the upcoming issue of coursework being replaced by controlled assessment and EO's meeting with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

Fiona Nicholson, Chair of Education Otherwise Government Policy Group and Local Contact for EO in Sheffield

Booktrust gave a Powerpoint presentation at about the free books which will apparently be available to home educated children and young people later in the year. To date they have only been given out in schools. Details of the coming year's book selections will go on the national Booktrust website in June and home educators will be able to select a free book online or by writing to request the Booktrust magazine which gives more information about the range of titles on offer. The next EO newsletter will have further details about this. The Booktrust website also has more information, but as far as I know, the 2008/2009 titles have not yet been released, so any lists of free books will be referring to the 2007/2008 programme, the deadline for which has now elapsed.

<http://www.booktrust.org.uk/Home>

Booktrust, Book House, 45 East Hill, London SW18 2QZ

Booktrust Switchboard and general enquiries
020 8516 2977

Notice regarding the Contact List and Members Handbook

The Members Handbook is growing and would be too large to print in its current format. It was decided to remove the concessions list and print this separately and you will have received this with your newsletter mailing this month. It will hopefully be handier to take around with you when you're visiting places of interest.

The Members Handbook will now be distributed with the June newsletter mailing each year, so members will receive the updated version with their next newsletter. The Contact list and Concessions list will continue to be distributed in April. Thanks to those postholders who've sent in updates for the Members handbook and if you have any more, then do let me know by the end of April.

Flexi-schooling

On Tuesday 4th March I attended the Midlands Regional Local Authority conference on behalf of EO.

One of the topics discussed at the conference was flexi-schooling. An increasing number of Elective Home Education representatives in local authorities were being asked about flexi-schooling and unsurprisingly they felt they didn't understand the small print of how it worked. When the Home Education Advisors made enquiries of the Elective Home Education Team at the DCSF they were referred to the Attendance team. We were fortunate to be able to pose direct questions to the DCSF since Denise Hunter and Iain Campbell both attended the conference.

A good person to contact at the DCSF Attendance Team is Corinne Kelly
Corinne.KELLY@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk

This is the address for the DCSF website page on Attendance.

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/schoolattendance/legislation/>

It's the school who decide whether or not a family can flexi-school but parents and schools may approach the local authority or Education Otherwise for guidance.

The single most important thing about flexi-schooling is this :you need to get the school register marked as Code B for the times when the child is not attending school.

If you are hoping to raise the issue of flexi-schooling with a school or with the local authority, EO Government Policy Group would be happy to give further information on how this may be arranged, though we need to emphasise that the ultimate decision rests with the school.

EO Local Contacts may wish to file this article somewhere for future reference because members will often ask about flexi-schooling and at the time of writing, the revised and

updated section on flexi-schooling in the EO Members Handbook has not yet been published.

The first question might be:do families have to follow the National Curriculum while the child is not attending school?'

The new Home Education Guidelines issued by the DCSF at the end of November 2007 specifically say that part time pupils don't have to follow the National Curriculum during their learning sessions out of school.

I was able to confirm this with Iain Campbell of the DCSF Home Education team who had been invited to speak at the Midlands Local Authority Conference. Iain said the wording had been supplied by the DCSF Attendance Team. The local authorities at the conference were by and large surprised by this and felt that this might dissuade some schools from entering into a part-time agreement with a family, because for instance the school could be concerned it would jeopardise the SATS scores if pupils were only partly grounded in the National Curriculum.

This is the relevant passage from the new Guidelines

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/localauthorities/_documents/content/7373-DCSF-Elective%20Home%20Education.pdf or
<http://tinyurl.com/2qxyfp>

5.6 "Flexi-schooling" or "flexible school attendance" is an arrangement between the parent and the school where the child is registered at school and attends the school only part time; the rest of the time the child is home educated (on authorised absence from school). This can be a long-term arrangement or a short-term measure for a particular reason. "Flexi-schooling" is a legal option provided that the head teacher at the school concerned agrees to the arrangement. The child will be required to follow the National

Curriculum whilst at school but not whilst he or she is being educated at home. Local authorities should make sure that head teachers are made familiar with flexi-schooling and how it may work in practice. Further information is available in the DCSF's guidance *Keeping Pupil Registers.*" (p.17)

We can find the DCSF guidance on keeping registers via the Attendance Legislation website address given earlier in this article:
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/schoolattendance/legislation/>

Now, there is a problem with the phrase "authorised absence," because while it is true that the child or young person is authorised by the headteacher to be absent from school, the exact phrase "authorised absence" is used for "Code C" in marking the register.

This leads on to the second question about flexi-schooling.

How does flexi-schooling work from the school's point of view and what does the school do about the register?

According to the head of Education Welfare who spoke at the Midlands conference, the school has to be satisfied that education is taking place in order to mark the pupil as "educated off site". If they can be sure of this, then they are allowed to mark the register as Code B which is "educated offsite".

You may face a hurdle if the school is not aware of the educational value of home education, particularly the types of home education which are most different from a school-at-home model, but this is not insurmountable, and again EO Government Policy Group would be happy to supply further information to your school or local authority.

What is the practical difference for the family as to whether it is Code B or Code C?

Well, parents might find themselves talking to headteachers who say that if they aren't convinced that there is "robust evidence of learning" in the non-school sessions then they can't allow the register to be marked as Code B "educated offsite". If the register is marked "authorised absence" Code C, this will count on the school's global absence scores, which in turn will affect the school's Ofsted rating.

Any family wishing to arrange flexi-schooling would be wise to bear in mind that absence scores and attendance targets are extremely important for the school.

The school will not be happy to have absences marked on the register, authorised or otherwise, which is why you need to help the school to understand that in other cases of flexi-schooling the register is marked as Code B "educated offsite".

So, one issue is the National Curriculum and another issue is how the schools mark the register. A third possible area of contention is how much funding the school will receive for the part-time pupil.

I have been making enquiries at DCSF Public Communications Unit about funding arrangements for flexi-school because we used to believe that flexi-schooling meant the school still had full funding, but I recently came across an instance where the headteacher seemed to be saying that this was no longer the case.

DCSF said that "the Department has not made any changes and this is not set to change. However, the Local Authority may decide to provide a school pro rata funding for the days the pupil is actually attending school. It is for LAs to fund schools through a local formula."

The email goes on to outline how a school might appeal against such a decision by the Local Authority, saying that "if the school considers that the formula delivers insufficient resource

in meeting the needs of the school, then the governing body may wish to bring its views about the local funding formula to the attention of the authority or conversely, the school representative on the local Schools Forum."

If anyone wants to take this further, you can make enquiries here: info@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk
Reduced funding might act as a deterrent for schools, particularly if the Head already regarded flexi-school as an administrative burden or had qualms about how the school's attendance targets might be affected.

However, at present there is no official change of Government policy for funding flexi-school arrangements, and so if this is raised by the school, please contact EO Government Policy Group.

Flexi-schooling is not a clear cut issue. No-one has the automatic right to part time attendance, though it is permissible by law and operates successfully in a number of cases. The ultimate decision rests with the school, and the application to flexi-school is most likely to be successful if the family understands in advance some of the reasons why the school might be reluctant.

The Newsletter would welcome parents' stories about successful flexi-school arrangements, or alternatively where they have encountered obstacles from the school or the authority. Please get in touch via email

nlco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org or by writing to the address given elsewhere in the Newsletter.

Recap of useful addresses:

EO Government Policy Group

governmentpolicy@education-otherwise.org
Fiona Nicholson, 205 Leverton Gardens,
Sheffield S11 8FD

DCSF Attendance Team

Corinne.KELLY@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/schoolattendance/legislation/>
Corinne Kelly
Department for Children, Schools and Families
School Attendance and Parental Responsibility
Team, Caxton House, Tothill Street, London
SW1H 9NA

DCSF Home Education Guidelines

<http://tinyurl.com/2qxypf>
hard copies available via
Denise Hunter
Elective Home Education Team, Department
for Children, Schools and Families,
Independent Schools Partnerships and
Strategy

DCSF Public Communications Unit

info@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk
0870 000 2288.
Second Floor, Area A, Mowden Hall, Staindrop
Road, Darlington DL3 9BG

Note regarding contacting EO through the EO e-mails addresses

Some of the EO e-mail are becoming very 'spammy' and as a result some members e-mails may be missed. As an example Lynda currently gets over 15,000 spam messages each month and it's rising. Her spam filter sorts them into a folder, and whilst she checks the spam folder looking at the sender and the subject line to try and find any messages that need attention amongst the rubbish, it is very easy to miss some EO messages due to the huge amounts of spam.

Can members put the letters "EO" in the Subject line of any emails that they send to postholders, as it will be easier to pick out mail that needs attention if they end up in the spam folder in error. If you're having problems contacting Lynda on the database@education-otherwise.org email, then you can try her personal email elyris@f2s.com but please try the database email a couple of times first, thank you. Any tips on combating spam gratefully received!

Teenage reviewers wanted!

How interesting to see over the years, how EO changes, develops and grows. Many of us continue to gain inspiration and incentive from the earlier pioneers of alternative education; John Holt, Ivan Illich, Paul Goodman, Ian Lister and more recently from authors such as John Gatto, Paula Rothermel, Roland and Janet Meighan, Mike and Jan Fortune-Wood et. al. But *still* we hear the same old criticisms about perceived lack of socialisation of children, lack of monitoring and (I've even heard it said) failure to 'train to fit the status-quo'.

This all leads me to a personal point regarding publishing for children. My interest in alternative-to-school led me into some years working with youth, and that in physical science activities!

Rich accounts of what many of the youths experienced in this, including some home educated young people, left a legacy of tales and stories - quite radical really - with requests like, "Please write it down Ken, please let other kids read about our adventures."

Now as a scientist, my publications include scientific papers, technical articles; arcane specialised stuff of course. This means if that's been your 'genre', try going on to write adventure stories for kids, especially if they are physical science based with positive comments about home ed.

One comment I received was to the effect that moving to such an approach would result in total failure, removed as it was from mainstream genre; "No hope there, mate." Nevertheless I sent material to publishers and agents. Most publishers merely said, "You need to find an agent and submit through that." One publisher did welcome a phone call, but the

editor involved said, "Thank you for letting us see your synopsis. None of our departments would have any interest in your approach, but our textbook editors are always interested to see original material for the National Curriculum..."

No encouragement was forthcoming from calls to agents either. Comments from one were, "You must be joking! You're offering a fiction-non-fiction mix on a physical science theme? Don't you know that physics stuff is anathema to nearly all children these days! The approach you've taken also eliminates any interest by our Schools Dept." She went on, "Sci Fi, wizardry etc. might still go..."

Another agent replied, "The MSS sample you sent appears marred by some of the clearly political references, which were too directing for a children's book. A diatribe against capitalism, an attempt to include mention of global warming, and the extolling of the virtues of home education; this last topic might well put a publisher off - it seemed to be encouraging children to think ill of going to school." What a shock to read that! It really does seem that conforming, establishment people are still extremely ruffled to come across critical alternatives...

Two or three youths I know well, did read chapters from the work. One said, "Loved the thunderstorm story and where Jamie p----d his trousers! Cor, would really like to make those jars that gave the kids electric shocks," and he went ahead and made them - and the telegraphs.

This is where you come in as colleagues. I'm sure in our large membership, there are quite a few young teen and just pre-teen girls, and

boys, who would make excellent - and impartial - literary critics. (Just think of the educational value of that.) So my request is who out there would like a chapter of *Jamie and Hannah's Electrical Adventure* to read and critically review? Who would like to do some of the remarkably interesting craftwork and experiments?

You could request an attached (WORD format) e-mail download, or a chapter printed out (hard copy). Choose from the chapter list. It would be

great to see considered reviews of the work from a group of same-age young people as all those now in the past who inspired the work with their stories and interests, and to whom it is dedicated.

Ken L. Smith, Staple Farmhouse, Staple, Canterbury, Kent CT3 1JX
E-mail: g3jix@aol.com

Walpurgis Night (April 30th)

There is a mountain very high and bare...whereon it is given out that witches hold their dance on Walpurgis Night! - Jacob Grimm, 1883.

Typically Halloween is thought to be a time of witches and ghosts. Walpurgis Night, a counter-point in the year to Halloween, is another such night. Whilst named after the Christian Saint Walpurga, it derives its customs from earlier Pagan traditions and was considered the time that Odin sacrificed himself in order to be taught the secret of the runes. Bonfires were lit to keep away the spirits that were said to walk upon that night.

St Walpurga came from England to become an abbess in a German monastery in the 8th Century. She is attributed with healing powers and is symbolised by three oat ears and a small bottle of oil. The oil is representative of her healing power, but the ears of oats are likely representative of an earlier pagan association with fertility (Beltaine on May 1st being a major pagan festival).

In Germany it is celebrated in much the same way that Halloween is celebrated in the UK. 'Walpurgisnacht' is the scene of tricks played on unsuspecting people. Another tradition is to place out a slice of bread smeared in butter and honey called 'Ankenschmitt' for the phantom hounds to protect from bad weather and ensure that crops don't fail.

In Finland it is known as 'Vapunatto' and is one of the biggest celebrations of the year. It is the time for graduating students to celebrate receiving their white graduation caps and gowns and in Helsinki there is a tradition of 'capping' the statue of the mermaid Havis Amanda, spraying her with champagne and adding soap to the fountain at her feet. The following May Day is a public holiday, celebrated with 'Sima' a type of mead and 'Tippaleipä' (sweet pastries) - recipes included in Crafty Corner.

