

education otherwise



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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE IS: 1st May 2008

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EO Merchandise

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

Moonstone

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

Welcome...

To the June 2008 edition of the Education Otherwise Newsletter.

It now feels as if Summer is truly here. A trip to one of the local HE groups saw my shoulders getting burnt (silly me) and my children running around sans shoes.

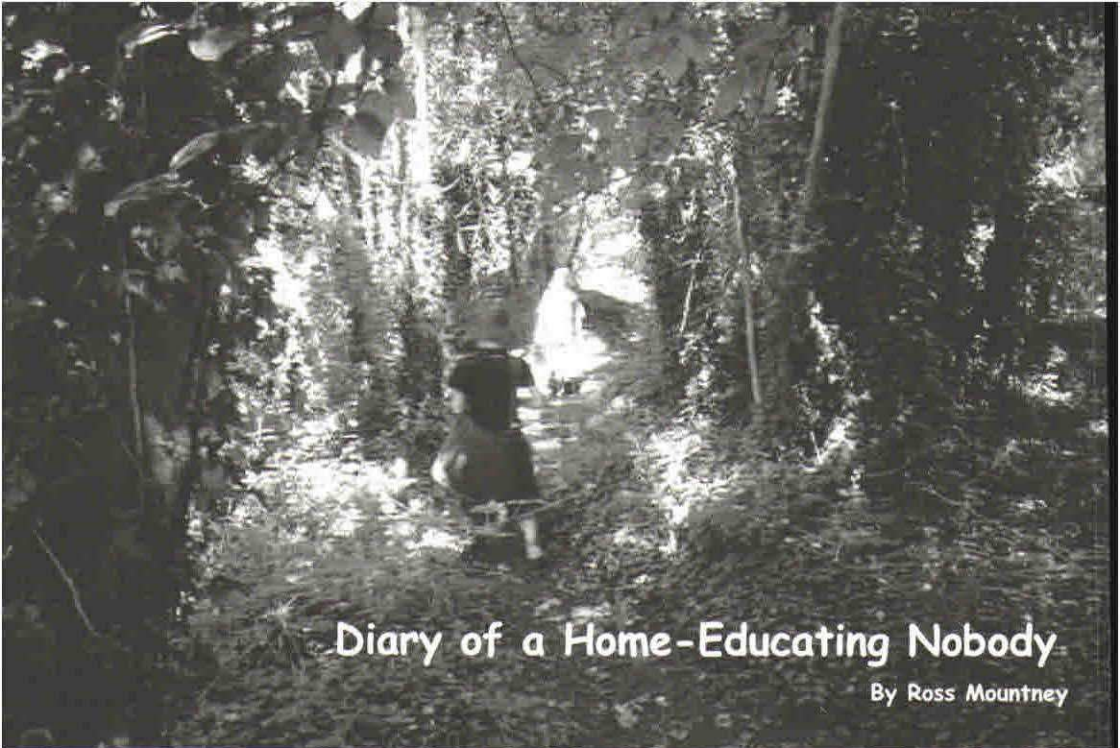
In Diary of a Home-Educating Nobody I've included a couple of photos. I hope the style of it is to your liking and if so, please consider sending in photos to use in further editions of the Newsletter.

Feedback shows that people like reading about what other families are up to (the human instinct for nosiness) and it would be great to include more 'day-to-day' stories in the Newsletter. Perhaps you'd like to write 'A Day in the HE Life Of...' and include a few pics of what you might get up to in any given day.

With recent talk of government plans to force single parents into work when their youngest child reaches 12 (and indeed the plan is to reduce this down to 7) I thought it would be interesting to include some articles about HE-ers who do paid work inside and outside the home. If you do this, please send in your experiences, they may be helpful to other HE-ers, or indeed people who want to HE but are concerned as to how they will balance HE and work. Please also read the article on p.21 about the government plans for single parents and please support EO in its support of single parents right to dedicate their lives to HE-ing their children.

We all know that parenting is hard work, but some (not all) single parents do this job single-handedly. To take on a job outside the home can be unrealistic unless you have an excellent support network in place and not all single parents have this. In addition, finding childcare for home-educated children (and even more so for older children/teens as a whole) can be really difficult (although there is a list of HE-friendly childminders). HE can literally be a life-line for some children and young people and the government's plans as they stand will deny them their right to be HE-ed.

Nikki Haxell
Newsletter Co-ordinator



Diary of a Home-Educating Nobody

By Ross Mounthey

I've just been reading an article about Nature Tables. It's about a campaign to bring back the opportunity for children to bring their finds from the natural world for display and discussion in the classroom, like they used when we were little. With the constraints schools are under to fulfil a demanding academic curriculum nowadays these kinds of practical experiences are the ones that have become extinct in schools. But, never mind schools, there's no reason why we home educators can't have our own nature table!

Now this may sound all twee and Enid Blyton-ish but actually there's some really valuable reasons why we should encourage it for there are all sorts of unexpected benefits.

Firstly, the increase in experience of the natural world - a vital element to understanding the planet and consequently the care we need to take of it. Secondly the identification of species which surround us and which so many children are unable to name, or are even aware that they are there, right on their doorstep in some cases. And that goes for many of the parents too! Thirdly, this is a valuable part of any science curriculum. And fourthly, it gets children outdoors; it brings them into a natural environment which can have a huge impact on their behaviour, their well-being and their general health.

The article suggests how so many of today's children have a very scant knowledge of the natural world. They are

familiar with the term 'global warming' and are busy recycling, but cannot identify a blackbird or a bluebell. It's as if we've been so busy promoting the bigger picture we've forgotten the little pictures that start in the children's back yard and are the foundation of further understanding. Without this ground work the wider understanding is less likely to be lasting or valued and children are also less likely to understand their own relevance to this natural world too.

But the article also suggests that there is more to the children's experience of the natural world than just identifying species and being aware of their existence. One of the biggest benefits is to do with *exposure*.

Apparently, children who have regular contact with nature during their primary years will have an awareness that will stay with them for life. If they've had close experience with natural spaces as youngsters then that experience will have an impact on how they treat the planet later on. Children who are shut away in cloistered, clean, indoor environments, where dirt is bad and exploration scary, can sometimes become uncomfortable and even fearful in natural spaces because of lack of understanding. And they fail to experience the wealth of advantages that nature has on our physical, mental and spiritual well being.

I've written before about the effect of the outdoors on the children's moods when I did manage to prise them out. Moody, argumentative and hyper little aliens

become reasonable beings again after an episode outdoors. Their behaviour becomes less tense, and they have a tranquillity about them, and a sense of fulfilment which you never see in children's eyes when they are in front of a games console. I don't know whether you've ever been on holiday by the sea but you can often spot utterly contented children just happy to sit and play for hours in the sand, those that are not continually reprimanded for getting dirty that is! For our children have become too cloistered and cosseted, even imprisoned inside, in our attempts to over protect them from a world we're conditioning them to believe is threatening and full of dreaded bacteria. Yet being out in this muddy and jean-ripping world, exploring and discovering, and able to have some natural uncontrolled time, is exactly what does them good.

Time within the natural environment calms children down and physical activity increases intelligence. It can therefore have a good effect on their academic ability and concentration when they are required to undertake activities which are more academic and perhaps less appealing.

I appreciate that suggesting going for a walk can evoke the biggest groan from the children sometimes, absorbed as they usually are in the Nintendo. But actually, there are even better activities for them than walking.

If you get toggged up against the weather, arm yourself with picnic, snacks, hot and cold drinks and friends if possible, get out into a natural environment where you can

set up 'base camp', i.e., picnic bench, clearing in a wood, rug on the ground, park or whatever, and stay put, the children can then go off and play, build dens, explore, gather bits for ID, or just play war games as they inevitably do. They far prefer to spend time like this, when you stay in one place and they can keep checking in, because they can have a little independence and play with their mates instead of the dreaded 'walking'. And all the time they will be gaining experience of being out in natural spaces, building their confidence and playing games that stretch their imaginations beyond computer gaming. And if you can manage not to put any of your anxieties upon them (for generally the children don't have these concerns until you mention it!) about getting dirty or muddy, ripping their clothes, falling over, getting scratched, bitten or stung, then they will have the best time ever and you will come home with contented, tired children.

I know that not everyone has easy access to natural spaces. But even cities offer similar opportunities in parks and play areas. Walking past front gardens is as good an opportunity for spotting wild things (you can often spot ants on the pavements) as walking down a lane and many of them have more hedges! There are riverbanks and canals, playgrounds and hanging baskets and other unexpected places to find wild life, like cemeteries for example. You don't necessarily have to live rurally - you just have to open your eyes.