Valborgsmässoafton', as it is known in Sweden, is another key holiday of the year in Sweden and sees the lighting of large bonfires upon which straw effigies are burnt. An older tradition is for children to collect branches from the woods at twilight which are used to decorate their homes. Eggs were given as a reward, but these have, perhaps unsurprisingly been replaced with chocolate! Singing is another popular activity, with students gathering at events to sing to entertain the public. The traditional meal at this time is gravlax (salmon marinated in salt, sugar and dill).

News from the Disability Group

The Disability Group is going to have a permanent slot in the Newsletter, where we hope to include examples of what it is like to home educate with disabilities and special needs, either the children's or the parents'. If you would like to share your story with us we would love to hear from you. This month we are starting with some of the FAQs that reach the helpline and the Special Needs Contact, Christine Waterman.

Can I take a child with special needs out of school?

Yes. If your child has special needs, and is in a mainstream school then you just need to write a de-registration letter. The process is exactly the same as for any other child, whether or not they have a statement, and the LA or school cannot refuse.

Will I get any funding?

It is very rare for LAs to provide funding for children with special needs to be educated at home. Most only do so if they agree that the child's needs cannot be met in school. Some have funded specific programmes at home, but this is unusual. Most families actually prefer the freedom of having little contact with the LA to being funded

What happens if they are in a special school?

Consent from the LA is needed before the name can be removed from the register. This cannot be withheld without good reason. You should write to the school asking that the child's name be removed from the register and asking for it to be confirmed in writing to you by a set date. Most LAs respond by removing the child's name. Some however make further enquiries from you about your provision before removing the name from the register. If you have any difficulty contact Education Otherwise for help. You can contact Christine on 01923 464773 or e-mail: christine.waterman@ntlworld.com

Do I have to provide what is in the statement?

No. The statement is not enforceable on a parent. The parent must however ensure that the child's special needs are met, according to section 7 of the 1996 Education Act. In some cases this will be in a very different way to the provision outlined in the statement. In other cases the parent may actually be providing what is in the statement more effectively than the school were. Either way, the statement must be reviewed and it is important that the parent can demonstrate that the child's needs are being met.

Do I have to attend the statement reviews?

No. However the LA have to carry out the review and may put pressure on the family to attend, as no one else is working with the child, and the family have all the information about the child's education. If the LA has no information from the parent they could conclude that the child's needs are not being met and so it is useful to submit a report showing how the needs outlined in the statement are being met, even if you are using a very different approach to meeting those needs. Many parents find that they no longer want the statement once they are home educating, especially if the child is very different in the home setting. It is possible to ask to cease the statement, but the LA do not have to agree. A good time to do this is at the review when the LA have seen that the child's needs are being met.

We have had an interesting response from Olaf Hindmarsh, convenor of the Midlands regional conference and Co-ordinator for Elective Home Education within Staffordshire Local Authority. He contacted us to ask what sort of information is given to people de-registering children with disabilities or SEN and statements. I think he was surprised to receive a detailed email from the DG. We explained that there is no template of information as each family is so different. We also outlined some of the difficulties that some of our members have, including problems with de-registering, LAs treating statemented children differently, problems supplying therapies and issues with Social Services.

We received an email back thanking us for the information, and an invitation to join him at the next conference. This will be an excellent opportunity for some LAs to hear from us about how they could improve their relationship with families when dealing with disabilities and special needs.

We have also submitted a response to the Bercow consultation on Speech and Language Therapy. Thanks to members we were able to give the picture of what is happening on the ground with these services.

So many people find that there is no help for their children in school if they need the services of SALT. Some find when they de-register that the level of help stays the same, that is, there is still no help. But occasionally things work out better as individual therapists take an interest in home education. Sadly that doesn't happen often enough and parents find themselves having to continue the fight.

The important thing is that Mr Bercow now knows that things are not working at the receiving end of SALT as the LAs would have him think. And he now knows about home education too!

If anyone would like to read the DG's response you can find it in the members area of the forum. <http://www.education-otherwise.org/forum/default.asp> in the Disability and Disability Awareness section. http://www.education-otherwise.org/forum/forum_posts.asp?TID=1928

In the next few months we have some more consultations to look at, as well as trying to see a way of educating Social Services to help them understand that home education is a healthy and valid choice and there is no need for concern when a child is withdrawn from school.

The new guidelines on Home Education can be very useful when dealing with the LA. SEN is discussed in section 3.17-23. You can download your own copy of the guidelines from here: <http://tinyurl.com/2qxypf>. Or you can request hard copy from: Denise Hunter, Department for Children, Schools and Families Independent Schools Partnerships and Strategy, Mowden Hall, Staindrop Road, Darlington DL3 9BG 12

POSITIVE ASPECTS

Positive Aspects is a free bi-monthly e-mail newsletter for anyone who has an interest in any disability, mental health issue and/or illness who lives anywhere in England*. It is packed full of useful items, law, events, holidays, benefits, requests, leisure and fun, true stories, penpals and personals, other interesting articles, useful websites and computer tips, putting people in touch and much more. It also comes with a separate 'diary dates' attachment and to keep you up to date with what's happening in your area, regular *Positive Aspects* 'Newsflash' articles sent to you.

To subscribe, please send an email to trudy.1@ntlworld.com with 'subscribe' and the country you live in in the message/text area of the e-mail. *People who live outside of England are welcome to receive *Positive Aspects*, but must be aware that some of the articles re. Law, benefits, etc, might not apply to them.

The Children's Information Sharing (CIS) Index

Our organisations have joined forces to prepare this short, critical briefing about the major government databases relating to children and young people. We appreciate that the subject is complex, but hope that this document will provide a basic framework for understanding the operation of the many different databases and their potential for use as a new and highly intrusive form of surveillance covering children and families. We are happy to answer questions and to expand on this information - our contact details are at the end. For a fuller understanding, we also recommend that you read the FIPR report to the Information Commissioner: *'Children's Databases - safety and privacy'* which can be downloaded from:

http://www.fipr.org/childrens_databases.pdf

It is nine years since the government published the white paper, 'Modernising Government', which presaged the joining-up of public services. The period since has seen rapid development in databases and systems that can store and share information between agencies. It is in children's services that much of the early work in what has become known as 'Transformational Government', or e-government, has been carried out. A wide variety of case-management and assessment systems now exists at local authority or police force level within education, youth justice, health and social care, all of them built to a single, mandatory specification, the 'eGIF' (eGovernment Interoperability Framework), in order to facilitate the flow of information between agencies.

In 2000 the Government embarked upon two significant projects: the first to gather personal data about school pupils into a permanent, national database; the second to explore ways in which information about service-users could be shared between agencies.

National Pupil Database and School Census

The National Pupil Database has been in existence since 2000. It is populated with information collected through the school census. Initially this census was carried out annually, but it is now thrice-yearly. Data about each state school pupil is taken directly from school and nursery management information systems; other early years providers, such as childminders or playgroups, submit data via their local authority. The scope of the census has gradually been extended through secondary legislation and currently over 40 separate personal data items are collected on each child, including ethnicity, entitlement to free schools meals, behaviour and attendance data. This information is kept permanently, and consent is not sought from parents or children at any stage.

The Government is shortly to make a formal announcement about a further national education database:

MIAP (Managing Information Across Partnerships). This will create a lifelong, online record of qualifications and courses attended for the whole population from the age of 14. It will draw on both the National Pupil Database and on the 'Individual Learner Record' - a record system for those in further/higher education that has been operated by the Learning and Skills Council since 2001.

Connexions

The second project, the Connexions service for 13-19-year-olds, was also set up in 2000 to track all teenagers in each local authority area and provide them with a multi-agency careers, welfare and advice service. Each young person is allocated a Connexions 'Personal Adviser' (PA) to act as a central contact between services/agencies in order to facilitate service provision and information-sharing between them. The PA may also carry out an in-depth personal assessment of the young person and his/her family background using a profiling tool

called the 'APIR'. This asks questions about every conceivable area of a young person's life, and includes subjective assessments of their development, judgements about their friendships, and opinions on the capabilities of their parents. Although consent is required before the APIR can be uploaded to the Connexions system and shared with practitioners, many local authorities have instructed PAs that parents do not routinely need to be consulted or involved, and there are serious doubts as to whether the consent obtained from young people themselves is genuinely free and informed. The Connexions service has now been taken over by local authorities and will be subsumed into the other databases being created, detailed below.

'Every Child Matters'

In November 2003, the Government published a green paper called 'Every Child Matters' (ECM) which outlined plans for a national database of all children and gave increased responsibilities to public services to monitor all children's development from birth. It was the result of policy work dating back to the late 1990s but was presented to the public as a response to the Laming Report (2003) into the death of Victoria Climbié in the previous year. The paper set out five broad 'outcomes' for all children, now linked to a series of detailed performance indicators for each local authority. It also expanded the accepted meaning of a child 'at risk' as one who was at risk of abuse or neglect to encompass 'at risk of poor outcomes' such as teenage pregnancy, educational failure and committing criminal offences.

The Children Act 2004 enabled ECM to be put into practice. It joined all agencies under the umbrella of a single 'Children's Services Authority' and empowered the Government to establish by regulations national databases containing information about all children from birth to 18.

Central to the delivery of ECM is a trio of databases. Two of them, Contactpoint and eCAF, are for the use of all practitioners; the

third, the 'Integrated Children's System' is for social care staff.

Contactpoint

This is a central identity hub and index of all children intended to hold basic details of child and parents, plus the contact details of all practitioners involved with a child and the identifiers by which a child is known to each agency system. There will be a facility to conceal details of a child's access to some services, and also (because of security concerns) to shield the records of certain children such as those in well-known families, in witness protection or escaping domestic violence. The database will be populated with data from the National Pupil Database, Child Benefit and NHS records.

The introduction of Contactpoint has been delayed following HMRC's loss of discs containing Child Benefit details, but the Government hopes to continue with its establishment later in 2008. It should be noted that Contactpoint was originally called the 'Information Sharing Index' but re-branded following adverse publicity. It is popularly called the 'Children's Database', although given the number of different children's databases in existence, this is misleading.

eCAF

The 'Common Assessment Framework' (CAF) is a development of the Connexions APIR tool: an in-depth profiling system to be applied by any practitioner, other than social care staff, to all children seeking services beyond 'universal' health and education. The Government estimates that around 50% of all children will require such extra services at some point. The CAF has been developed into an electronic format (the eCAF) and the Government announced via Written Ministerial Statement at summer 2007 recess that a single national eCAF database will be constructed to hold all assessments.

Although eCAF is presented as a consent-based process, in practice there is considerable pressure to gain consent, with

many practitioners making it a condition of receiving a service, and government guidance has suggested that parental consent can be dispensed with if a child is over 12 - although the form gathers sensitive information about the parents and other family members.

The Social Exclusion Unit has recently published a report: 'Think Family - improving the life chances of families at risk' which outlines the way in which the eCAF can be used as a starting point for carrying out assessments of all members of a family in order to determine what services should be put in place.

Integrated Children's System (ICS)

This is an electronic record of each child's contact with social care and consists of a series of forms to be used by social care staff. The ICS has three main categories of forms: for children in need of protection, children with other needs, and children looked after by the local authority. Currently under development at local authority level, it is a subset of the larger 'Electronic Social Care Record' (ESCR) project that will hold information on both adults and children. Ultimately it is planned to join ESCR with NHS care records into a single system.

All of our organisations have serious concerns about:

- the security and legality of children's databases
- the extent of the data that is being collected and shared
- the scale of the intrusion into family life and children's privacy
- the sensitivity and subjectivity of the data being shared
- the undermining of parental authority
- effects on professional practice
- the diversion of funding urgently needed for frontline services

For more information, our contact details are as follows:

ARCH: Terri Dowty Tel: 020 8558 9317
email: terri@arch-ed.org

FIPR: Professor Ross Anderson Tel: 01223 334733
email: Ross.Anderson@cl.cam.ac.uk

Liberty: Gareth Crossman Tel: 020 7378 3654
email: GarethC@liberty-human-rights.org.uk

NO2ID: Phil Booth Tel: 07974 230 839
email: national.coordinator@no2id.net

Open Rights Group: Becky Hogge Tel: 020 7096 1079
email: becky@openrightsgroup.org

Privacy International: Gus Hosein email: gus@privacy.org

PEAK CAMP 2008

6th June - Sunday 15th June

Family camp at Barracks Farm, Beresford Dale, nr Hartington (grid ref. 123 586).

Two large fields for tents and touring caravans, with shower blocks, toilets and wash basins.

Fees per night:

Adults:	2.00
Children:	1.00
Cars:	2.00
Caravans:	4.50

There is no need to book - families can make their stay as long or short as they wish. Fees are payable direct to the farm, not to the organisers. However it would be useful if I had an indication of the number of families coming that I could pass on to the farm. There are no pre-organised activities. In the past however, walks, cycle rides, rock climbing, circle dancing and shared meals have all been popular activities.

Offers of shared activities and workshops are always welcome. There is plenty of time to share experiences of home educating with other families and for families and children to socialise freely. We do not have exclusive use of the site. Other campsite users (Duke of Edinburgh parties and members of the public) should be treated with complete respect. Normal campsite rules apply.