Birds sing in cities and I see more foxes in London than I do where I live in the country, city parks often have more trees.

So why not give it a go and see if it works for you? Get exploring and adventuring. Make the natural world a regular experience for your children. And perhaps even start your own little nature table!

Ross Mountney

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NB: I'm sure you're aware that you should not be picking wildflowers, digging up plants, breaking branches or destroying trees or habitats - there should be chances to collect natural objects without resorting to that. But you might like to check out this website for more info: www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk and check your council website for local green spaces.

The Foundation Stage

It all started when I and my husband started visiting the county's primary schools for our son who was 3 and a half years old at that time. We're supposed to get him enrolled in a school of our preference.

At this stage, I think the readers must know about our background; we are from Pakistan, both are dentists graduating from private dental colleges studying in semi-private schools in one of the major cities of our country. And to our surprise when we visited those schools, we saw the conditions were so bad that even we both have studied in a relatively better environment, the rooms were so suffocated, not enough facilities to play different sports, and like all parents we're looking for the best environment for our son, if not the best then at least better than what we've been through because even we're in one of the better schools still we've typical complexes of not being in one of the top most schools of the city and therefore all blame of our short-comings went to our parents for not enrolling us in those top schools as we believe that a good foundation is made by a good school and I strongly believed it too.

The teacher of the state school mentioned that from grade 2, that is from the 3rd year of their school life there will be a computer in his class, yes just one computer in 20 children and every child will get the opportunity to sit in front of the computer without any separate instructor

once a month for the whole day to be able to get familiar with it.

All the school visits reminded us of the concept of an inspection in the government departments of our country. Whenever there is an inspection coming the whole building is renovated, new furniture is being bought, new staff hired and the best possible environment is created to impress members of the inspection committee!

So the very next day, we're looking into the options of private schools. When we went there for our first visit, it was like a dream world and we both were shocked to see the difference, the student-teacher ratio was less than half, the rooms were spacious and airy and luxurious, ideal facilities to play so many sports, one computer on 4 children from grade 1, in short the whole experience was delightful, a perfect place that we can think of for our child. Although it was involving so much of our savings still we decided to go for it for the betterment of our child thinking that we're doing the best for our son and providing him what our parents were unable to provide us, that is a good foundation by enrolling in a good school. He started the school in September last year and was not very happy from day one.

During the first week, as we told him all the good things about schools and he was looking forward to see all that, but what he

was experiencing and thinking in his small 4 year old mind was totally different.

On the very first day, he was supposed to put his sports kit on the peg and take out his shoes and wear plimsolls inside the class room which he refused to do, I thought this will be taken as a normal children's behaviour of being possessive about their belongings especially in an environment they are not familiar with. But to my disappointment it was not taken that way and I'd to force my child to put his things away from him.

On the second day of his school life he came home very much scared of something that happened during their play time: one boy told him to kick the other boy, he told me that he replied no he would not, the boy asked the third boy and he actually kicked the other boy very hard, I could see so much fear in his eyes when he was telling me all that, the next day was again a scary experience, this time not with other kids but with the teacher, he told me that the teacher was telling a story which I didn't liked at all, it was really scary. I thought I must discuss this with his teacher but I was not given enough time to talk to her although it is clearly mentioned in their policy that they welcome parents to talk to their child's teacher whenever they want.

It was this same first week when I started searching Google by writing 'alternate to school' and found out about EO and so much other work that is being going on and is legally allowed and an option to the

parents whether they decide to send their kids to school or teach them at home.

The school never told me that my child was upset especially in the afternoon and use to cry as he was missing his family; it was my son to tell that he was crying. It was so upsetting because whenever I use to call them to make sure he's doing well, I was told he must be fine otherwise they would have informed the operator and after my fourth consecutive phone call, I was being told (politely) that I should not call them anymore. The operator further explained that it is normal for kids to cry for their mothers and it's normal for mothers to react in this way because I'm not use to with all this as he's my first child and I'm going through this separation anxiety.

First Friday was a big relief for all the family and we'd a nice weekend together at home. On Sunday night, he came into my room at 2:00am saying that he don't want to go to school. This was not something normal for him as he sleeps very well and never wakes in between ever since I stopped breastfeeding him. I promised him that I'll ask his teacher to reduce his time.

The next morning we reach school and he refused to go inside. I went in to see the teacher and mentioned about the early morning incident and suggested to reduce his time till lunch break as he's not used to of being away from me for so long, he has never being to any day care and was just use to go to nursery school for 2 and a half hours every day.

Switching from 2 and a half to 7 hours is a big change for him. The teacher after consulting her colleague finally agreed on picking him up at 1pm. I came out of the class room hoping that he'll agree to this proposal but he still refused to go in, the teacher came out and said this happens mostly with other kids as well specially on Mondays that kids don't feel like coming to school as they enjoy their time at home over the weekend and they want to last this for long.

Anyway after that, one of the most painful experience so far because of what happened afterwards when my son still refused to go inside, the teacher picked him up forcefully and started dragging him towards the classroom, my son who was already so upset and crying started screaming and shouting and was saying just one thing I want to go to my amma (mummy), I just couldn't take it, that incident is still fresh in my mind and I'm still shaking while writing this down, it was not something acceptable for me and my son at all.

I asked the teacher if we do this with him he'll never feel comfortable coming here, can I come along and make him settle in his class and then I'll leave. The teacher agreed unwillingly and said we don't encourage parents to come inside as this further increase the separation time. I left the class room in 5 minutes after settling him down. Every day from then on, was an unhappy day for all of us even at home.

The next week (third week), I witnessed something very unusual for me: while I was waiting in the car park as my husband went to pick him up at 1pm, I saw some kids playing around, they're around 7 boys and 2 girls all aged approx. 12 years, they're playing around in usual way and then suddenly they picked one boy, knocked him down and started kicking him in his tummy, he was screaming but his voice was not being heard because of other children's laughter. They did this for long until he was in tears and decided to leave them. When I mentioned this to my husband, he said it is not something unusual, yes he's right but I thought this is something that is usual for all the schools but we're here talking about a county's best private school, a grammar school of the town.

I'm not in a position to compare the standard of education between today's school standard in UK and what I've experienced as a child when I was in school in Pakistan, but what I've experienced so far and what I'm observing teenager's attitude on streets for more than 4years of my stay in UK, and what I'm reading in newspapers and seeing on media is more than enough for me to make my decision of taking him out of school as I've a choice of educating him in school or otherwise. During these days there was an open day by EO in London which we decided to attend before making our final move. We gathered all the courage that was needed before leaving that building to take the required action as every parent we met was happy with their decision and was very

helpful and encouraging in our case, finally a lecture by a former teacher with all the convincing research data has done the trick for us. My thanks to all the EO volunteers who're there on that open day, it was certain a great help for us.

The following week (4th week) we took the appointment to see the head teacher and when we mentioned about our concern, her only remark was that your child is very shy and you'll isolate him further by taking him out of school. I tried to explain her that he's not shy, he takes his time and he only speaks when he is comfortable with the environment and also with the people he is speaking to, and I call this attitude of any child his age as being sensitive not shy. Finally when we left her office, we're reminded that as per their policy, we've to pay for one full term fees and so we did, his name is legally on their register until today, April 2008, and the head teacher insisted to send him till that time but he only went for 3 more days.

No regrets of spending more than £5000 in all this but during these 6 months at home, our life is totally different, there are no more screaming and shouting and crying for getting up for school, no more unfinished breakfasts he has gain weight in all these months, no more disturb nights, he is my laughing, playing, jumping around child back in his original form. It's not that I'm not concern about his education instead I'm even more involved, I've not checked the national curriculum yet as I feel it's too early at this stage to go according to that, we're doing this which he's interested

in, like for example, he asked me how to read the time, so I bought a teaching wall clock and started telling him the time, it took him hardly a month before he could read the time accurately, he's interested in cutting, pasting, painting and colouring, he can count till 100 and write till 20 and he can also do some simple addition and subtraction sums, he can write A-Z but gets confused between M and W and writes 9 as P, he is very much disciplined with time restricted cartoon watching and doing any such academic activities but of his own choice for an hour or so. I've made a schedule which I don't force on him but try to follow as much as he likes, there are no more scary stories involving skeleton and monsters coming at night from a bedroom window instead every night they've their story time enjoyed with their father telling silly, interesting, funny and educational stories to them.

He loves to go for swimming and enjoys pedalling his bicycle along with his father, and the rest of the day is spend playing and jumping around with his 2 year old little brother. He wants to become a dentist as well and tells me that I'll go to university to become a dentist like you and dad so that I can help others who are in pain and I'll do filling in their teeth.

I would like to congratulate EO for making all these efforts of helping other families like mine. Although my relatives thinks that it is the most silliest decision I've ever made and also told me that by doing this I think that I'll be able to make him my slave, so in other words they themselves

agrees that a child does get trapped in this system. I'm his mother, loves him more than words can express.

I don't want him to become my slave rather I want to give him such an environment in his early learning age that no one can make him slave for their own interests. I was wrong that a good foundation can be given by simply enrolling the child in a good school. For a good foundation, the child must be given a loving, caring, and friendly atmosphere which is best possible at home with his parents who love him unconditionally.

It is the parents and the immediate family that can make that foundation's pillars so firm that a child can build upon these pillars and lift them up in his life ahead.

Foundation stage is not for schools, it is for the parents for as long as they and their children feel like continuing willingly.

The best environment for a child of foundation stage is the happy environment of home. Hats off to all those who are doing their utmost to give a good foundation to their children, it shows how much you care for them and love them. It might be too early for me to say anything about my experience of home education but all I'm trying to do is to put my efforts to give him a solid foundation to build upon. No doubt, HOME EDUCATION is THE REAL OPTION!!

Mrs. Riffat Fatima

New Booklet With This Newsletter

The old-style annual Members Handbook has now been replaced by a new format booklet which serves as a general introduction to home education for new members. The new reference booklet also gives information about the organisation of Education Otherwise.

Much of the information in the new booklet is also available on the Education Otherwise website www.education-otherwise.org.uk but we are aware that some of our members do not have access to the Internet and may in any event prefer a hard copy for reference.

Since this is the first year we are introducing the new format booklet we are very interested in feedback from members about what else they would like to see in the booklet next year.

Please email wpec@education-otherwise.org or write to: Education Otherwise, WPEC, PO Box 325, Kings Ln. PE34 3XW.

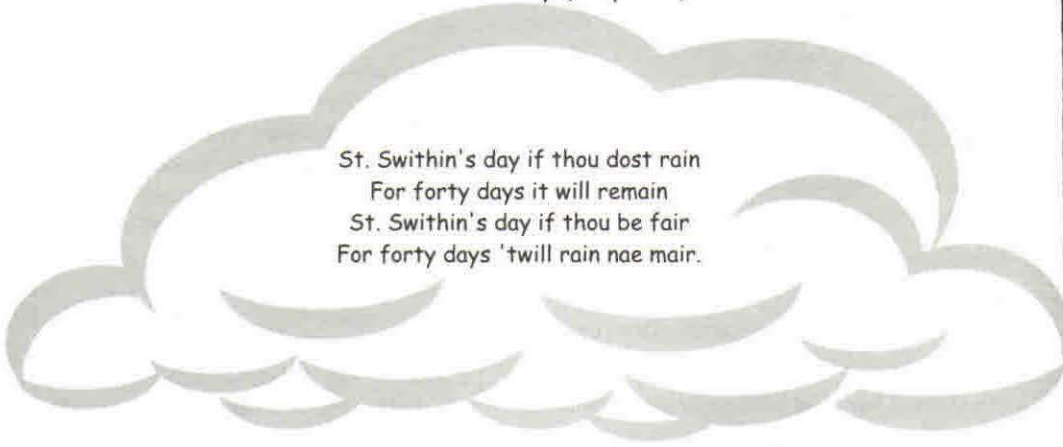
Update to 2008 Concessions Listing

LONDON - Tower of London

The concessions listing is incorrect for this attraction, admission is **not free**. EO members are eligible for the concessionary rate for schools of £3.50. They must provide evidence of EO membership and book 6 weeks in advance. £3.50 for 5 to 15 year olds, one adult free per 10 children and £14.40 for extra adults. Available term-time only.

Tel: 08707 515191 for booking pack.

St. Swithins Day (July 15th)



St. Swithin's day if thou dost rain
For forty days it will remain
St. Swithin's day if thou be fair
For forty days 'twill rain nae mair.

St. Swithin (Swithun) was a Saxon Bishop of Winchester and legend says that as he lay dying, he asked to be buried in a humble grave outside the north wall of Winchester cathedral so that the 'sweet rain of heaven' could fall upon his grave. He died in 862AD.

The monks of Winchester felt that this wasn't a suitable resting place for a Bishop, so on July 15th 971 they moved his grave to a more ornate shrine. According to the legend there was a heavy rain storm during the ceremony and for 40 days and nights after. It was believed that the rains were caused by St. Swithun weeping over being moved. This led to the belief that should it rain on St. Swithun's Day, then it will rain for the next 40 days (ending on St. Bartholomews Day) and if it be fine weather, than this will also continue for the next 40 days.

However, the Met Office has tested the myth of 55 occasions and each time 40 days of similar weather has not followed.

The French have two similar proverbs: "S'il pleut le jour de St. Médan" (8th June), "il pleut quarante jours plus tard;" and "S'il pleut le jour de St. Gervais" (19th June), "il pleut quarante jours après."

To mark St Swithin's Day you could investigate similar sayings.

"Red sky at night, shepherd's delight, red sky in the morning, shepherd's warning," Has some truth in it. The sky appears red due to dust particles or dray air. In the UK, weather systems move mostly from West to East, so a red sunrise indicated wet weather coming from the West, whilst a red sunset would indicate dry weather coming from the West.

Another saying is: "If there is fog accompanied by wind, expect rain." Again, when wind and fog occur the likely cause is the approach of a front, implying rain.

There are many other 'wise weather sayings' around:

- April showers bring May flowers.

- When the chairs squeak, it's of rain they speak.
- When dew is on the grass, rain will never come to pass.
- Red sky at night is a sailor's delight. Red sky in morning - sailor take warning. Apparently this is an American proverb with the European version substituting 'shepherd' for 'sailor'.
- If you live in Wales and you build dry stone walls, the rainy weather always appalls.
- When a halo rings the Moon or Sun, rain's approaching on the run.
- Rainbow to windward foul fall the day. Rainbow to leeward, rain runs away.
- If the day starts cloudy, once there is a patch of clear blue sky big enough to make a sailor a pair of trousers, the weather will improve.
- If you can see Howth Head from Dublin, it's going to rain. If you can't, it is raining¹.
- St Swithins day if it dost rain, for 40 days 'twill remain. St Swithins day if thou be fair, for 40 days 'twill rain nae more.
- Oak before Ash, in for a splash. Ash before Oak, in for a soak².
- If St Paul's day (29 June) be fair and clear, it does betide a happy year. But if it chance to snow or rain, then will be dear all kinds of grain. If clouds or mists do dark the sky, great store of birds and beasts shall die. And if the winds do file aloft, then war shall vex the kingdom oft.
- If Candlemas day (2 February) be dry and fair, the half o' winters to come and mair. If Candlemas day be wet and foul, the half o' winter's gane at Yule.
- When the rooster crows on the heap of dung the weather will change or stay as it is³.
- Aiming a raspberry at the sky will lead to crop failure.

Some further ideas:

Using a Cricket as a Thermometer

In the evening when crickets are in the cool grass, count the number of chirps they make in 14 seconds and that will be the Fahrenheit temperature in their location (the temperature may be different where you are standing).

Using a Pine Cone to Measure Humidity

Put a pine cone outside where you can observe it from time to time. It will change when the humidity increases because it closes up in moist weather to protect the seeds.

Using Seaweed to Measure Humidity

Certain types of seaweed can be used to measure the humidity. In the UK there is a type called lace seaweed, a single, long strand of seaweed, looking a lot like a bootlace. Hang this up in a sheltered area and as the humidity rises the seaweed becomes damp, slimy and pliant, as humidity drops it becomes hard and brittle.

Sources:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/weather/features/stswithin_isobellang.shtml

<http://www.newadvent.org>

<http://www.bartleby.com/81/16141.html>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/A641305>

The Underground City by Anne Forbes

£5.99 ISBN 978-086315-637-3

This is the third book about the Macarthurs and the best one so far. This one concentrates on Prince Casinir, the Djinn father of Price Kalman. The villain in the previous two books is trying to find his son after being locked in a well for forty years. He escapes the well by taking over the body of a kid who is dared to spend the night at the well.

While all this is happening Neil has gone to Mary Kings Close on a school trip (Mary Kings Close is near to the city that Edinburgh is built on) and is trying to help the ghosts. They are afraid that two bank robbers are going to let out the plague people (the ghosts of the people who died of the plague). I won't tell you how this all turns out, I'll let you read the book. If you like Harry Potter this is totally different but still a very good read, 10/10.