For more details contact Gary Podmore. 01451 833828

EDUCATING ARCHIE : fools rush in



Early Years Foundation Stage Legislation

The following is taken direct from the www.savechildhood.org website. The Open EYE petition is now live on the 10 Downing St website: <http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/OpenEYE/>

Here is the full petition text:

We, the undersigned, petition the Prime Minister to commission an urgent independent review of the compulsory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy framework, and to reduce the status of its learning and development requirements to 'professional guidelines'. We recognise the government's good intentions in its early-years policy-making, but are concerned about the EYFS legislation, which comes into force in England next September. Our concerns focus on the learning and development requirements, as follows:

1. They may harm children's development
2. They will restrict parents' freedom of choice in childcare and education
3. Their assessment profile requirements may place an unnecessary bureaucratic burden on those who care for young children
4. Recent evidence suggests that government interventions in education generally may not be driving standards up and may be putting too much pressure on children

—official petition text ends—

Additional information

The following is intended to explain further the thinking behind the petition. However, please note that **only the text above forms the official petition wording** - which means that even if you are not entirely certain about what follows, as long as you agree with the wording above, you can sign the petition.

1. There is significant evidence to suggest that introducing formal education too early is damaging to some children in both the short and the long term, especially to boys. Consequences may include the development of unpredictable emotional and behavioural problems, unwarranted levels of stress, damage to children's self-esteem and erosion of their enthusiasm for learning. Research has shown that 5 year olds drilled in reading and writing were outstripped four years later by children whose first year at school was more socially interactive and stimulating. Such evidence suggests that in practice (notwithstanding the

reassurances offered in the legislation) the approaches to teaching that will be encouraged by broad-brush EYFS targets - such as that by the age of 5 children should "begin to form simple sentences, sometimes using punctuation" - are likely to be those which may be harmful to young children.

2. The EYFS will be mandatory across all settings - childminders, nurseries, playgroups, schools (including independent schools). We appreciate that the Government's intention is to ensure the same high standards everywhere, but we believe that this could be better achieved by investing the necessary resources in comprehensive staff training across the field. We do not accept that the EYFS encapsulation of child development reflects the views of professionals worldwide, nor do we accept that it is acceptable to mix developmental milestones with aspirational outcomes. We note that the law allows for the Government to make regulations

regarding exemptions to EYFS. However such exceptions are to be made only at the request of individual parents, and it will therefore be impossible for parents to find a childcare or educational setting which takes a different approach to the EYFS and therefore does not teach to its learning and development requirements. This is an unprecedented restriction of parents' freedom to choose how their children are cared for and educated. It may actually increase the use of informal care, with accompanying lower standards in some cases.

3. The EYFS profile demands that carers assess children against 117 different assessment points. With less than a year to go until implementation, arrangements for carers to receive training and ongoing support are seriously inadequate. Without such training and support there is unlikely to be any consistency of assessments and random "box-ticking" is a real probability. Even once trained to do it, assessment and recording will add

significantly to the workload of those who care for and work with young children. It may skew the way staff observe and interact with those children, and the paperwork required will certainly take up valuable time that could otherwise be spent with them.

4. Recent evidence - including the reports of the Cambridge Primary Review, and the latest OECD PISA report (the "international league tables") - suggests that government-driven changes in education have been largely ineffective in driving up standards and may at worst be adversely affecting both educational standards and the quality of children's educational experiences. We see no reason to believe that the EYFS learning and development requirements would break this pattern. In conclusion, we believe that this unprecedented legislation could lead to harmful long-term consequences and therefore contradicts the responsible "precautionary principle" which should surely be exercised in all early-year state policy-making.

Book Review

Alice Next Door by Judi Curtin

Published by O'Brien www.obrien.ie

This entertaining story is about two pre-teen girls, Megan and Alice who have been best friends since nursery school and live next door to each other in Limerick, Southern Ireland. Their world is turned upside-down when Alice has to move to a different city after her parents split up.

After a few weeks, Megan visits Alice for a day but they find it so hard to leave each other again that Alice comes up with a plan that she hopes will get them get back together. It will be risky but the friends are up for the challenge.

I loved the book, it was easy to read and the familiarity I have with the Irish place names and expressions added to my enjoyment. There are also another two sequels to read as well! I would definitely recommend this book to girls my age.

By Clodagh (11)

Contact for ASDAN

In the December 2007 issue there was an article regarding ASDAN on page 20. There was no contact name given for this and we have found out that home educators are struggling to find someone to talk to about this course.

This programme is brilliant for home educators and the Oxford Group is a registered centre with qualified trained moderators. Our aim is to help home educators to have access to this programme by offering our services to others around the country.

If you would like further details please contact: *Jean Sutcliffe, 54 The Avenue, Chinnor, Oxon OX39 4PE Tel: 01844 354883*

Child protection policies

I have been pleased to see the information on Child Protection in the supplement to the October 2007 EO magazine and the information in the members handbook.

I cannot stress how strongly I feel the need for EO to have clear policies that safeguard the whole child and I am pleased to see the beginning of this in the magazine.

As EO is often seen as synonymous with Home Education and as it is the largest national body, I believe it's stance on child protection gives out a clear message that the safety of our HE children matters. This seems to remain a concern for many LEAs and clearly stating our policy should help rid them of this unfounded fear that somehow HE families are more vulnerable than the general child population. I have just read through the whole of the

London Child Protection Procedures (3rd Edition) that has been distributed widely. It states that it is everybody's job in our society to safeguard children. Having had to wade through the whole 549 pages of notes I suggest that the EO policy should be concise, clear, easy to implement and known by all.

Fortunately in EO children remain the parent's responsibility and you state this clearly in your handbook and information along with providing the childline and the NSPCC Helplines in each magazine. I think this makes formulating the policies easier as well as clearly reminding us all of our responsibility as parents.

Obviously all of us want our children to be safe and happy but in addition to that I believe that it is important to safeguard EO as an organization. Showing that there are working policies in place would clearly not only act as a deterrent should anyone want to misuse EO and gain access to children or information but it would also speak powerfully to LEAs and other bodies about the importance EO places on children's safety.

I think the proposed idea of a credit card size information note re child protection would be useful. I have one from another source and it is most useful to know what to do if one is faced with a situation where a child is at risk. Again this places the responsibility on every adult member rather than one or two people it also makes it less likely for people to be wrongly accused or for the spread of gossip if everyone is following the same procedure. I think a designated person like the one suggested would be most helpful but think their role could be limited to responding if

there are any concerns about any EO volunteers, staff or trustees. Basically any other concerns could be taken straight to the police where getting more people involved might just be counterproductive.

I would like to know that all the trustees have been police checked and that the secretary or designated child protection person has this information. I know that the trustees do not have children under their care but having been a chair of a charity where I did not have any hands on work with children I still had to be checked. When I queried this they said that because the charity worked with families it was imperative that all trustees had a clear updated record to protect the integrity of the organization and to help the organization distance itself from any unlawful decisions any individual might make. Then the individual volunteer falling short of the law becomes that individual's concern and does not tarnish the whole organization.

I was shocked to read the statistics that say that every day in the UK more than 50 children are excluded from school and that a further 50,000 children skip school every day. I believe that having clear policies further draws a line between HE children and children that are not receiving an education and who would in my opinion be more vulnerable. I think the public and local authorities need to be encouraged to form a clear distinction between children missing from Education and HE children. I believe the new HE guidance notes for local authorities will be enormously helpful.

As EO as an organization is seen as the lobbygroup for HE and in many circles as being synonymous with HE. I thus believe it is vital to have all the important policies you have mentioned in the last few newsletters written

about and read by all HE members. I am sure some people are finding it rather dry reading matter and may wonder at its relevance for them as a HE family. I would propose that without all this hard work the trustees have put in we would be leaving ourselves as a charity in a vulnerable position. As HE and EO is getting better known many families might turn to HE as an alternative educational option.

Being able to remain a safe charity with transparent policies and objectives will help prevent EO and HE being dragged through the mud as well as ensure we all take on the important responsibility of safeguarding the well being and happiness of all HE children.

Bridget Steenkamp (An HE mother of 2)

How I deal with the LA

I understand why they want to visit for child safety which is why I let my council know, but I did not have to and have told the woman if she comes and it is unbearable she is shown the door and I will only give information by post.

Karen Pettitt

Changes to the Newsletter

Hello, I thought I would comment on ideas put forward for new EO magazine format. I agree with all the points you mentioned! I am confident that any advertising would be vetted and appropriate. The only thing that concerns me is the sourcing of paper and inks - there are now good printers who use less chemical coloured inks (e.g. water-based) and can use recycled paper. Would it be possible to look into this aspect?

Yours faithfully, *Jenni Stone (address supplied)*

Reply from NL Co-ordinator re. Changes to the Newsletter

A proposal of possible changes (plus general ideas re. the newsletter, incorporating feedback from the Leicestershire meeting) has been put together and I'm hoping to get it onto the EO forum at some point after the newsletter comes out so that it might be open to more general discussion by the membership.

Certainly one area I've looked at is that of printing with vegetable-based inks and this is included in the proposal.

Nikki Haxell, EO Newsletter Co-ordinator & Local Contact, Doncaster.

Well done!

I would just like to say a big well done to Lizzi Armstrong for the EO Children's Pages (Issue 180). The layout was very professional and eye catching. Our son found the content interesting (he's sent away for the RSPB award scheme) and, with 16 pages, it was a substantial read instead of the usual small Children's Pages.

With the main newsletter, I think the possibility of a new-style newsletter with more articles, photographs etc would be exciting. The world is changing and especially education. If EO slightly changes then that is great as it will no doubt reach out to more people than ever to help them with their (right!) choices.

As an EO member going on 11 years, it would be refreshing to receive a more up-to-date newsletter full of articles about all types of education styles, useful websites, tips and experiences, exam courses and so on.

We look forward to the future of EO. Many thanks and best wishes, *Leanne Wallace and Tony Osgerby, 2 Westgarth Gardens, Cayton, Scarborough YO11 3SF*

E-mail problem

I rarely care what the EO executive do; until today when all EO members got a separate letter on the so-called email problem.

1. As EO members are more environmentally aware than most, what a huge waste of paper. It could have gone out in the next newsletter

2. What a waste of EO money - what was the total printing and postage cost ?

3. The extra-sensitive trustees need to be better informed on the rights and responsibilities of trustees - the matter is so serious that it should perhaps be referred to the Charity Commission as a breach of duty

4. Apart from the indefensible waste of scarce EO money and resources, if the alleged emails were attacking or impugning trustees or executive members either by actual name or inference, then it is not EO resources that should be used to defend allegations against individuals. The individuals should bear those costs.

5. Anyone who enters local, national or even member group politics should expect criticism and worse - if they run to mummy at the first slight they are very sad.

6. In any local or national politics, even EO, no member or potential member is allowed to use group resources to either defend or promote their party or themselves as individuals. Many potential politicians have been forced to pay back "election expenses" when they used council or government money to promote their political party

7. As an international journalist, writing about what companies and people say and do is normal. You also get to read within the lines. When any politician or company does something wrong, they attempt to stop you writing the truth by running to lawyers and the police.

This rarely works. What tends to happen is that the louder they scream "we are not guilty" the less people believe them - perhaps because 99% of the time, they did do wrong. Now I am not for any moment suggesting any trustee has done anything wrong or has anything to hide, BUT - the louder they scream and wail, the more people will start to believe there is something there- whatever it is. The only sensible course of action is to stay calm, and keep quiet

8. The Blair/Brown government has a tendency to paranoia. They like their members to be good boys and girls who toe the party line and do not think for themselves. Anyone who steps out of line gets into trouble, as does any journalist who writes anything they do not like. The people running EO seem to be moving towards the Brown paranoia - scared of dissension, and anyone who does not agree with them

9. Involving the police in EO business is a dangerous precedent, and once they investigate, you cannot control the direction they go in, or the final outcome

10. So rulers of EO, if you want power, accept the stick that goes with it. And whoever wasted EO's (yours and my) money should voluntarily pay the costs out of their own pocket, or would they rather the Charity Commission forces them to do it.

11. Those in charge of EO seem to have lost sight of its purpose, and that it is a grass roots member organisation - not some quasi-company. Most EO members have no interest in how it is run, but what they do have is independence - and these stupid shenanigans will just drive members away.

Ian Youngman, Norfolk

Reply to 'E-mail Problem'

As a new trustee, (I was only co-opted a week ago) I felt that it would be right for me to formulate a reply to this letter as none of its passion was pointed at me and so I could answer dispassionately.

"So rulers of EO, if you want power accept the stick that goes with it".

Hmmm... As trustees I think that we see ourselves more as representatives than rulers. Indeed, since joining the council I have spoken to a number of genuine home-owners, seeking the best for their children and doing their best for the community as a whole. I stood, not for power, but because as a father of 4, the youngest of which is less than a year old and meaning I have at least 16 years ahead of me, I wanted to see council quorate, so the decisions that need to be made in order to see EO active and effective for the next 16 years could be made. So far the 45 hours plus that I have put into this role haven't been met with "stick". I would hope that they are not in the future. Perhaps of the 4500 members we have, if those who spent their time "giving stick" (your word not mine) spent that time instead giving support we could all achieve so much more.

Are you unhappy with the council? Talk to us. We have just had an AGM 60 people turned up. 60. Yes, some expressed disagreement with many areas of the council's operation and debate was had. We knew them and they knew us. Decisions were made. Agreements made. Disagreements remained. That is life.

Not "some quasi company"! - Briefly you are correct. We are a proper company! Well that is what it says at Companies House anyway.

In my opinion, I have noticed in life that the thing that "drives most people away" from things is negativity and fighting. Support and cooperation by their very nature always attract people.

"Calling the police is a dangerous precedent". The only danger I can see is for the person who illegally used the email addresses of a number of EO members. An anonymous person, used the names and emails of the membership for their own purposes. Is this theft? I gave my email to be used for members to contact me as part of EO to share HE. We all did. Nowhere does it say anyone can have my details for their own gain. Did this coward hand type all the emails from their own paper copy of the handbook or do they have an e-copy from somewhere? However they got them, in my view this illegal use was theft.

I'm glad the police are contacted and members were informed to contact the police if they felt uncomfortable with their email address being used in this way. I want the cheat caught. I am spending a lot of time and effort campaigning against Contact Point. I don't want nameless faceless people having my details and that of my family. Guess what - that's what has happened to your details here.

"It could have waited until the next newsletter." With respect, if the first the membership heard of the fact that someone had illegally used the details of the charity to spam a load of hate mail was some two months after the event... well I can see the headline now "Charity mailing list with children's details fraudulently used. Trustees keep quiet for more than 3 months without calling the police". I would be replying to a letter screaming blue murder. Which way do you want it?

I guess hindsight is wonderful. I wish I could make all my decisions and judgements with it. We all of us have looked at situations in which we have acted and then wondered whether there was a different way of doing them.

I am sorry your letter is so negative towards us as a body of people trying our best. If you feel that we are not doing a good enough job I am sure that we can find room for you to join us and show us a better way forward.

I hope that this has covered many of your points. Feel free to contact me. I am always willing to hold open, honest and courteous discussions with anyone. I may not agree, but surely that is why we home educate? Because we are individual thinkers and hope that our children will be the same.

Regards, Roarke

Teaching kids about future-proof food

(free resources from The Vegan Society)

Choosing to eat a plant-based diet has a big positive impact on our health, on animal welfare and on the planet. The Vegan Society is launching a major new resource to help teachers get the message across to the next generation.

Rob Jackson, Education Officer at the Vegan Society said today, "Our new interactive CD-ROM is an exciting way for young people to learn about future-proof food. Popular performance poet Benjamin Zephaniah romps you through a wealth of carefully researched information on a huge range of topics. Whether it's healthy plant-based eating, the ethics of livestock farming, or finding your voice as an active citizen, the sound, graphics and activities bring the subject alive."

The Vegan Society have trained school speakers (also available to attend HE groups), able to take assemblies, lessons, or workshops on themes such as veganism, nutrition, and global issues. A range of classroom materials are available from our website for teachers to use independently. The Vegan Society Interactive CD-ROM costs £5, but is **free to schools and home-educators**.

Find out more on www.vegansociety.com or contact the Education Officer: Rob Jackson (0121) 523 1738 ~ youth@vegansociety.com

Crafty Corner

Recipes for Walpurgis Night

Sima

Sima is a Finnish homebrew. It is mild and non-alcoholic.

Source:

http://hbd.org/brewery/cm3/recs/12_15.html

Ingredients:

- 1/2 kilogram, brown sugar
- 1/2 kilogram, white sugar
- 2-3 lemons
- 5 litres water
- 1/4-1/2 teaspoon, yeast
- raisins and sugar for bottling

Method:

1. Wash the lemons thoroughly and peel the yellow skin.
2. Pour the boiling water on the lemon skins and sugars.
3. Remove the white skin from the lemons and slice the lemons crosswise.
4. Add the slices into the slightly cooled liquid. Let cool until the liquid is at body temperature.
5. Add the yeast and let ferment for a day to day and a half.
6. When the drink is bottled, remove the lemon slices and skins.
7. Add a spoonful of sugar and some raisins to every bottle.
8. Close the bottles loosely.
9. After a day, tighten the caps and move the bottles to refrigerator.
10. The drink is ready when the raisins have risen from the bottom to the surface.

Tippaleipä

Lacy fried dough sprinkled with sugar and served with Sima.

Source:

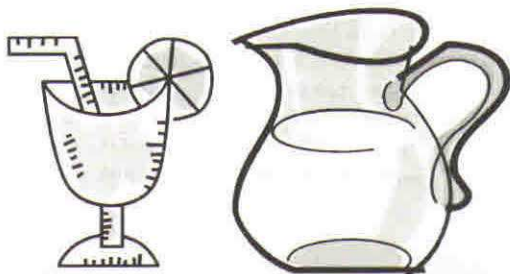
http://www.theworldwidegourmet.com/?action=recette_show&id=945&lg=en

Ingredients:

- 2 eggs
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 200ml ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup) milk
- 400ml ($1\frac{1}{2}$ cups + 2tbsp) flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp pure vanilla extract
- Vegetable or coconut oil for frying
- Icing sugar

Method:

1. Combine the eggs and sugar without whisking; blend in the other ingredients.
2. Pour the batter into a paper cone or piping bag.
3. Squeeze it out into thin ribbons directly into hot oil, using a spiral motion to create little nests or rings;
4. When the doughnuts are golden brown, remove them from the oil and drain on paper towels;
5. Sprinkle with icing sugar.



Make Egg Carton Flowers

A lovely idea to use up egg cartons is to use the 'cup' parts to make flowers.

Needed:

Egg cartons

Paint

Green pipecleaners or straws

Buttons and/or beads

Method:

Cut out the 'cup' parts of the egg box and trim the edges to form petals and then paint. You can also make petals from the main box. Once dry, make a slit in the bottom and attach to a pipecleaner or straw. You can then cover the join with a further trimmed cup, or an untrimmed cup to make a 'trumpet' (for a daffodil).

Get even more creative and add buttons or beads to the centre.



Pinwheels

For windier days and great for putting in the garden now the weather is warming up!

Needed:

Coloured sugar (heavier) paper or plain to be decorated

Large beads (to thread over the wire)

Wire (gardening wire)

Sticks (you can also use a straw)

Thick sticky tape (or duct tape)

Method:

1. Cut the paper into squares (don't get bigger than 21cm square or the pinwheel will be floppy).
2. Fold the paper in half along a diagonal and then again along the opposite diagonal to establish the centre.
3. Using scissors, cut in about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way along the fold.
4. Fold every other tip into the centre and overlap them.
5. Place the paper over a rubber or piece of plasticine and then push the wire through the overlapping tips in the centre.
6. Thread a bead over the end of the wire and fold the wire over it to secure it at the front of the pinwheel and then thread a further bead at the back of the pinwheel, ensuring that the pinwheel can spin freely.
7. Attach the wire to the stick or straw by either wrapping it around or passing it through the straw (with a straw you can fold the wire so that it goes down the centre of the straw).
8. Cover the wire and stick with thick tape to protect fingers.

Trustees Annual Report

Over the last year the Trustees have worked on plans to take EO forward, to strengthen EO's management and organisation, and to introduce clear policies and procedures to clarify volunteers' roles and improve EO's support for home educators. In addition they have ensured that the newsletter, the Helpline and the Local Contacts have continued to function.

The trustees are working to modernise the charity and to improve organisational structure. EO has grown in 20 years from 1000 to 4000 members but still retained informal structures from its early days and lacked written policies and procedures. The trustees have been making progress with introducing policies, procedures, job descriptions, codes of conduct, and volunteer agreements. In future, there will be policies for every aspect of the EO's work, as there should have been for some time.

Further, Trustees have been working to introduce an understanding of modern data protection and safeguarding children practices amongst volunteers. There are plans to introduce training and induction programs for volunteers, in addition information manuals have been introduced for the main front line volunteers, volunteer agreements are being introduced, and the co-ordination and management structure is being reviewed. The Trustees have initiated an investigation into setting up a solicitor's service backing the helpline, so that those members who need the help of a solicitor can access one who knows about HE.

New Memorandum and Articles were prepared. The changes to the M&As of EO are legal requirements in order for the management and structure of the organisation to meet the stipulations of the new legislation about

companies. The M&As which are proposed will also reduce the number of trustees to a minimum of six and maximum of eleven. The reduction in number of trustees follows advice we have been given to reduce the number of trustees and to develop a management team. This will separate day to day running from the trustees role, and so provide better checks and balances in the running of EO.

A presentation on the proposed management structure changes was made to members on the AGM day. In addition the new M&A will give all members of EO voting rights

There have been four open council meetings this year, plus an extra Open Brainstorming meeting. At the AGM voting is now more democratic because votes can be sent in by post on proxy forms, as well as given in person. Our teleconferences replace the earlier practice of having a decision making Steering Group within council. Teleconferences are open to all trustees to attend, and generally seven or more trustees are present. Teleconference minutes are a much more detailed record of council decisions than was available before, and are available on the forums. There is at present a delay before the minutes are posted due to pressure of work, which we aim to reduce.

Although EO groups were thought to be insured in the past, it was discovered that the cover was not what past trustees believed to be in place. When we discovered this, we acted immediately and informed members. We have found out that to insure groups properly would require many controls, with accounts and accurate membership records for local groups, and centralised information. Similarly with insurance for open council meetings and gatherings - suitable cover was not in place and there are many difficulties to obtaining

insurance when children have access to kitchens, around camp fires etc. At present EO groups are not organised in a way that makes full insurance a practical option, and cover is only for open council meetings. Further, the trustees recognise that the role of EO is to support PARENTS to home educate. In our support role we do not run any groups: we list information about local groups, camps etc. We feel this is more in keeping with how HE is evolving. Most groups and camps are run by parents and we would like to encourage people, just as we do with the education of their children, to take responsibility for running their activities.

Since the resignation of the last child protection group members in June, trustees took direct responsibility for safeguarding children. EO trustees are working, with advice from the NSPCC, to develop a safeguarding children plan, including procedures and policy. In the interim, members were advised that they should refer all concerns directly to outside agencies, and the NSPCC number is printed prominently on the opening page of the members' bi-monthly newsletter.

Trustees ratified a safeguarding children policy in November 2007. The recruitment of a Designated Safeguarding Children Person has just been successfully completed. The extension of CRB checks from trustees to all 150 post holders has begun. All long term trustees are CRB checked, as are co-opted trustees where this is viable. There are three trustees co-opted from late 2007 onwards who have not had CRB checks started due to the short period to the February meeting. Two of the three hold enhanced CRBs from other organisations and have shown them to EO as a temporary measure.

There has been a high level of turnover of trustees during the year since the last AGM (February 2006). Soon after the AGM two trustees resigned who were unhappy with the makeup of the new board of trustees. In June two more trustees resigned for personal

reasons. Three further resignations occurred in June, one for family reasons, one of a co-opted trustee who felt they had not been advised of the level and type of work required of an EO trustee, and one for personal reasons. Later in the year two more trustees resigned over disputes within the trustee body, and one for personal reasons. This has been a high level of turnover. 7 of the 14 trustees from the start of the year remain, and three co-opted trustees also resigned. However of the seven replacement trustees now on the board, three had previously served several years as trustees, and the others are experienced home educators with experience of leading organisations at local or national level. Comments made by departing trustees have been largely about the stress of being on council, and the difficulty of coping with the workload and executing it effectively. This was often stated in combination with other personal reasons for being unable to continue. We feel that the turnover is particularly high because of the workload and issues resulting from the work required to progress with reform of the organisation.

Unfortunately the trustees have had to take disciplinary action during the last year to address breaches of confidentiality, privacy, and good practice for safeguarding children. Complaints about post holders have led to 3 serious investigations during the last year, leading to one removal from post, two suspensions that led to resignations from post, and 5 further resignations in solidarity with one of the suspensions.

An unknown person or persons has misused members and volunteer data to circulate anonymous mails. The trustees have not yet been successful in tracing the person responsible. They have informed the police and been advised as to how to move forward.

The membership fluctuates monthly between 3900 and 4200 members. There is a large turn over in the membership and many members fail to renew on time.

The accounts were not completed in time to mail them to members 21 days before the AGM. Our accountant failed to tell us that they were going to miss the deadline, until it was too late to find an alternative. This is the second time this has happened so a new accountant has been found and a resolution to

change accountant will be put to the AGM. The AGM was adjourned after other business was completed and will reconvene at another members meeting on April 26th to receive the final accounts. The new accountants have confirmed they can meet this date.

A summary of the EO Celebration of Home Education Day

On the 23 February EO held a "Celebration of Home Education" day. There were art works from about ten children and young people displayed in the main hall to brighten the room and to remind us of the talent and imagination and creativity in EO! Photographs were taken of the art show but they do not do justice to it. There were also stalls from EO, Choice in Education, and Black and Other Home Educators.

The day began with Carla Macgregor, an EO trustee, giving a power-point demonstration of what the new structure of EO might look like. There was lively discussion, as well as a general agreement that this structure was the way forward for EO.

Next Terri Dowty from ARCH gave a very informative and chilling talk about the state of Britain today, where we are headed, and how this is going to affect our children. See the article from ARCH in this newsletter.

After a delicious lunch which catered to many dietary needs, we got down to the business of the day. There was discussion about how the EGM was to be held and whether there was to be any debate on that day about the proposed changes to the A+Ms. Discussion was not really relevant as most members were not at the meeting, but it was decided to have 10 minutes of questions to the trustees and then 3 two-minute speeches for and against the motion. The tone was constructive and orderly. The vote was 22 against and 39 for which meant that, although trustees carried the vote, the motion was not passed, as 75% of the votes cast were needed.

There were some criticisms of the proposed A+Ms which we all felt were valid. There is soon to be a steering group to amend the new A+Ms before they are put forward again for another vote. Next was the AGM. As the accounts were not ready, we have had to postpone this part of the AGM (see ad in this newsletter). But we were able to agree the minutes from last year's AGM and to vote one person on as a new trustee. This brought the number of trustees to six. The trustees need to co-opt eight others, and by the time you read this, they will have done this. They are Vikki Skinner, Kelly Moorhouse, Carla Macgregor, Leslie Barson, Judi Wilson, June Wilson-Billing, A. Roarke and Celia McDonagh.