Keith (14)

"My Shadow" by Robert Louis Stevenson

I have a little shadow that goes in and out
with me,
And what can be the use of him is more
than I can see.

He is very, very like me from the heels up
to the head;
And I see him jump before me, when I
jump into my bed.

The funniest thing about him is the way he
likes to grow—
Not at all like proper children, which is
always very slow;
For he sometimes shoots up taller like an
India-rubber ball,
And he sometimes gets so little that
there's none of him at all.

He hasn't got a notion of how children
ought to play,
And can only make a fool of me in every
sort of way.

He stays so close beside me, he's a
coward you can see;
I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that
shadow sticks to me!

One morning, very early, before the sun
was up,
I rose and found the shining dew on every
buttercup;
But my lazy little shadow, like an errant
sleepy-head,
Had stayed at home behind me and was
fast asleep in bed.

Calling all children with Internet Access!

EO would like to invite you to the new children's forum. It will be a safe place for children to chat and exchange ideas and fun. To join get your parents to send an email to childrensforum@education-otherwise.org asking for an invitation. The email should include your family name, your email address (if different), postcode and either the EO membership number or the first line of the postal address. The EO Children's Forum Group will then send you information about how the forum will work and an invitation to join.

From the EO Children's Forum Group

Wanted for future Newsletters

Have you got a HE story to share?

If so, why not send it into the Newsletter? Feedback to the Newsletter shows that people like reading about other people's experiences and what may be seemingly 'mundane' to you and your family, is very likely of interest to other people and a common question by people new to HE is, "But what do you DO?"

Quite a few of the online HE blogs occasionally do a 'Day in the life of...' and it would be great to see some of these in the Newsletter too. So if you'd like to get your camera out, take a few pics and write a few words - nothing onerous, just a little diary of what you've done in a day, please send it in, we'd love to include some day-to-day HE experiences.

Different Approaches to HE

We all know that family's approaches to HE are diverse. It would be interesting to include family's different approaches to HE. Are you interested in Montessori? Steiner? Autonomous Ed? Classical? Why not write about how your family approaches HE and include any suggestions for resources that other families can use to find out more about that approach if they are interested?

Also, if a large factor of you home-educating is your religious beliefs, it would be good to hear how HE fits in with, and is an important part of, your faith.

HE and working

We'd also like to hear about any experience you have, positive or negative, of HE-ing and doing paid or voluntary work. What do you do? How do you balance your day? Do you use childcare?

It would also be good to hear from young people who have set up business whilst being HE. What do you do? Have you had any support to set up your business?

Summer fun

With summer truly here at last, many of you will be off out and about around the country (enjoying the sunshine - hopefully!) Why not write about any visits you've made? Include a couple of pictures (if you have any). It would be great to include reviews of places to visit around the country which might be of interest to other home-educators.

Don't forget, we welcome any other articles for consideration for inclusion that you think will be of interest to members.

Send your articles in to articles@education-otherwise.org or nlco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org.

Why not celebrate the Solstice by making the following:

Lavender Biscuits

INGREDIENTS

- 140 g butter
- 100 g white sugar
- 1 egg
- 5 g lavender flowers
- 190 g all-purpose flour
- 100 g colored sugar for decoration (optional)
- 5 g lavender flowers

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Grease baking sheets.
2. Cream together the butter and sugar. Beat the egg, and blend into the butter and sugar. Mix in the lavender flowers and the flour. Drop batter by teaspoonfuls onto baking sheets.
3. Bake 15 to 20 minutes, or until golden. Remove biscuits to cooling racks, and sprinkle with decorative sugar and additional lavender flowers if desired.

Source:

<http://allrecipes.com/Recipe/Lavender-Cookies/Detail.aspx>

Home-made Lemonade

INGREDIENTS

- 4 lemons, juiced
- 945 ml water
- 100 g white sugar

DIRECTIONS

1. In a 2 quart pitcher, combine the lemon juice, water and sugar.
2. Stir until sugar is dissolved.
3. Chill in refrigerator



Other ideas:

Cut out sun shapes in cardboard or clay and decorate with gold glitter or paint (also in yellows and oranges). You can string them up to glitter in the sunshine whilst you enjoy the longest day.

Make a faery shelter from a small box and decorate it with sticks, stones, fallen leaves (and maybe the odd picked daisy or dandelion - but please don't pick other wild flowers unless you're sure they're in abundance). Place it outside and leave out milk and honey for the faeries.

Get outside into the sun, go for a picnic in the park, or in the woods and enjoy your lavender biscuits and home-made lemonade.



Thank you

What a good response so far to my little request for some teen 'Reviewers' of book chapters on a science based story. The feedback has certainly kept me busy! I'm most impressed with the success and motivation of HE young people and their self-confident enthusiasm. Keep it up, that's really good for the HE scene - far above the 'schooled' lethargy, yet again. Anyone I've missed replying to (there might be one or two, you know what a disorganised lot some of us are), please post a little 'come on' reminder!

Many thanks,
Ken Smith

I would just like to say a big 'WELL DONE' to (Issue 180, Feb 08) EO Children's Pages by Lizzi Armstrong.

The layout was very professional and eye-catching. Our son found the content interesting and he has sent away for the RSPB Award Scheme. With 16 pages it was a substantial read, instead of the usual small number of 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, especially education. If EO slightly changes then that's great, as it will no doubt reach out to more people than ever to help them with their rights / choices.

As an EO member going on eleven 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 etc.

We look forward to the future of EO

Many thanks and best wishes,
Leanne Wallace and Tony Osgerby,
2 Westgarth Gardens, Cauton,
Scarborough YO11 3SF

Making EO more democratic

It is self-evident that the ancient M&A need revising. They were drawn up when EO was a far smaller organisation which had meetings round the campfire or kitchen table. They were drawn up before the internet.

Ironically it was easier to get 20 people at a General Meeting to make it quorate in 1988 than it is in 2008. In the 21st Century we have been lucky to be quorate (20 people present) at a meeting. Anyone who thinks that EO is democratic should go and look at the minutes of Open Trustee Meetings in the members forum.

The organisation might have 4,000+ member families but over 3,900 of those families have probably never attended a meeting and will never attend a meeting. These families need a voice and we can give them a voice by introducing a postal vote system.

It is misplaced nostalgia to think that if we keep the rules for that period then we somehow can return to The Golden Age of EO. I know it is really boring to think about the Governing Document for EO and to fill out the Signed Up Members Form and find someone who is going to the meeting (for example one of the Trustees listed on the inside back page of the Newsletter) and appoint them as your proxy (sorry, another form to fill in !) and everyone has got more important things to do but if members do it just this once then we will

never have to ask them to do it again.

At present we have the extraordinary situation where 6 members of EO are inadvertently holding up the modernisation and effective governance of the entire organisation, possibly because so few members understand the issues or the present voting system. That just doesn't feel democratic to me.

There were 39 votes in favour of the new M&A in London and 22 votes against and Company Law says we need a 75% majority for change, which would have required 45 votes in favour instead of 39.

If any member gets in touch with me I'd be happy to explain the SUMs and proxy voting system and which pieces of paper have to be filled in and where they have to be sent so that members can set up a vote on the amended M&A now.

Members who have no intention of going to a voting meeting in person can now have "open" or "closed" proxies, which means that EITHER you ask the person at the meeting to vote the same way for you as they are doing for themselves OR you tell them which way you want them to vote. (You mark this by an x on the proxy form).

You don't have to digest reams of documents and weigh up the arguments at this stage; all you have to do is set yourself up so you are able to cast a vote.

Fiona
Trustee Education Otherwise
Chair EO Government Policy Group
Member of Education Otherwise Disability Group

205 Leverton Gardens, Sheffield
S11 8FD ~ fiona_j_nicholson@yahoo.co.uk
0114 2751142

Open Trustee 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. Some places available on a first-come-first-served basis.

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.

The next OTM will be 6th September 2008, Durham. More information in the August newsletter.

News from the Disability Group

Disability Group Round-up

These last few months have again been busy for us. We have responded to two more consultations. We made a pointed response to the Valuing People Now: from progress to transformation which was a DCSF consultation where EO Disability Group highlighted the lack of services for disabled children in the transition years to adult services.

We also responded to the DCSF consultation Aiming High for Disabled Children which looked at Children's Services. We know they got and read our response because they had forgotten how to open pdf files. This meant that they had a couple extra emails from us so hopefully it will stick in their heads and they will remember that there are children who are not in schools that also need to access these services.

The DG sent a briefing paper to the Institute for Public Policy Research about and to the Children's Commissioner following the IPPR seminar hosted by Sir Al Aynsley Green in early April.