After these business meetings, the afternoon began with a workshop with Ian Dowty, a long term home educating father and barrister, about how EO can run a helpline with legal backing. There is a report on this later in this newsletter.

The day ended with three workshops: Rehena Prior hosted general issues in home education and Fiona Nicholson hosted a workshop on the government guidelines. Both were well attended. In the main hall Rowenna Williams hosted a workshop about "your dream EO". There is a report of this in the newsletter. It was a very successful and constructive day and it seems to be a good format to build on for future AGM day. The trustees would like to thank all those too numerous to mention individually who helped the day be so successful. *Since this article was written June Wilson-Billing has resigned from the trustees and Jennifer Skillen has been co-opted.*

Notes from the workshop about EO helpline with legal backing

We were very fortunate to have Ian Dowty, who is a home educating father and a barrister and who has for many years helped home educators with legal problems, to lead this discussion. The workshop started on a low note as Ian explained how difficult he believed it would be to find solicitors who would be willing to do the training necessary to defend HE'ers. Ian tried to do this, running courses for solicitors with very little interest.

Solicitors' firms would only be prepared to do the work if they were paid a commercial rate or if legal aid were available to the individual client. For firms to offer legal aid they have to hold a commercial contract with the Legal Services Commission in the relevant field of law. To advise HE'ers generally under legal aid, a firm would need an education law contract. If things had gone so far that the HE'ers were prosecuted, the solicitors would need a criminal law contract.

In Ian's view it was important that any solicitor who was to help and advise HE'ers actually understood what HE was all about and had a feel for how the law interacted with HE. Many education firms were very school-based. The amount of law that affects HE is very small, and having an understanding of HE was much more important.

It was pointed out that HE is a tiny proportion of education law and, for this reason alone, is not that interesting to many solicitors who are under pressure from their firms to make money.

However, after this the ideas started to flow thick and fast from the audience about how we can overcome these issues! To try and counter the difficult situation described above, some ideas were that the HE community should concentrate on:

- Use home grown solicitors (there were four at the meeting!)

- Defend ourselves in court. Ian would advise against this course; defending yourself in court requires more legal knowledge than an intelligent look at the HE provisions. If people were prosecuted, legal aid was available and a skilled criminal lawyer with a knowledge of and sympathy towards HE could be best.
- Train advocates: mediators from the HE community who could mediate between the family and LA, and prevent matters escalating to a court appearance.
- EO could target law schools to explain HE. It was pointed out that if it is not in their exams students may not be interested. Law students do not generally study education law for their exams.
- EO could begin to collate a register of solicitors who have been used in the past and are sympathetic to HE.
- Collect knowledge of previous cases where HE'ers have won, to establish a precedent, learn from their experiences and use to train other solicitors.

It was pointed out that it is very important to know which areas of law are brought up in cases involving HE and what the demand is, for example divorce, marriage and family law, and education law such as School Attendance Orders. Training in human rights also should be advantageous for solicitors working in HE cases.

There was some discussion about local HE'ers and/or local contacts targeting their LAs and working with them and challenging their interpretation of the HE law and perception of HE, helping them to write their HE literature, having regular contact with them, and helping to publicise the new guidelines and educate them. However some local HE'ers and/or local contacts do not want to be known by their LAs.

Ian said that an understanding and knowledge

of HE is more important than a knowledge of education law in advising HE'ers who did not yet face court proceedings. We have that. It would be easier to train helpline advisors in the law than solicitors in HE. However, if the case goes to court then one needs someone with more knowledge of the law than HE. This does not happen that often.

The meeting ended with the idea of a three tiered system which would act as a series of filters of callers: on the first level are the helpline volunteers not only trained in helpline procedure, but also trained by a solicitor who knows about the HE legal situation in legal matters and when to pass the caller to a solicitor. The next level would be a trained solicitor/specialist volunteer but one perhaps who is no longer practising. If the person on that level could not help or felt more help was needed, the case could be passed to the third level, a working solicitor. Whether this solicitor was permanently retained by EO or only paid when work was done (like the Designated Person) would have to be explored.

The next steps are to assess the level and type of demand: assess the level of realistic cost and begin to look where the funding for setting up this project could be sought. It might be that subscriptions would have to rise but this might be a price HE'ers are willing to pay, in order to have trained legal people easily to hand.

During the afternoon at the AGM one of the workshops was the **Future Of EO**. The idea behind this workshop was to brainstorm around the idea of 'what if we had plenty of resources (money, time and people power), what would we like to see happening in the future of EO'. Below is the list of ideas that came up.

- Advertising in national papers
- Press release officers
- Pro-active work with LEA's
- Educational officers educated in all aspects of education

- Named LEA liaison officers (maybe volunteers that through home education, e.g. those with grown up children
- Training for volunteers (maybe experienced volunteers to train new volunteers)
- Temporary paid trainers
- Local Contacts in all areas
- High profile EO HQ e.g. as the W.I. have. Large building in lovely extensive grounds where we could run gatherings and run themed courses/camps
- National mail drops in magazines/papers
- Cross HE organisational communication
- All HE children being funded without strings attached
- National fundraiser
- National gatherings: Separate from meetings : Themed e.g. new home edders, Families with teenagers, etc, or Styles - autonomous, structured, etc
- Regional gatherings
- EO all-weather banner and sandwich boards outside OCM's/AGM's venues
- Insurance advisor
- Experience register e.g. how you managed to get to universe without exams, court cases, SEN
- Promotional week - posters, car sticker, pens, badges, non-helium biodegradable balloons to members
- National Home Education Week
- Media training and list of available families for media interviews
- Children lead campaign group
- Children/young people council
- More paid workers
- Named SS, legal, health individuals as contact points
- Special needs team with a variety of knowledge of different abilities/conditions etc
- Accessing HE parents with grown up children, possibly in a paid capacity for short term projects
- Researcher - benefits of home educating on ... how children learn to read naturally, how SN kids progress and 'get on' in life.

- Higher profile with MP's etc
- Think Tank - find forthcoming issues to target e.g. with press release
- Positive home education stories in press, example stories of informal/autonomous success to release to the press
- Networking between EO national and local home ed groups
- Career connection - how different families, list of individuals that will talk to kids about their careers and how they got their positions
- Flexi-schooling to really work
- Famous patron
- Community fund or Community interest company - keeping charity status and delivering public services to raise income
- Development plan
- Science/resource week
- Page and EO website with example links e.g. science experiments, geology experiments etc
- Sharing of successful ideas between local groups, e.g. pea fair
- Outcome of the questionnaire of 2006
- Achievements badges as the scouts/guides have.

Thank you to all that attended this workshop and for all your great ideas. *Rowenna Williams*

Open Council Meeting

7th June 2008, 10.00-17.00

Easton Family Centre, Beaufort Street
(off Stapleton Road), Easton,
Bristol BS5 0SQ

Travel:

By public transport: The centre is about 1.5 miles from Templemeads train station and the same distance from Bristol Bus Station, bus routes 48, 49, 24 and 25 stop near the bus station.

By car: The centre is easy to get to from the M32, there is parking.

Playsessions: A qualified playworker will be offering supervised play sessions for all ages on the day. Places must be booked by the 25th of April.

Ring Carla 0117 9354389 or e-mail:
cmacgregor@education-otherwise.org

Food: There are lots of take away options and cafes very nearby or bring your own.

Adjourned Annual General Meeting of Education Otherwise Association Limited

Saturday 26 April 2008 at 2.15pm at The Holiday Inn, Tadcaster Road, YORK, YO24 1QF

Directions:

- BY CAR: Leave A1 at Junction A64. Take A64 East to York. Leave at York West Interchange. Join A1036 A1036 for 1/2 mile. Hotel on your right. There is a large free car park.
- BY PUBLIC TRANS: From the railway station located in York City centre take any bus to Dringhouses and alight at Dringhouses Church
- Train Station Distance 1.5mi/2.41kms
- By Taxi Fee £3.50 (GBP)

Agenda:

- 1 Welcome and Apologies
- 2 Consideration of the accounts
- 3 Auditors Remuneration
- 4 Appointment of Auditor

PLEASE NOTE: Only those who were Signed Up Members at the first part of this AGM (23 February 2008) are able to vote at the second part. Proxy Votes: The proxy appointments stand as they were at the beginning of the AGM on 23 February 2008.

If you would like to become a member who can vote in EO at any future meetings please read the following!

Becoming a Signed Up Member (SUM)

It seems that there is confusion about the different memberships which is not surprising. I found it all a bit confusing myself. Any way I shall try to explain as clearly as I can:

When anyone joins EO using the normal membership form, and paying a membership fee, they become a 'normal' member, receive a membership card, get the contact book, the handbook and the newsletter, but they cannot vote at any of the meetings of EO

In order to vote they have to become a 'signed up' member (SUM), also referred to as a 'guarantor'. This doesn't cost anything and anyone who is a current 'normal' member can become a 'signed up' member. All that someone wanting to do this needs to do, is complete a Signed Up Members form and send it to the Company Secretary.

That's the situation at present and I believe that out of the 4,200 or so members of EO only about 200 are 'signed up'

It is the intention that when a new Articles and Memorandum of Association are agreed the membership system will be simplified and all current 'normal' members will be able to vote. This will require everyone to agree to accept £1.00 liability in the event of EO going bankrupt.

BUT in the mean time if you want to vote at any meetings, appoint a proxy, or act as a proxy, you must fill in the SUM form below and send it to the Company Secretary whose contact details are in the back of the newsletter.

~~~~~

### SIGNED-UP MEMBERS (EO Membership Declaration)

I (Print Name) . . . . .  
wish to become a member of Education Otherwise Association Ltd.

In the event of the Association being wound up I agree to contribute  
up to £10 in payment of any debts and liabilities it may have incurred.

Signature of Member . . . . .

Date . . . . .

Address (print in full) . . . . .  
. . . . .  
. . . . .  
. . . . .  
. . . . .  
. . . . .

This form may be completed by current members who have paid their annual subscription,  
and should be returned to:

The EO Company Secretary, 31 Framlingham Road, Peterborough, PE2 8UG

~~~~~

Articles and Memoranda of Association

Hello. My name is Roarke and I have recently been co-opted as a trustee for EO. I am the husband of 1 wife and the father of 4 children. We have been autonomously home educating for nearly 3 years - and we love it!

I have been asked to explain about the need to revise EO's Articles and Memoranda of Association so here goes...

You might have noticed that recent newsletters have been full of information about meetings and voting for new Articles and Memoranda of Association for EO. For one reason and another, you probably didn't vote. I can say this with a degree of certainty because I know that only 61 people voted. The vote went 39 in favour and 22 against the proposal.

Does this mean the vote was carried? No. Because company law says there has to be a 75% majority in any vote for changes to the company's rules.

So this must mean EO is a company, right? Yes! EO is a charitable company limited by guarantee.

But surely if we are a charitable company then we are also a charity? Well, yes. EO is actually Education Otherwise Association Limited and we are what is called an "incorporated association". As a charity we are affected by laws governing charities and we need to heed advice from the Charities Commission. As a company we are also affected by laws governing companies. <http://www.company.ieshouse.gov.uk/companiesAct/companiesAct.s.html>

When company law changes or when the Charity Commission issues new directives, EO Trustees have to look at the way EO operates and we have to make sure we are working within the law. But we can't just start doing things differently without updating our written rules, which when you think about it is fair enough. The rules not only set out best practice but they also have to describe what

will actually happen. It just doesn't make sense to have a written rule which everyone ignores. The Charities Commission recognises this and that's why it advises charities to amend their Articles and Memoranda of Association (A & Ms) to take account of updated practices and amendments to company law.

I hope you are still bearing with me on this. I expect you'd rather be reading something more interesting, but I believe really strongly that it's important to safeguard the legal future of EO and to make sure we get some good new A&Ms to update our trusty old A&Ms which have served us well for more than 20 years.

So where do we go from here? We need to update our Articles. We put proposals for new Articles in the last newsletter and urged everyone to vote. What happened? Hardly anyone voted. As Trustees I think we need to look at why hardly anyone voted and we need to remove obstacles to voting wherever we can.

One of the barriers to voting is having to be a guarantor of EO, because EO is a charitable company limited by guarantee. I won't deny that it's a bit of a bother arranging to be a guarantor because you have to fill out a Signed Up Members Form and post it to the Company Secretary. At the moment, you don't get to vote just by paying your subs as a member of EO because we currently have A&Ms which say that you have to be a Signed Up Member. More on this another time but suffice to say in the new A & Ms you will be automatically Signed Up.

Another of the barriers to voting is having to get yourself and your family to a meeting. We are doing what we can to make this less difficult, in terms of choosing venues with disabled access close to rail links and public transport. Since last April, we have also provided crèches at EO meetings.

You also don't have to attend the meeting in person in order to be able to cast your vote.

You can appoint someone to vote on your behalf. This is called a postal proxy vote. You need to find someone who is going to an EO meeting and then you put their name down on a proxy voting form and send it to the Company Secretary. If you don't know anyone who is going to the meeting you can put the Company Secretary's name down. By doing this you can tell the Company Secretary which way you want them to vote. This part of the system is still a bit flawed, isn't it, because what if you don't know anyone and you don't feel OK about just phoning a Trustee from the back of the Newsletter and saying "are you going to this meeting and can I put your name down on this form"? But for the moment it's the best we've got.

Having said all that, I'm getting the impression that one of the main obstacles to voting is that folks just don't understand what they are meant to be voting about. I voted for the proposal at the meeting, but it didn't get through and you know it was probably right that it didn't get through at that time because there were some strong objections raised. So I'm now heading up a group with a few of the people who spoke against the proposal at the meeting, who said let's not rush this through, let's take a bit of time to get it right and who have now volunteered their energy and commitment and expertise to EO to help us improve the revised A&Ms.

One way that you can become involved is to join the Business area of the EO members' forum.

<http://www.education-otherwise.org/About%20EO/Joining/MemberArea.htm>

Another way to get involved is to write with your suggestions to me. My address is: Roarke, 124 Chislehurst Road, Orpington, Kent, BR6 0DW

The Whole Articles and Memoranda of Association were sent in the last newsletter. For a duplicate copy please contact either

myself or the company secretary. Details on the back page

You might be wondering what happens next and how long all this is likely to take. Well, we have the AGM Part II in a few weeks time. The London AGM was adjourned until the accounts could be presented. This is a legal requirement. I've checked on this and we won't be voting on any new proposals at the adjourned AGM, we'll just be finishing the meeting we started in London.

Personally I think it's good that we won't be voting on new A&Ms at the AGM part II because a/ the people who voted last time are only a small fraction of the membership, so that's not democratic and inclusive and b/ because there won't be anything to vote on yet. I think people need to have some paperwork they can read where they know exactly what they are voting FOR or AGAINST and they need this in good time before the meeting.

That's the job we've set ourselves in the new A&M Working Group. We can all choose how much or how little we want to be involved with the running of EO, and right now we've got a bunch of dedicated folk who are re-working our new Articles and Memoranda. When we have a draft we feel comfortable with, we'll submit it to the Charities Commission for approval and then put it in the next Newsletter. There will also be an article accompanying the new amendments which will explain the key differences between the previous draft and the new draft and highlight where the changes have been required by the Companies Act 2006 and where there have been specific or general recommendations from the Charities Commission.

So please, don't sit back and just let the same old same old work through how to best organise EO for the future. There are over 4000 of us in EO - wouldn't it be good if many of us took control of the future of our organisation to ensure continued support for all HEing families in the years ahead?

Local Contact Round-up

Local Contact Vacancies

Even if your area has a Local Contact, please consider volunteering to job share with the current post holder.

The following areas are without Local Contacts or the current post holder has given notice that they wish to resign when someone has volunteered to replace them. All Local Contact will be CRB checked.

If you would be like to consider being a Local Contact please contact Carla: 0117 935 4389 or lcco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org

Areas needing a Local Contact:

England

Bedfordshire

Birmingham and Solihull

Buckinghamshire

Essex: both Barking and Dagenham and South East

South Gloucester

Gloucestershire

Herefordshire

Kent South East

Lancaster Bolton

Leicestershire

London - North West

London - Richmond and Kingston

Manchester

Merseyside

Norfolk west

Oxfordshire

Staffordshire - South

West Midlands - Dudley

Yorkshire West -Leeds, Calderdale and Kirklees

Yorkshire East-Hull

Yorkshire North

Scotland

Dumfries and Galloway

Angus, Dundee, Perth and Kinross

Argyll and Bute

Edinburgh and Lothians

Inverclyde and The Ayrshires

Glasgow

Fife

Wales

Mid Glamorgan

West Glamorgan

Vale of Glamorgan

New Local Contacts

West Midlands - Wolverhampton:

Debbie Chandler 01902 570787

jas123@blueyonder.co.uk

Norfolk, South: Anne Bury

McMurdock.

Gwynedd and Anglesey: Nick

O'Connor nick@nick59.wanadoo.co.uk

or 01407 811049 (not to be given to

LA or similar).

If you would like to know more about what being a Local Contact entails, please contact Carla on the e-mail or phone number above. She will be happy to explain more about the role so that you will be able to consider whether it is something you would have time to volunteer for (it may not take up as much time as you think!)

EO Vacancies

Local Authority Liaison Volunteer

This is primarily an electronic job, not out there meeting the LA personnel. But you can be involved with finding people willing to meet LAs who request it. The main parts of the work are:

- Keeping an up to date list of LA home education contacts in each LA in England, Wales, Scotland and N Ireland
- Send out an email Bulletin to all LAs once in a while
- Keep an eye that the info on the EO web site for LAs is up to date
- Keep a list of EO members and others working with LAs and inform them of anything being sent to their LA
- Give LA contact details to any EO members who need it.
- Have an EO email address to receive mail from the web site.

The basic part of the job only takes time in spurts, but more work could be done by someone interested. It is perhaps also a post that is ripe for job sharing, so that ideas can be developed together. If you think you might be interested please contact Priscilla Park Weir 01980 629 737 priscilla@cooptel.net

Cheap Broadband and Phone Calls

The Phone Co-op has introduced a tiered rate for Broadband, so at last, if you are a low user, you will pay less. EO has an affiliation scheme with the Phone Co-op, so quote our affinity number *017* when you sign up for inexpensive phone calls, dial-up, broadband, line-rental and much more. The co-operative is "owned" by the members and any profits go back to the members, not into the pockets of phone moguls!

Three ways to find out more: go straight to their web site www.thephone.coop go to the bottom of the front page of the EO website or phone 0845 458 9000. Remember to quote the affinity No 017.

EO Trading Team

The Education Otherwise Trading team are looking for at least two volunteers. Responsibilities would include:

1. Holding stock (levels to be agreed subject to space available at the volunteers home)
2. Receiving orders via email and despatching as soon as possible (within one week if possible)
3. Emailing Store Manager (Paul Robinson) when merchandise is shipped so that records can be updated.

People need to have access to email as Paul has set it up that as much as possible is automated to reduce the amount of work involved.

Due to the potential for lots of orders (we hope), people should have easy access to a post office. For more information, contact Jacqui Houlding on jacqui@thecrystalball.org.uk or on 01925 654856 or any other EOT volunteer.

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 20 October 2008 and costs £23. You can sign up using the Renewal form on the EO website or contact Lynda.

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.

Free Trials - contact Lynda 01553 617551
learnpremium@education-otherwise.org

Advertisements

EO Home Education Cards

("Truancy Cards")

Extra cards are available at £1 each card required from:
EO HE Cards, 22 Lewis Drive, St Germans, King's Lynn,
Norfolk PE34 3FB

Please send a stamped, addressed envelope plus a cheque or
postal order or the equivalent in 50p or £1 stamps. Cheques
and postal orders made payable to 'Education Otherwise
Association Ltd' Email queries to: database@education-otherwise.org (please put EO in subject line of e-mails)

Newsademic.com

WHAT DO YOUR CHILDREN KNOW ABOUT WORLD NEWS?

Many children are curious about worldwide news events. They hear about them on television and radio. Then they wonder:

But unfortunately most modern newspapers are dominated by trivial gossip and stories about celebrities. And the few that aren't are not very child friendly.

So what can children do to find out what's happening in the world?

They can read Newsademic – a newspaper which is carefully written and edited in an easy-to-understand format.

Newsademic's focus is on international events – the ones which shape and affect the world we all live in today. Newsademic carries no advertising neither does it feature articles about television, sport, computer games, pop music or celebrity culture.

Classroom activities are available to accompany each issue.

The newspaper is distributed fortnightly as a PDF file by email. Although it can be read on screen it has been designed to be printed out and read as a paper copy. Subscribers are also able to view an online version and fully searchable archive.

Subscription prices start at £23.50. Visit www.newsademic.com to receive a FREE issue.



EDUCATION OTHERWISE MEMBERS Use Group Reference Code **EO378** when paying online to receive three extra free issues. Offer ends 31st August 2008

Newsademic, Hill House, 210 Upper Richmond Road, London SW15 6NP, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0)208 816 8781. Web: www.newsademic.com Email: info@newsademic.com

EXAMS UK

National Examination Centre

All Subjects – All Levels – All Boards

External Candidate Examination Entry

GCSE, IGCSE, A/S, A2, NVQ
and other levels

Mock Examinations

All Levels (Key Stage 2 to A2)

Tuition & Support

Home-Tuition, Email Support
Call 0117 9564637

info@examsuk.co.uk

www.examsuk.co.uk

Exams UK is a division of 3A Tutors Ltd
Examination Centre No.: 50538 & GB239

Principal: Dr. A. Monks

CAMPING IN WEST WALES FOR EO FAMILIES

on organic smallholding

Indoor playspace, fields and woods

Cardigan Bay Heritage coast

Beautiful beaches, dolphins, seals

Camping £12.50 per night per family

David Witt 01239 811118

email: cwmholidays@btconnect.com

www.cwmrhaffau-holidays.co.uk

HAPPY HOLIDAYS IN NORMANDY.COM

Practise your French and see the history of Normandy. Our beautifully positioned gites are the perfect location for home study families, many of whom have recommended us.

In this area, you can visit the D Day landings beaches, first liberated town of Saint Mere Eglise, 2nd world war museums, Bayeux tapestry, nuclear submarine museum, Mont Saint Micheal, Pirou castle (Viking) and the Roman site of the Gaul's. PLUS we are only 10 minutes from golden sandy beaches.

Tel: Tony or Louise: 0033 2 33 21 39 05 www.happyholidaysinnormandy.com

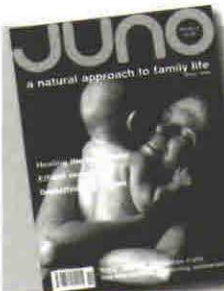
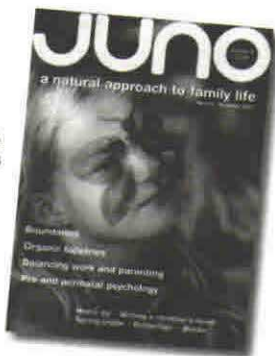
Juno

Juno is a parenting magazine with an ethos based on conscious parenting, sustainability, social justice, non-violence and a commitment to personal growth and spiritual awareness. Juno is named after and inspired by the Roman goddess of birth, fertility, marriage and female genius.

Our aims are to acknowledge the valuable role of being a parent with all of its joys and challenges and to enrich family life and relationships by encouraging reflection, self-acceptance and peaceful parenting; building a sense of community and celebrating the roles of parenting and home making.

Our broad editorial contains features, interviews, reviews, personal stories, crafts and celebrations. Contributions from our readers are central to the ethos of the magazine, and it is by sharing stories, ideas and information that we hope to empower you to be the parent you want to be.

Described by readers as different, inspiring, down to earth and intelligent. We aren't glossy and you won't find us in supermarkets or newsagents – but you can find us nationwide from branches of Borders, eco baby shops, organic and health food shops and via subscription.



You can subscribe on-line and read articles on our website

www.junomagazine.com

To subscribe by post please send a cheque for £20 (5 issues) or £35 (12 issues) to Juno Magazine, PO Box 592, East Grinstead, RH19 3AQ mentioning where you heard about us. You can also try a sample issue for £4.

'I can honestly say I think Juno is the best written parenting magazine I have read for absolutely ages!'
Susie Fairgrove, Weleda

HOME EDUCATION HOLIDAYS IN IRELAND

JULY & AUGUST HOLIDAYS

Thatched cottage or caravan accommodation available.

Nature activities, spinning, herb walks & workshops, self-sufficiency.

For more info call –
00353(0)61924868

www.thechildrensashram.com

MONEY, TIME & FREEDOM

We have a solution that
CAN GIVE YOU ALL 3

A Home Based Income
Opportunity

Flexible hours to suit, no
experience

No stock, full support
Genuine Ethical UK PLC

It has certainly given our
home educated family a
positive outlook for the future.

Call Lisa: 020 8338 5616
www.eeze-cash.com

RURAL HOLIDAY COTTAGE WITH POOL IN
LOT, SOUTH WEST FRANCE

**10% discount for members of Education
Otherwise**

Beautiful Quercy house with heated pool
and large gardens. Equipped to high
standard particularly for families.

Special Offers: May 17th 9 days for the
price of 7

WC 12th July £150 discount

www.cahorscountryhouse.com

Phone Jo -01912170365

WALDORF COLLEGE

learning through experience

EDUCATIONAL JOURNEYS

Watch our student film!

www.waldorf.college.project.org.uk

Phone-01453 840 009

Stroud, Gloucestershire

Would You Like to Find
Out More About A

Home Business Opportunity

That Supports your
Family Based Lifestyle
And Meets Your Ethical
Standards?