Disability issues have been raised at various meetings by members of the DG and GPG: disability issues were raised at Children Missing Education meeting with DCSF; disability issues were raised at meeting about new internal assessments with Government exam regulators; disability and SEN issues were raised with ministers and top civil servants at Time to Talk regional events in early March; disability and SEN issues were raised at meeting with lead civil servant in welfare reform policy dealing with moving lone parents off income support and on to Jobseeker's allowance. Fiona Nicholson who is a member of EO Government Policy Group as well as being a member of EO Disability Group has been instrumental in bringing awareness to all these meetings.

EO Disability Group arranged for Alexander Roarke, EO Trustee and parent of SEN children to attend the Westminster Forum seminar in March to raise awareness of home education for children with special educational needs. The meeting was chaired by John Bercow MP of the Bercow Review into Speech and Language Provision.

<http://www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk/mediaforum/>

The Disability group liaises with the EO Government Policy Group, and two members of the Disability Group are also Trustees, bringing disability and SEN issues into the mainstream in EO government policy work and in EO itself.

On Friday April 25 Jennifer managed to hand a letter on behalf of EO to Tony Attwood at a workshop put on by him and colleague Michelle Garnett. (see write up elsewhere). We have asked Tony to make a statement that says that it is okay to home educate children on the Autistic Spectrum that can be used with other professionals. Many parents find that when

they de-register their children from school, their children are so much more relaxed and happy, but then trouble starts all over again when paediatricians and social workers start saying that these children should return to school to be 'socialised'. Hopefully a statement from Tony Attwood will allay any worries they have about home education.

We do have a few consultations and reports coming up, one of them concerning Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII) <http://tinyurl.com/26t9u3> which is the new MSBP. Too many parents are still being accused of harming their children so we are hoping to express the view that home educating a child does not put them in increased risk of harm.

There is still lots to do and if you would like to find out more about the work of our group contact Jennifer on disabilityawareness@education-otherwise.org

Most of the Disability Group's work and discussions are conducted via email, which we find is the least intrusive way for parents of disabled children to combine home education and caring responsibilities with making a contribution volunteering for EO.

Jennifer Skillen

disabilityawareness@education-otherwise.org

Asperger's Syndrome Workshop Review

On Friday April 25 I settled my son in with his dad for the day, and set off to the bi-annual workshop put on by our local autistic support group given by Tony Attwood. He used to live round here so he always makes sure that he stops by on his world tours. This year he brought a colleague Dr Michelle Garnett to present with him. She has been working with him for 15 years, most recently at their Australian clinic Hearts and Minds.

<http://www.mindsandhearts.net/>

As you can imagine this led to not only an interesting and informative talk, but also a really amusing and uplifting day.

Tony started the day by going through some of the basic criteria and behaviours of Asperger's Syndrome (AS). One of the most interesting was the results of their recent research. They found that there

are five coherent and reliable dimensions of Asperger's Syndrome: perspective-taking difficulties, difficulties in both understanding and expressing emotions, sensory sensitivity, fact orientation, and rigidity in thinking.

The new piece of the puzzle is the sensory sensitivity which is not found in any other diagnostic criteria for AS. They have recommended that this be added to future diagnostic criteria, and pointed out that the adults that they work with usually say that the most difficult thing to deal with as an adult is the sensory issues. <http://www.mindsandhearts.net/research.html>

There is often talk about how many other conditions such as dyslexia and dyspraxia are co-morbid to AS, and they indeed found a very high rate of children had problems in these areas. 75% of children with AS have problems with handwriting,

50% had problems with motor clumsiness and very high numbers (over 80%) had problems with time management and organisational skills.

They had an interesting take on reading, writing and math. Attwood specifically said that if a child isn't reading by age 12, then give up trying to teach them. There is no point in flogging a dead horse. They said that same for math. If they have problems understanding math then just teach it as life skills, and if a child isn't mastered hand writing by age 8, then go straight to keyboard skills.

This is something that many home educators already do so it was good to have this endorsed by the expert himself.

Attwood is broadly in favour of home education if school isn't working out. He has the same views on socialisation. In fact, I thought for a minute he had been listening to us as he made the comment that we heard so often from home educators: When are we ever in a room with people whose birth dates are six months either side of us!

In the afternoon they went on to talk about the teen years. In their research they spend a lot of time observing teens in their natural environment, or 'stalking' as they jokingly called it. Michelle was particularly funny in her description of teen boys being the most toxic animals in Australia! It was felt that if AS teens are not getting on with their peers, then there is no reason why they shouldn't socialise with much older people. Again, they had the view that many home educators have

that you don't have to socialise with peers only, and sometimes it is best for AS teens to be with much older people, and wait until their peers grown up and become more sociable and human again.

They also talked about sexuality and AS. They stressed that it was very important to explain very clearly to these children in advance of puberty what to expect, and to do it on a one to one basis so that there is no room for ambiguity. They cited the young AS person who didn't think they could get pregnant because they hadn't slept with their girlfriend. He had taken literally the phrase 'sleeping with' and as he hadn't slept with his girlfriend, but only had sex with her, he thought he was okay!

Hygiene was also a hot topic, and they said that it won't work to point out to the teen that they smell and that it will upset people. They don't do emotions and so won't care. The best way to approach it is to teach them the science behind it. Tony suggested that you tell them about bacteria growing on sweat, and it is the bacteria farting that makes the smell and if you don't wash it off you can get ill. Appeal to the science side of things, not the emotional side of things.

There is so much more I would like to share with you, but there isn't enough room here. If you would like to read my notes you can find them in the disability section of the forum, http://www.education-otherwise.org/forum/forum_posts.asp?TI D=2092 or you can email me on jskillen@education-otherwise.org and I will forward them to you.

Jennifer Skillen

Learning Through Obsessions

Some children are oppositional. If you say the sky is blue they will say no. If you ask them if they would like some chocolate, they will say no, then tell you they want three pieces. If you say it is time to do something educational, well, forget it!

Often children on the Autistic Spectrum are oppositional. This may seem like a double dose of bad news, but actually you can use this to your advantage.

Ram, who has Asperger's Syndrome, is oppositional and totally obsessed with Lego Bionicle. He eats, sleeps and dreams Bionicle. Yes, we eat with Bionicles at the table, he sleeps with some by his bed and he definitely dreams about them too.

But all is not lost because there is a lot of education going on here too. He has improved his reading no end by spending time on the BZPower website. (<http://www.bzpower.com/>) Because the Bionicle Universe is made up, many of the words used are also make up and Ram has had to learn how to pronounce them. Of course he wouldn't have to pronounce them if he didn't read them aloud, but he does that a lot because he feel that I need to know about it too! In fact reading aloud has improved as well, as he is learning to read aloud with expression.

He is also getting some social skills improvement out of it too, as he has discovered the forums. Although he isn't ready to post he does spend a lot of time reading them and learning how people can communicate, and what is acceptable.

The usual side of Lego is not neglected either, as he also spend lots of time putting together new Bionicle creatures. His manual dexterity is improving, and he is getting a good eye for what colours go together; lots of purposive conversation about colour mixing. All his creating is also helping his sequencing skills. When he makes a new Bionicle he likes to explain it too me, and to do this he needs to explain it so that I will understand what is going on. If he just launches into something without starting at the beginning then I can stop him and get him to start again.

He has also learned the joy of reading books! He has gone from a boy who is happy to read computer screens but refused to read books, to devouring books, to the exclusion of eating and playing on the computer. <http://tinyurl.com/6hxkt8>

However, in common with Aspies, he can't carry this over to other things. He has no interest in reading anything else. I just hope that Lego bring out the next few books soon so that Ram can read some more.

So while being oppositional and having Aspergers at the same time may seem like a life sentence, by allowing Ram to follow his obsessive, I am not only getting him to educate himself, he is enjoying it too!

Abbie Green
abbieramgreen@aol.com

Government Plans for Home-educating Lone Parents on Income Support

By Fiona Nicholson, Home-educating single parent and Chair of the EO Government Policy Group

The Newsletter editor is going to squeeze this article in about lone parents on Income Support even though I am sending it way past the deadline for contributions. Thank you Nikki!

We were hanging on as long as possible so that we could bring the very latest news. This is the state of play as of May 9th.

The bad news is that the Government still apparently intends that lone parents on Income Support should be moved to Jobseeker's Allowance when the youngest child is 7. This will be introduced in stages from the end of 2008, initially when the youngest child is 12 by November 2008, decreasing to 7 by November 2010.

According to my Lone Parent Advisor, the current proposed date for introducing this is November 24th 2008 for new claimants, with existing claimants being moved over Christmas and the New Year. The main feature of Jobseeker's Allowance is that the claimant has to be available to take up a job offer of 16 hours a week. If this condition is not met, then the benefit can be cut.

The good news is that the Government has finally recognised Education Otherwise as a stakeholder in this debate and has belatedly recognised home education as a policy issue.

The big question mark is over whether home educators will be allowed to remain on Income Support.

If they are not permitted to remain on

Income Support, we have a lot of issues which need resolving around whether children can be left at home alone and whether suitable childcare could ever be found if the lone parent is to be forced into paid work outside the home. This all comes under the broad category of "flexibilities in the JSA regime".

On May 7th the Department of Work and Pensions formally referred new draft regulations on Income Support entitlement and the new Jobseeker's Allowance regime to the Government's Social Security Advisory Committee. This is the last stage of the process before new regulations are debated and voted in parliament by the summer recess on July 22nd.

Apparently SSAC requested additional information to support the draft regulations. By the time you read this the consultation should be open. Education Otherwise is formally recognised as a stakeholder and home education is now acknowledged as a policy issue. Education Otherwise Campaign site will continue to bring the latest news to the home education community.

Education Otherwise Government Policy Group and EO Disability Group have also written jointly to Minister Stephen Timms urging him to add home educating lone parents to the category of claimants who will be entitled to remain on Income Support because of additional caring responsibilities.

*Letter to Minister Stephen Timms Friday
May 2nd 2008:*

Dear Minister

I had a meeting this morning with Richard Caborn to discuss the Government's plans to move lone parents off Income Support and on to Jobseeker's Allowance.

On Tuesday I met for 2 hours with Alison Durbin, DWP Head of the Parents Employment Division Work, Welfare and Equality Group to discuss the same issue.

I have also spoken at some length with Gill Saunders of the Social Security Advisory Committee.

Education Otherwise supports the Government's aims to eradicate child poverty by 2020 which is why I am writing to you as a matter of urgency because the current plan to put home educating lone parents onto Jobseeker's Allowance will force many hundreds of children below the poverty line.

If home educating lone parents were to be moved on to Jobseeker's Allowance they would not be available for work because of their caring and teaching responsibilities. They would therefore be in breach of JSA regulations and their family income would be reduced by £60.50 a week.

Education Otherwise Government Policy Group and Education Otherwise Disability Group therefore recommend that lone parents who home educate must be allowed to remain on Income Support because of their additional caring responsibilities and because they make a vital contribution to society raising and educating children who for one reason or another do not fit into the state system.

Home education is not a lifestyle choice;

for many of our children it is quite literally a lifeline.

I have supplied Alison Durbin with background material which I understand she will shortly be bringing to your attention. Richard has also said that he will be speaking to Alison as soon as possible. I understand from Alison that the draft regulations will be presented to the next meeting of the Social Security Advisory Committee on May 7th.

I would be happy to answer any further questions the Department has on this matter.

I look forward to hearing from you

Fiona Nicholson

Trustee Education Otherwise, Chair
Education Otherwise Government Policy
Group, Member of Education Otherwise
Disability Group

At the time of writing I am waiting for confirmation from Downing Street for my public petition that asks the Minister to allow home educating lone parents to remain on Income Support. If the application is successful, the deadline for the petition will be early July, which is before the next issue of the Newsletter. I am closing the petition early in order to push for a response from the Department and will give the URL on the EO Campaign Site. If you have access to the internet, please visit EO Campaign website for the latest news. You can also sign up to get instant automatic emails when the site is updated and you can add the campaign site to your RSS feeds.

[http://www.freedomforchildrentogrow.org
/update.php](http://www.freedomforchildrentogrow.org/update.php)

[http://www.freedomforchildrentogrow.org
/lone.htm](http://www.freedomforchildrentogrow.org/lone.htm)

GCSES from 2011: Changes to Coursework

Education Otherwise Government Policy Group has been investigating what will happen when coursework is replaced with "controlled assessments."

If you have access to the internet, you can read more background information about this on the Education Otherwise Campaign Website Freedom for Children to Grow

<http://www.freedomforchildrentogrow.org/qa.htm>

Some home educating families have heard rumours about coursework being scrapped but they may think that this means our young people will just be able to sit extra exams. But this is not how it is going to work.

GCSEs are divided into components for external and internal assessment. For a very few subjects, there will be 100% external assessment in the form of examinations. However, for most GCSE subjects there will be a balance of external exams and internal assessment. It is the arrangements for internal assessment which are being changed, with the Government directing that coursework is to be abolished and replaced by controlled assessments.

The first year this will happen is when candidates are sitting exams in summer 2011. In the school system, the first teaching for the new specifications will take place from September 2009 and then it will run for 2 years before it affects final exams in summer 2011. Exam boards are currently in discussion with QCA and JCQ as to how these regulations will be interpreted by different boards in different subjects.

English and maths are different. They are seen as "gatekeeper" GCSE subjects, since progression to the Level 3 frequently (though of course not always) depends on having GCSE maths and English. Maths won't have any internal assessment components and reform of English GCSEs will be a year behind the main schedule, with the first change occurring in summer 2012. Some science subjects are also outside the main GCSE internal assessment reform programme, since changes are already underway in these areas.

Since Autumn 2007 EO Government Policy Group have been in discussion with the Qualification and Curriculum Authority and the DCSF Home Education team about new assessments. In early April 2008 EO had a meeting in London with QCA and with the Director of the Joint Council for Qualifications. QCA maintains and develops the national curriculum and associated tests, assessments and examinations, while JCQ is the focal point for major awarding bodies, which includes individual examination boards such as Edexcel and AQA.

The purpose of the London meeting was to explore how controlled assessments could possibly work for home educated young people taking GCSEs. We took as our starting point the QCA controlled assessment regulations published in February 2008.

http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_16010.aspx

It is impossible to generalise accurately but to give a rough example, for subjects which have 60% controlled assessment this would represent an advisory figure of approximately 45 hours work to be

completed by the candidate as part of the internal assessment.

Obviously, the crux comes in the level of supervision required for the internal or controlled assessment. If home educated candidates had to complete the entire 45 hours work under the direct supervision of an invigilator-type person then this would make sitting exams as a private candidate a logistical nightmare and it would also be ridiculously expensive.

At the London meeting EO was keen to ask: what percentage of this work (ranging from 0% to 100%) was required to be completed under the highest level of supervision. We also wanted to set out some of the difficulties faced by home educated young people who are trying to take exams as private candidates.

At the meeting we said that from reading the QCA regulations it seemed that in the great majority of subjects there would be two tiers of supervision, formal and informal. We wanted to find common ground on the distinction between "the research or data gathering stage " and what might be termed "the writing up stage". It was agreed that it would not be possible to allocate a specific number of advisory hours to each stage, but since the level of required supervision is different for the two stages, this is something we will definitely need to explore further for private candidates. At first sight and after discussion at the meeting, it seems likely that the writing up stage might be around 3 hours out of a total of 15 for the entire unit.

We also considered in more general terms what "informal supervision" might mean in the context of home-based education. It is possible that the home educated candidate

might be able to complete the majority of the work at home and then sign a declaration to be countersigned by the parent affirming that the research is the candidate's own work. The candidate would then write up the research at the exam centre or possibly in some other context using webcam or other technology to ensure invigilation or mandatory direct supervision.

This would probably involve the home educating family building up a relationship with the exam centre. As a result of discussions at the meeting, the regulatory bodies and DCSF are now aware that home educating families do not generally have positive experiences with maintained schools and that this will be an issue in terms of "building a relationship with the exam centre." This would of course be particularly true if a child had been removed from school following difficulties for example around bullying or unmet Special Educational Needs, where any relationship between the school and the family might have completely broken down. EO may be able to find answers for some members via the independent sector, particularly in light of the January meeting with EO, HEAS, the Independent Schools Council and the DCSF Home Education team where we discussed the idea that the ISC might facilitate home educators' access to a national network of exam centres in independent schools.

EO Government Policy Group has also been speaking to NEC and to Oxford Home Schooling, both of whom are aware of the investigation and lobbying work that Education Otherwise has been doing in the area of controlled assessment. It is very useful for EO to have direct links with the main distance learning providers because

obviously we have common areas of interest.

We will keep members posted via the Newsletter and the EO Members Forum. To join the Members' Forum, send an email to forums@education-otherwise.org giving the following details :

- the name you would like to use on the forum
- your real name
- your email address
- your full postal address or EO membership number.