Call Kerriane Cartmer-
Edwards on

02070 960 690

EO MERCHANDISE

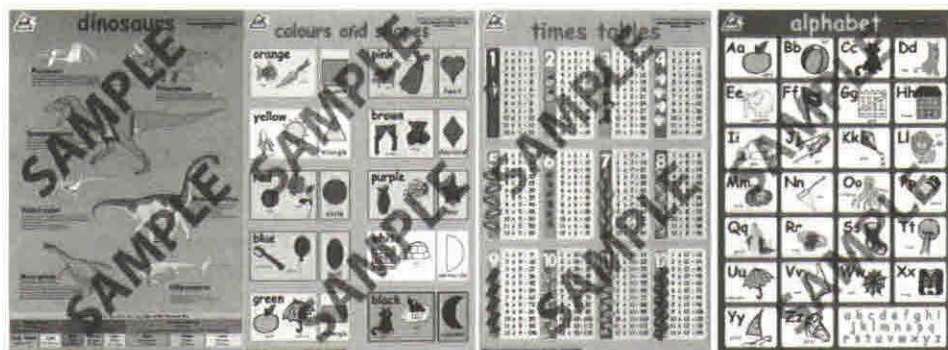
(Members Only Prices)

Publications	Member Price	T-shirts & Hoodies	Member Price
Early Years	£3.60	Navy: Home Education - a real option Sizes M, L or XL	£6.00
Teach Your Own by <i>John Holt</i>	£7.50	Navy: Home Education - a real option Sizes 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-11 or 12-13	£4.50
Free Range Education - <i>Ed. Terri Dowty</i>	£9.90	White: SINC Sizes M, L or XL	£6.00
Home Educating Our Autistic Spectrum Children: Paths are Made by Walking <i>Edited by Terri Dowty and Kitt Cowlshaw</i>	£13.50	Hoodie: SINC with triangle logo Sizes 5-6, 7-8, 9-11, 12-13 Hoodie: SINC with triangle logo Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL Black, Navy	£15.00 £20.00
Learning from Home Based Education	£4.50	Oskar: The World's My Playground Sizes S, M or L in Purple, Royal Blue or Sky Blue	£5.15
School's Out - Educating Your Child at Home - <i>Jean Bendell</i>	£3.60	Oskar: The World's My Playground Purple, Royal Blue or Sky Blue Sizes 1-2, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-11, 12-13	£4.70
Educating Your Child at Home - <i>Jane Lowe & Alan Thomas</i>	£10.75	White: SINC Sizes 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-11, 12-13	£4.50
Evaluation and Research in Education, Special Edition Home Education - <i>Guest Editor Paula Rothermel</i>	£6.00		
Educating Children at Home - <i>Alan Thomas</i>	£9.85		
Their Own Voices	£3.15		
Paula Rothermel's PhD Research (2002) Leaflet	£0.54		
Stationery			
Recycled 30cm/12" Ruler	£1.08		
Eraser (red or white)	£0.41		
Recycled Pencil	£0.53		
Recycled Pen	£0.77		
Highlighter (pink/yellow/green)	£0.89		
Notepads (A5)	£1.00		
Red Pencil Case	£1.35		
Set 10 Coloured Pencils	£4.32		
Special Offer			
Set of Four original A3 Posters	£6.30		

EO Leaflet Series: All leaflets are 45p each and are available free to download from the EO website

1. *Choosing your approach to home-education*
2. *Deregistration and contact with local education authorities*
3. *Legal aspects of home-education*
4. *Home-education research*
5. *Further reading*
6. *Useful organisations* (part of membership pack)
7. *Courses and qualifications*
8. *GCSEs*
9. *Educational resources*
10. *Home-education and Steiner*
11. *Flexi-schooling*
12. *School anxieties*
13. *Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Home Education*
14. *Dyslexia*

Having now had a chance to actually see how the changes in postal charges will affect EO, the pricing structure has been changed. For small items, you, the customer, are paying much less postage. For larger items, the cost of postage has increased (as detailed on the order form)



EO Merchandise Order Form

Item	Size	Colour	Quantity	Cost	Total
				Sub Total	
				P&P (UK)	
				Total (Sub Total plus Postage)	

Your Name:

Your Address:

Your Telephone Number: Email Address:

Cheque Number:

Please send this order form to:

EO Trading, 38 Garwood Close, Westbrook, Warrington. WA5 8TF Email: merchandise@education-otherwise.org

Cheque to be made payable to: Education Otherwise Trading Limited

Postage and Packing

Order value £0-5: £1	Order value £30-40: £4.50
Order value £5-10: £1.50	Order value £40-50: £5.50
Order value £10-20: £2.50	Order value £50+: £6.50
Order value £20-30: £3.50	

Regional Diary

All regular meetings listed below are included automatically in every issue, please let us know of any changes. 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. Not all groups are run by EO members. Please call the number given for further details of the meeting/event in your area. Changes to Jo: regionaldiary@education-otherwise.org or 01392 438876.

ENGLAND

BEDFORDSHIRE

South Bedfordshire Home Education Group, covering **Houghton Regis, Dunstable & surrounding areas**. We meet regularly with a variety of activities. Bernie: 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 Gail: gail.borrows@gmail.com or 01628 483895
Hero's Education Centre 4 days/wk, workshops, lessons, activities, Dawn 01628 783107, thirdEye1@compuserve.com :
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

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
Bristol Home Education Learning Place meeting Monday + Friday pm, Carla 0117 935 4389

BUCKS

Newsletter for Bucks/Northants & Milton Keynes home educators network extends a warm welcome to all. Extends a warm to all, multi activities and support, also have excellent relationship with LEA/LA. Local Contact Georgeanne 01908 662256 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

South Bucks: meetings for craft, activities, play, speakers, drama, trips etc. Jackie 01753 886924 or Gail 01628 483895, gail.borrows@gmail.com
High Wycombe, Hughenden Village Hall, 1.30-4pm every Tuesday, Claire 07841 474398 :
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/highwycombehomeeducators>

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Cambridge: regular meetings & outings, Jane: 01223 241925, JLLHellings@aol.com
Alconbury monthly activities run by Christian group. All welcome, Audrey 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 Friday afternoons a month. To contact the group see Yahoo list at:
[http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/PboroMudPud/Cambridge/Norfolk border](http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/PboroMudPud/Cambridge/Norfolk%20border), North Cambridgeshire: Fortnightly at **March**, Jane 01354 677869 or Sarah 01354 688245 or Pat: Northcamps@chauntryhouse.fsnet.co.uk

CHESHIRE

South Cheshire and North Staffs Group, regular activities, meetings and trips for all ages. Teen activities. Contact Carrie 01782 786720, scans.heag@yahoo.co.uk

CLEVELAND & DURHAM (see also DURHAM) email list:

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/tvhe/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 : Local information
on our local home ed website:

www.freewebs/cornwallhomeed

Menheniot near Liskeard, Home Grown Small
School, Mondays, term time only, Kath 01752
851091 or Tania 01822 835902

Pensilva, Forest Day, 2 last Tuesdays of each
month. Ele: 0845 345 8596

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

CUMBRIA

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

Kendal 3rd Friday each month Contact Jayne
01539 534541 or jaynewoodbank@yahoo.co.uk

Kendal alternate Mondays, Jo 01539 567005.

Pennith alternate Tuesday, 1.30-3.30, Sarah
01768 896019

South Lakes, Wednesday, Lex 01229 885206

DERBYSHIRE

Chesterfield Home Ed Group meet Wednesday.
Outings & activities, Yvonne 01246 555645, Suzy
01246 240917, Alastair 01246 520820

Chesterfield @ Hasland Village Hall, Art Class,
age 10 & over, Thursdays, 12-2pm, term time only,
Sian or Marek on 01246 473902

Derby Group, 4th Thursday 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: Ianalderson7758@tiscali.co.uk
Family swimming sessions, Wednesday pm, Ian:
Ianalderson7758@tiscali.co.uk

Derbyshire & beyond - AHEAD. Meet weekly on
Thursday 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 or 01392 851370

National Trust (Devon) for details ring Neil
01363 82314

East & Mid Devon Local Contact: Kate 01392
851370

Okehampton Monday, alternate weeks, Barbara
01837 55805

Exeter Wednesday, Free Range Learning for all
ages, Annie 01392 434167

Exeter Thursday, fortnightly Pottery, Neil
01363 82314

Exeter Friday, 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
Tuesday, 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 01271

830456/830804

South Devon Local Contact Bridget, 01803
862158, 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 Monday from 10-2.30 term
time, all ages welcome. Mary or Danny 01297
560342

DORSET

Dorset/Somerset/Devon borders

Regular meetings on Tuesday, Karen 01460
30461, on Thursday, Ali 01297 489775

Dorset Rosemary 01747 853593

Bournemouth Weekly Monday Meetings, Carol:
01202 677066, Carolstonehe@yahoo.co.uk local
website: www.he-ed.org.uk

Durham

email

list:<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/tvhe/> or
http://groups.yahoo.com/durhamhome_ed/

ESSEX

Chelmsford monthly meetings, third Thurs, 2-4pm, Sarah: tower@tesco.net

Colchester Bowling & Swimming monthly on last Wednesday, term time, Sharron: sharron@brainydata.com

Southend OTHENA - Older children/Teens News & Activities (11+) for details contact Michelle: ab006h6097@blueyonder.co.uk or 01702 307834

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/OTHENA/>
Tiptree monthly meetings, last Tuesday of month 2-5pm, Julie.ashton@ntlworld.com

Various venues across Essex, New Teens Group, meeting monthly, Sally@brisley.freemove.co.uk

Around Essex Educational visits twice monthly Thursday. Details of Essex groups & events in Epicycle available from Corinne: epicycle@wavy.org 07802630693

Southend, Shirley: 01702 308698, indigoshirl@gmail.com

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Monthly social meetings open to all. Regular workshops & outings. Website: <http://members.lycos.co.uk/GlosHomeEducators/index.html> also Email list for events & forum. Rob & Fiona 01684 290087

openhORIZONS@ntlworld.com Caroline 01242 890351 cambrose@ieee.org Beverley 01242 524091 or Mhairi 01452 384104.

Gloucester meetings & swimming. Dawn 01452 540019 dawnandmike@blueyonder.co.uk or Tracy 07941 612092

Stroud regular meetings, Nick 01453 840036: nick.weir@localfood.org.uk

South Gloucestershire

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

HAMPSHIRE

Havant, meeting most weekdays. Julie 01243 552472, activeo@btinternet.com:
www.activeo.org.uk

Fareham & Gosport, FAREGOS HE meets twice weekly for craft, swimming & other activities. Tracey 02392 551870 or Julie 01730 261468: jkbar1955@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

Farnham/Aldershot area, under 10s; fortnightly, Paula: 01252 316497 paula.oakley@talk21.com or Emma: 01483 426277 emmajevons@supanet.com
Romsey/New Forest area, fortnightly, annimax1@yahoo.co.uk

Southampton & area, SEEDS meetings at least weekly, Lyn 02380 487879:

lynbrayshaw@dsl.pipex.com:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SEEDS1>

New Forest I'm back to running the home ed social group for the New Forest and we are moving to a new location. Join us on Fridays between 11am-1pm for crafts, tea, workshops and socialising! Contact Karen on 01425 656856 for more information.

HERTFORDSHIRE (see also N.London)

To join **Herts Yahoo Group** please email: karenbartlett@btinternet.com

Stevenage Swimming Pool, Swimming Lessons every Thursday 10.30am, term time, email Kathleen: kathleen.darby@ntlworld.com

ISLE OF MAN

Isle of Man Home Education Network. Meeting monthly, <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: HYPERLINK

"<http://www.when.omnia.co.uk/>"

www.when.omnia.co.uk & email group:

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 Monday 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

Hayes, meeting alternate Fridays, 11am-2pm:

Debbie 07730 955395, Carrie 07817 093645

LANCASHIRE

Old Cobblers, Pam 01706 215585, for a

comprehensive list of monthly events please email

Pam at: 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, Thursday 12-3pm,

Gillian, 01524 62918,

kenworthyfamily@talktalk.net

LEICESTERSHIRE

5 regular meeting venues across Leicestershire.

Alex 0116 2720209 : alex.caldwell@tiscali.co.uk

Leicester area-Syston Group for the under 8s.

Tammy on mattamsam@btinternet.com or 0116

2692499, or Vikki on martinvikki@aol.com

LINCOLNSHIRE

Activelincs Home Education Group, Helena 01724

720595

Boston and surrounding area. Families with

teens who'd like to meet for swimming, bowling

or other activities contact Ross on 01205

870773 or ross.mountney@tiscali.co.uk

Central Lincoln, Bluebells, regular meetings, Ruth

01522 804583.

Variety of informal events & get togethers,

Christine 01507 338070,

christinehalse1@yahoo.co.uk

Lincoln Cathedral Home-educators - Central

Lincoln, regular meetings, Ruth 01522 804583,

Christine 01507 338070,

christinehalse1@yahoo.co.uk

South Lincolnshire, drama group, Brothertoft

Village hall, 10 - 12 Tues, 01205 821044

Krisistevens@aol.com

LONDON

Ladbroke Grove/Queens Park group, Monday +

Wednesday, Sarah 07816 872841 or Gigi 020 732

88990

South East London/Kent borders regular

meetings, Ann 01689 826504

East London HE Group alternate Wednesdays in

Leytonstone 1-4pm, Call Jo, 020 8520 5709 :

acoo@mirehall.freereserve.co.uk

East London Home Educators, Forest Gate,

Meeting Friday 10.30, Annalise 0208 500 1053

Bromley/Croydon Chrysalis Group, Jenny 020

8654 3972, jen9@blueyonder.co.uk

Dulwich, Wednesday, Maths, Science, Speakers

and Social for age 7-teen. Gina 020 8299 1135

Forest Hill, Mondays, for age 11+, contact

Denise 020 8699 6866

Grove Park group meets every other Friday,

Claire 020 8402 5831

Kidbroke rollerblading, Fiona 020 8852 9756 :

bettleslake@clara.net

Lewisham Thursday 11-1 then to park

afterwards, Joolz, 0208 2895026 :

teachyourown@hotmail.com

New Cross, term time swim on Tuesday 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, Mon

afternoons, call Sophie on 020 7581 5238 to

book

Stanmore events on Tuesday + Wednesday.