Fiona Nicholson

Chair Education Otherwise Government Policy Group

Member of Education Otherwise Disability Group

Trustee Education Otherwise

Children Missing Education (CME)

At the beginning of April members of Education Otherwise Government Policy Group, EO Disability Group and EO Media met with Sharon Pitchford, the lead policy maker in the DCSF for Children Missing Education in England. Denise Hunter and Iain Campbell, DCSF Elective Home Education team, also attended the meeting.

EO requested the meeting because we had concerns about local authorities' understanding of "Children Missing Education" and we also had a number of questions about how CME would tie in with the introduction and implementation of the children's national database (known as ContactPoint.)

The linking up of CME with ContactPoint is obviously significant to home educators

because the Department has previously implied that compulsory registration of home educated children was not necessary because effectively the job would be done by the "the children missing education database". ARCH explained in the last issue of the Newsletter how ContactPoint will work, taking basic information from Child Benefit records and then filling in the gaps from other local and national databases, including presumably the local authorities' records of home educated children and the Children Missing Education database of children for whom the educational setting is not known.

At the point of writing this article, we are still waiting for DCSF to get back to us on the question of whether the fact of a child's being home educated will go on ContactPoint automatically or whether there will be blank field until home education is entered manually at a later date. We have had emails from the Department confirming that they are chasing this up for us.

To give a bit of background to all this : in November 2006 EO Government Policy Group (Phil Hicks) made a major contribution the DfES consultation on Statutory Guidance for Children Missing Education in England. The Guidance was published in February 2007 and it sets out exactly what English local authorities are supposed to do in relation to home educated children and "Children Missing Education."

It was a battle which was well worth fighting. But now it seems as if it is making no difference on the ground. As EO told the DCSF, many English local authorities still seem frankly unaware of the statutory guidance. In addition, few

local authority departments have the money to pay £500 per delegate to attend the Capita Children Missing Education training conferences.

This is a link to the statutory guidance for England. It is around 30 pages long and well worth reading.

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources/IG00202/>

If you don't have access to the internet, you could try phoning Teachernet on **Telephone:** 0845 600 9506 and asking how you can obtain a copy. Alternatively, you could ask Sharon Pitchford for assistance. Sharon's contact details are

SHARON PITCHFORD
CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION
DCSF MOORFOOT
SHEFFIELD
S1

At the April meeting Sharon confirmed that "Children Missing Education" does not apply to home educated children in the sense that they are receiving education ie their educational status/education setting is known. Since it is a year from statutory guidance being published for England, EO and DCSF felt that there was a good case for an update or short summary to be circulated, confirming that partner agencies and other teams in the Children's Services should be aware of the statutory guidance from the department and we hope Sharon will be able to do this shortly.

EO also told DCSF that there was an issue with some local authorities such as Southend and Surrey saying that home educated children were "vulnerable" simply by the fact that they were not registered pupils at a school. The statutory guidance

is quite clear about which priority groups of children are to be regarded as vulnerable and home educated children are not on the list.

It turns out that in many local authorities the post of Children Missing Education officer has gone to a representative from the Education Welfare Services. EO indicated that this was a problem for our members, since EWOs sometimes did not know the basic facts about home education, for example that there was no legal duty to adhere to the National Curriculum, that parents did not have to be qualified teachers, that home education affords opportunities for socialisation and so on.

At the meeting EO also raised the issue of home education and special educational needs. Ann Newstead related how it had worked for her family when it came to de-registering her children and also in terms of undergoing the diagnostic procedure for Asperger's. EO explained that many home educated children on the autistic spectrum would not have a formal diagnosis of SEN since there was no assistance for children outside the school system so there was no point.

EO also explained that it is a common pattern for children to be de-registered after a complete breakdown of communication with the school and the local authority, with statements being refused or the extra assistance set out in the statement not being provided. This means that families with SEN child often have extremely bad experience of "the system". The family may now typically have a very low expectation of fair treatment and be exceedingly wary. At the same time, social services may be pressing for re-

entry to school to cure perceived socialisation issues.

The following examples of CME policy were given to the DCSF (this is not an exhaustive list)

1/ Southend

<http://www.southend.gov.uk/resources/childrenmissingeducationguidancejune2007.doc>

The COOS [Children out of School] panel has been given the responsibility for CME [Children Missing Education] cases (not on a school roll)

Pupils appearing on the panel agendas largely came from within the following groups:

EOTAS cases within the following categories:

1. the pupil has been legally removed from roll, an application has been made for EOTAS, but the initial monitoring visit has not taken place;
2. monitoring visit(s) has found the provision to be unsatisfactory; the parent has failed to respond to an annual monitoring visit request."

2/ Surrey

<http://tinyurl.com/2gc2r4>

"Children and Young People who are at risk of missing education"

These include: *Education by Parental Provision (EBPP)*" page 13 of Surrey's CME Policy. The Surrey guidance page 14 on *Education By Parental Provision* appears to say that when the authority becomes aware of children who are said to be home educated, the children will be logged as "at risk of missing education" and that they will remain in this category until provision

has been approved and the child is officially "registered".

3/ Brighton

http://education.brighton-hove.gov.uk/downloads/education/CME_draft_April_2006.doc

Brighton appears not to have updated its policy since a draft document in 2006. There is no recognition that statutory guidance was published on Children Missing Education in February 2007. Brighton's 2007 response to the Home Education Guidelines consultation stated: "We need to be able to ensure that the home education programme is happening before we can be sure they are not missing education."

4/ Lambeth

"The new duty under the Education and Inspection Act 2006 whereby the LA need to identify CME or in danger of ME is rather contradictory to the point in 2.7." DCSF Home Education Guidelines consultation response 2007.

5/ Leicestershire

"Para 2.6 on Children Missing Education is contradictory: the second sentence says that the LA duty to identify CME applies to those educated at home; the third sentence says that the duty does not apply to home-educated children. The duty to investigate possible CME seems fairly pointless if it does not cover all children who are out of school." DCSF Home Education Guidelines consultation response 2007.

6/ Nottinghamshire

"Even children who are said to be "educated at home" can actually miss out on an education. [...]"

In September 2007, a CME (Child Missing Education) officer will have been appointed to Nottinghamshire Local Authority's Children and Young People's Services to address these issues." DCSF Home Education Guidelines consultation response 2007.

Fiona Nicholson
Chair Education Otherwise Government
Policy Group
Member of Education Otherwise Disability
Group
Trustee Education Otherwise

Education Maintenance Allowance for Home Education

Education Otherwise Government Policy Group is in the preliminary stages of discussion with the Minister for Schools and with the Learning and Skills Council to find a way in which home educated young people in England and Wales can meet the criteria for receiving Education Maintenance Allowance. The Elective Home Education team at DCSF Darlington is also aware of these recent developments.

At the end of March EO GPG had a 2 hour meeting with senior policy makers from the LSC in England. The earliest possible implementation date for home educators' eligibility would be September 2009 because there are a lot of details which still need to be sorted.

In order to get EMA individual home educating parents would have to demonstrate that they meet the EMA criteria. We can't get agreement for "home education" to be an automatic category for EMA, but EO has now

established with the senior policy makers that there are ways round the system if we study the regulations in some detail and if we are prepared to jump through some admin and paperwork hoops. Some home educators will prefer not to do this for their own families but others will be interested to find out how their offspring can get £30 a week if they don't go to college or if they only go to college part time.

As some people may know, home educated young people in Scotland are already entitled to receive Education Maintenance Allowance. This was secured by Schoolhouse home education support organisation working with a supportive Member of the Scottish Parliament. We cannot make direct comparisons with Scotland because education in Scotland is devolved and EMA in Scotland operates quite differently but we can still use the example of Scotland to say where there is a will there is a way.

In England EMA payments are made through the Learner Support System payment package, whereas in Scotland EMA is paid through the local authority. Once again, this restricts the utility of comparing the Scottish system with the English system.

At the English LSC meeting we were advised that the purpose of EMA lay in trying to re-engage the disaffected and disengaged. Funding was intended to fund additional costs which had been free before the age of 16 - travel, books, meals. We were informed that the focus of EMA is shifting from being seen as an attendance allowance to rewarding improvements in behaviour and attitude on the part of the young learners. This

follows some very recent reviews into EMA, of which many of us were not previously aware.

EMA requires a minimum number of "guided learning hours". A full time course would be 450 guided learning hours or 12 hours per week. The guided learning hours only apply to courses leading to a Level 3 qualification or below. Level 4 courses eg at Higher Education level in Open University, would not be eligible for the 12 hours guided learning component of EMA.