Programme available from Vivienne:

timsharkey@aol.com, call 020 8954 1885 or

Vicki: Aceva@btinternet.com

N London, Haringey Home Educators' Club, Wed

pm, Gaby 0208 881 9463

N London Barnet Group, Mon, Mirelle 020 8449

7868, or lance.e@virgin.net or

Lynda 020 8368 9046

West London (& Middlesex) Home Ed group

Tuesday, Betsy 020 8993 0677

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

West London, Wednesday 12-2.30 pm fortnightly during term time, Alison 020 8569 9398 or

Kathryn 020 8566 0543 or

kathrynvglenn@hotmail.com or

Alison@rothwell1973.fsnet.co.uk

West London (Chiswick & Ealing) Tuesday,

Naomi 020 8567 7589 or

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 :

<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

MIDDLESEX

Hayes, meetings every other Thursday from

10.30 to 1.30, Jenn 0208 573 9042,

Jenn@shadowdale.demon.co.uk

Pinner, Meadowsweet Home School, Tuesday-

Friday, 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

Downham Market HEDD (Home Educators

Downham & District)

www.freewebs.com/hedownhamdistrict or Nicola

01366 385380.

Norwich area - Free Wheel for under 10s,

activity group **Wednesday 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 Imogen 01604 781316

or 07756 011189, info@northantshe.org.uk

Daventry, monthly meetings, Ley 01327 360909

or 07772 542966

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 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, jackiecrave@bluebottle.com

SHROPSHIRE

South Shrops regular meetings every Tuesday,

outings & workshops, Maria 01588 630314

Newport Nr Telford, meetings & outings, Fri

from 12.30, Julieann 01952 401571:

weshalllook@aol.com

Telford, Art Club meets every Monday afternoon

at Horsehay village hall, Jackie, 01952 419146

SOMERSET

Bath H.E.L.P. group meets regularly for outings &

activities. Louise: 07957 618988

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 Wednesday each month 11-3pm, bring lunch, karen 01543 422577, karen@karisto.co.uk

North Staffs and South Cheshire Group, regular activities, meetings and trips for all ages. Teen activities. Contact Carrie 01782 786720, scans.heag@yahoo.co.uk

SUFFOLK

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

Wetherden meetings 3rd 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 or Jeremy on 01483 546515

Surrey Home Educators meet regularly at the Priory, Reigate. Email group: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/surrey_home_ed

Surrey, Piers 01932 228940, www.bloohouse.co.uk

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

Cobham area, Learning Group for parents + children 087, Rachael: 01932 706191 : 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 or Emma, 01483 426277, emmajeavons@supanet.com

North Surrey/Croydon meetings, contact Jenny 0208 654 3972 : jen9@blueyonder.co.uk

SUSSEX

Wealden Home Ed website:

www.whenomnia.co.uk also email group: wealdenhomeeducatorsnetwork@yahoo.groups.com
Sussex east: regional contact, 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: 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

Brighton, meetings, Elaine 01273 581852 : elaine.haslip@btinternet.com

Eastbourne 'SHINIES' home ed. group: Loretta: 01323 509283 : madboys@tiscali.co.uk

Forest Row Area: Sue 01342 823068 or Winnie 01342 826087

Sussex west

Worthing/Shoreham Beach: Avis: 0127 542589 or 07703 647954

Central West Sussex, 20 mins Crawley, Brighton, Chichester, 10 mins Worthing. EtudEO-home-ed group, various clubs and groups meeting daily in term time. Jo, 01903 742989 : jodavis_@hotmail.co.uk

Chichester, meeting most weekdays. Julie 01243 552472, activeo@btinternet.com, www.activeo.org.uk

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_tyn_eandwear

Music @ Rosemary: 0191 2853707 :

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 1st Tuesday 10.30-1.30pm, Alison: 07769 740925

Coventry, meetings 4th Tuesday 1-4pm, Sarah: 024 7627 9633

Wolston, meetings 2nd Thursday 10.30-3pm, Sue 024 7654 3801

Rugby, Daventry, meeting monthly, Ley 01327 360909 : 07772 542966

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

Birmingham HE Group, regular meetings, Linda 0121 742 7368 :

linda@tustin2532.freemove.co.uk

Coseley, West Midlands, Meeting monthly, 10am, Fri, Debbie 01902 570787 or Glenda 0121 556 0189 : highwaygirl@supalife.com

Coventry, Daventry, meeting monthly, Ley 01327 360909 or 07772 542966

WILTSHIRE

Beccy 01985 840174

Biddestone, Chippenham, Out and About Learning Centre Nr. Chippenham Tuesdays termtime 9.30am to 3.00pm :

info@outandaboutlearning.org.uk

Warminster meeting each Monday from 2.30, Beccy, 01985 840174

Salisbury meeting Tuesday afternoons, Vicky, 01722 324863

Salisbury New group starting Monday 7th April, 1-3.30pm fortnightly, large hall, skate park, table tennis. Contact Ally for details 01722 710525

North Wiltshire

To link up with almost 100 HEers in North Wilts, NWilts_HE-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

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

Swindon Wednesday, Shena: 01793 686433 or Mandy: 01793 644472

FLL 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@eldekqvist.com

WORCESTERSHIRE

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

Worcester Home Education Group meeting Tuesday, Jayne 01905 424451

North Worcs/Kidderminster meetings, Gail 01562 822034, gail@tqmi.co.uk

YORKSHIRE EAST Regular meetings & visits, Alison 01405 769902

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

Between York and Pocklington, group meets Weds for various

educational activities, crafts & social contact, Sue, 01904 762559, email: contact@yorkeo.co.uk

YORKSHIRE NORTH

Regular meetings & outings. Karen 01904 400317, kkarensandy@aol.com

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

Skipton Home Ed Group Meeting monthly on Friday, Judith 01756 791356

near Malton, meeting weekly on Monday, Tess, 01947 825772 : tess@chrisgeall.com

Scarborough, weekly meetings, outings and activities, 11.30-3pm on Fridays. All welcome.

Lisa, 01723 378252, Lisa_riley@tiscali.co.uk or Tess, 01947 825772, tess@chrisgeall.com

Harrogate, Hookstone Chase community centre, Tues 1-3pm, Liz 01423 320341 :

Blessingway1@aol.com, or Kate 01423 865777 : ksbtscott@aol.com

Between York and Pocklington, group meets Weds for various

educational activities, crafts & social contact,
Sue, 01904 762559, email: contact@yorkeo.co.uk

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, Tuesday, Annette 0114
2583502 or Fiona 0114 275 1142

YORKSHIRE WEST

Bradford Weekly meetings & activities. For a
monthly schedule of activities, Sarah,
01484 361206 : sl.marshall@ntlworld.com

Halifax: Mon in term time, Gill, 01422 311876,
Gill Kilner@aol.com.

Huddersfield: Swimming, Wed, Tracy 01484
317176.

Huddersfield monthly meeting, Wednesday,
Helen 01484 841041 or Jane 01484 645034.

Huddersfield, Lunch & Chat, monthly,
Thursday, Tracy 01484 317176.

Huddersfield Art Gallery, Art Workshop,
Thursday, contact Jane 01484 645034.

SCOTLAND

ARGYLL, Home-Ed Group, regular meetings,
Joanne 0845 345 2291 or Debra 01631 730469 :
debra@celtic-soul-music.com

FIFE, Friday fortnightly meetings, Nicola 01334
478530, nicola.stubbs@btinternet.com

HIGHLANDS/MORAY, Toni, 01463 831574,
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 or
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

MID GLAMORGAN

Rhondda Cynon Taff, meetings on a Friday, Lisa
01443 772278

Caerphilly, fortnightly meeting on thursdays,
Kate : caerphillyhomeed@aol.com :
www.caerphillyhomeed.blogspot.com

PEMBROKESHIRE & Cardigan area, for local
information contact Yvette 08454 589251

CEREDIGION & CARMARTHENSHIRE & PEMBROKESHIRE

Childwise Education Newsletter A local
bimonthly newsletter for home educators with
'what's on' listings and contact list. Regular trips
to museums, NT properties, country parks etc.
Up to date local group info for Aberystwyth,
Lampeter, Carmarthenshire, Rhonda, Swansea.
email: childwise.newsletter@talktalk.net or phone
Laura 01545 580528

GWYNEDD

Bangor & area home ed network, Heather
01248 352336

Creative Learning and Support (C.L.A.S) meet
every Wednesday at Tregarth 12-5pm. Free
weekly newsletter of events via e-mail. Contact
jdchapmanmaurice@aol.com or phone Nick on
01407 811049 or Julie on 01286 678181 for
further information.

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
Newtown area: Fortnightly in Newtown, Sue
01686 688748: 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
Froncysyllte fortnightly meetings, Sam 01978
861011

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 italics). If you would prefer to volunteer for infrequent or small tasks please contact database@education-otherwise.org (please put EO in subject line of e-mails).

Small Groups:

Finance: Lynda Hitchman, *Pauline Butterworth*, Janet Simpson, *Janet Wilkinson*

Enquiries: Anne Rix, Iris Harrison

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

Core Govt. Policy: Fiona Nicholson, Annette Taberner, Ann Newstead, Karen Bowlzer, *Jo Berry*, Ann Samuel Till, Kira Patefield-Smith, Natasha Arthur, *Janet Wilkinson*

Disability Group: Karen Bowlzer, Fiona Nicholson, Jennifer Skillen, Sheryl Booth, Christine Waterman, *Celia McDonagh*

Scotland Group: Ann Samuel Till, Fiona Chaff, Rebecca Kail, Jane Bathgate

Grievances and Complaints:

eocomplaints@googlemail.com

Pauline Butterworth ~ 01642 672370 ~ 80 Grange Avenue, Stockton on Tees, Cleveland TS18 4PP ~ pbutterworth@education-otherwise.org

Lynda Hitchman ~ 01553 617551 ~ 22 Lewis Drive, St Germans, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3FB ~ database@education-otherwise.org (please put EO in subject line)

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

Jo Berry ~ 01260 222934 ~ East Wing, Harrington House, Tunstall Road, Bosley Cheshire SK11 0PE ~ 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 020 3002 7702 mediaco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org

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

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

Wales (N): Edwina Theunissen, Wrexham, 01978 661882 wales2@education-otherwise.org

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

South East: Ann Newstead, Kent 020 3002 7702 ~ southeast@education-otherwise.org

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

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

Northern Ireland: Marian Kenny 02825 654343

Vacant Areas: Scotland, North West, Midlands, East Anglia

EO E-mail Lists & Forums

EO runs four email lists with Yahoo Groups. The Yahoo lists are open to all, members and non-members. The forums are available in the Members Area of the EO website. See www.education-otherwise.org to join one of the yahoo forums.

To access the Members 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) 020 8969 0893
lbarson@education-otherwise.org

Jo Berry, (Cheshire) 01260 222934
jberry@education-otherwise.org (Enquiries Secretary)

Gail Borrows (Bucks) 01628 483895
gborrows@education-otherwise.org (Membership Secretary)

Pauline Butterworth (Cleveland) 01642 672370
pbutterworth@education-otherwise.org (Treasurer)

Carla MacGregor (Bristol) 0117 935 4389
cmacgregor@education-otherwise.org (Local Contacts
Coordinator)

Celia McDonagh (Glamorganshire) 01865 515071 or 07763
729055 ~ cmcdonagh@education-otherwise.org

Kelly Moorhouse (Denbighshire) 01824 703690
kmoorhouse@education-otherwise.org

Roarke Newstead (Kent) 020 3002 7702
rroarke@education-otherwise.org

Fiona Nicholson (S Yorks) 0114 275 1142
fnicholson@education-otherwise.org

Joss Nowell (Staffordshire) 01538 385057
jnowell@education-otherwise.org (Publications & DPO)

Vicki Skinner (Dorset) 01202 302275
vskinner@education-otherwise.org

Jennifer Skillen (Glos) jskillen@education-otherwise.org

Janet Wilkinson (Cambridgeshire) 01733 554436
jwilkinson@education-otherwise.org (Co Sec)

Rowenna Williams (Gwynedd) 01678 521348
rwilliams@education-otherwise.org

Judi Wilson (London) 020 8969 7963
jwilson@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 08445 867541
database@education-otherwise.org (Please put EO in the
Subject line of emails)

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). Caroline Clark ~ 08445 867549 ~ The Birches, 8
Green Lane, South Kirkby, Pontefract, W. Yorks, WF9
3LR ~ eastationery@education-otherwise.org

Useful Contacts

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.

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

Autonomous Education Support: Maya Lucas ~ 01462 630786
~ 79 Chagny Close, Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire
SG6 4BZ

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

College Contact: (Acting) Roger Scaife ~ 01422 884682
Glen House, Cragg Vale, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire
HX7 5SQ ~ 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: Jo Berry (See CM list)
jberry@education-otherwise.org

GCSE Contacts: Sarah Cook: 01768 896019
gcsecontact@education-otherwise.org

LearnPremium: Lynda Hitchman ~ 01553 617551
learnpremium@education-otherwise.org (please put EO in
subject line of e-mails)

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: June Booker, 5 Warwick Road,
Ettington, Warwickshire CV37 7SH
publications@education-otherwise.org

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

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

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

Treasurer: Pauline Butterworth (See CM List)

Volunteers are needed for the following posts/contacts:
Publications, EO Stalls, EO LA/EA Bridge Builder, School
Anxiety Support, Small Jobs Co-ordinator.

education otherwise

Education Otherwise is a membership organisation that 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)

Information can also be found on the Education Otherwise website:

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

Education Otherwise Association Ltd., Registered Charity No. 1055120

A company limited by guarantee and registered in
England and Wales No. 01917107

Registered Office Address: 31 Framlingham Road,
Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE2 8UG