We would not have to be studying for exams. The education provided could "lead to" Government accredited qualifications, in the sense that almost anything could "lead to" anything, if it put the learner in a better position than when he or she started. There does not have to be a qualification at the end, though there has to be evidence of PROGRESSION.

It should be noted that it would NOT be possible for the contract to be between the learner and an on-line provider of a course, because there is no external assessment of the provision.

The EO meeting focused on the EMA scheme requirements in detail, at the hurdles in extending the scheme to home education. EO and LSC explored comparisons with other models which satisfy EMA conditions.

An essential feature of EMA is the learning agreement. The learner is entering into a contract or learning agreement with the learning provider, in this case the parent. There is a possibility that the home educating parent could gain formal

recognition as a learning provider, providing that the parent participated in some form of accreditation process. This is where a lot of the fine-tuning will have to happen.

EO Government Policy Group is actively exploring options in this area and we will report back regularly to members eg via the newsletter and the EO Members Forum.

Watch this space.

Fiona Nicholson
Chair Education Otherwise Government Policy Group
Member of Education Otherwise Disability Group
Trustee of Education Otherwise

Safeguarding Children

We have a new Designated Safeguarding Children Officer (details under the EO Business Section) for EO members to call if they are unsure about phoning the NSPCC and are wondering what to do if they have concerns about the safety of a home educated child.

However, we would like to remind people that Safeguarding Children concerns should be reported to the:

NSPCC Helpline

Telephone No. 0800 800 5000.

If you are a child and you need someone to talk to, please contact:

Childline

Telephone: 0800 1111

EO has a Designated Safeguarding Children Person (DSCP)

The Trustees are pleased to introduce Jim Clossick, EO's new Designated Safeguarding Children Person, or DSCP for short. Jim has also written his own introduction, below.

Jim is an independent, part time contractor who will provide the experience and expertise EO needs to deal with child protection issues. The appointment follows a review of how EO should address this sensitive subject and extensive consultation with NSPCC, who were extremely helpful and very satisfied with the measures we have put in place and in the appointment we have made. It was decided to offer EO members access to an experienced professional in this area and that our previous internal arrangements, however well meaning, risked not meeting the high standards that are essential and could encounter conflicts of interest should allegations be made against another member.

It is important to emphasise that, should members have concerns about, or evidence of, circumstances that a child or children may be exposed to, or suffering from, abuse in any way, the concern should be reported to the NSPCC (0800 800 5000), the local authority or the police. However, we recognise that some members may have doubts about their concerns and wish to discuss them confidentially with the DSCP, who will help callers decide on what course of action they should take in line with best practice. This is the reason for the appointment.

The DSCP is available only to members of EO to discuss concerns that members may have about the safety of a child. It is important to point out that Jim is not available to discuss matters relating to EO policy and decisions made. So if you have a specific concern about the safety of a child and are unsure that your concern is justified or are wondering what you should do, then members may call Jim.

When calling the DSCP, callers will be asked for either their membership number or their surname and postcode in order that membership status may later be established. After this, the only record that will be kept of the call, for statistical purposes and reporting to Trustees, is the number of calls received, whether current members of EO and brief notes on type / content of calls.

The DSCP will make a confidential and safe record of any referrals and action that results. These will be reported to Trustees at regular intervals, such that all identities are obscured and anonymised.

Where a caller with a material concern feels unable to make a referral themselves, the DSCP will undertake this task, but will require the caller's details in order to be able to do so.

The DSCP will also provide an advisory service to EO's Trustees to ensure that our safeguarding children policy and practice keep abreast of changes in legislation and good practice in the wider community.

Jim can be contacted on 08445 869091; an answerphone is connected to the line and calls that cannot be taken will be responded to as soon as is possible. If a caller considers the matter is urgent, they should themselves call the NSPCC or their local Social Services or the police.

Introduction of DSCP to EO members

Greetings to everyone involved with Education Otherwise. I am your new, and your first, *Designated Safeguarding Children Person*. That is quite a job title and one I intend to take very seriously.

I am a social worker of nearly thirty years experience. I'd like to say that I started when I was 9, but alas I didn't train until I was in my late twenties, having foolishly decided to become an accountant when I was a mere youth. I turned out to be hopeless at that and I eventually realised that I was better at helping people than helping people make money.

Apart from a short initial period working with the elderly, I have spent my entire career working with children and families and the past twenty years working in child protection, nowadays known as 'safeguarding children'. I have worked both for local authorities and as a Children's Guardian. For the past ten years I have been a self-employed independent social worker, mainly undertaking risk and parenting assessments as an expert witness in care proceedings (legal proceedings in which local authorities are applying for care orders in respect of children). I also have experience of working with adult sex offenders, with children and young people who have sexual behaviour problems and with families

where domestic violence is or has been an issue.

I am not a home educator and until doing some reading when applying for this post knew very little about the subject. As a local authority social worker I can remember being involved in only one case where a child I was involved with was being educated at home.

According to the job description provided to me by EO my role is to "offer an external and entirely confidential service to Education Otherwise members who have safeguarding children worries and to act as a source of support, advice and expertise and refer any safeguarding children concerns to the relevant investigating authorities". Confidential in this context means that if information provided is to be shared with anyone it will only be with the responsible authorities and to the extent that is needed.

I would like to be absolutely clear that it is not my responsibility nor is it the responsibility of anyone at Education Otherwise to investigate allegations or suspicions of child abuse. That responsibility lies with local authorities and the police. Having said that, helping to safeguard children is every adult's responsibility. If you have genuine concerns that a child may be being neglected or abused in any way you should take some form of action. This can include speaking to the child's parents or carers about your concerns, if you feel able to do that. If you do not feel able to do that, you can refer your concerns to the appropriate agency directly and, if you prefer, anonymously, or through the NSPCC (0808 800 5000). You can also call Childline

(0800 1111) for advice. These numbers can also be found in the EO newsletter.

If you are not sure whether your concerns are serious enough to warrant referral to one of the statutory agencies you can call me to discuss and for advice and support. I will not necessarily be able to speak to you immediately, as I am not on 24 hour call, but serve as a retained part-time contractor. I will call you back as soon as possible. If you fear that delaying to speak to someone could be dangerous for the child concerned then you should immediately contact the local authority, the police or the NSPCC for advice and/or action.

When you call me I will ask you for your name and postcode, simply so that I can check with EO at a later stage that you are a member and therefore entitled to use the service I provide. This information will obviously identify you. You may share information with me that in my opinion indicates that a child may have been neglected or abused or may be at risk. In

those circumstances I will urge you to refer the matter to the authorities. If, for any reason, you do not wish to do that, even anonymously, and I cannot persuade you to do so, I reserve the right to make the referral myself. I will remind all callers of my right and responsibility to do that. It is therefore possible that you could then be contacted by one of the statutory agencies for further information and to help identify the child or family concerned.

The DSCP role is obviously a new one and as such we will all for some time be learning about its value, its scope and its limitations. I know that the vast majority of us have the happiness, welfare and safety of children as our paramount considerations. I am looking forward to contributing with you in the further development of Education Otherwise's commitment to children.

Jim Clossick
08445 869091

Children's List

We would like to explain to our membership the reasons why the Trustees took the decision to move the Yahoo list to a more secure forum-based technology and why the Yahoo list had to be closed without notice. Trustees only recently became aware that certain aspects of the Yahoo list were inherently unsafe for Children. The trustees consulted the NSPCC and were advised that security features needed to be installed immediately on any children's list we ran and if this was not possible then the list should be closed and another service opened. It was not possible to activate the recommended security features on a Yahoo list and therefore Trustees took the difficult decision to close the Yahoo children's list.

The biggest single concern was that despite that fact that the moderators were CRB checked, the trustees became aware that it was easy for any adult who is a member of EO to get private unmoderated access to any child.

Unfortunately this was not a facility we could turn off on a Yahoo list. Furthermore, any adult who had access to the mailing list had immediate access to young people's personal details e.g. names, instant message addresses, hobby interests, home town, personal photos, address, which offers the opportunity for cross-referencing to establish the possible location and identity of a child.

The decision to take immediate action without informing the list was taken when the trustees realised the serious consequences if this information should ever get into the wrong hands. If an undesirable adult was on the list then any warning of closure would have allowed such an individual to download all the information the list contained and to subsequently share this information with whomever they chose. While we had absolutely no indication such an individual was present on the list this risk was deemed unacceptable.

We deeply regret the disruption that our actions have had on some individuals. We hope that those young people and their parents understand that the Yahoo list had grown over the years, working as effectively and as safely as the moderators could make it. We would also like to assure you that the list was not closed as a result of suspicious activity; it is purely due to the inherent risk in Internet email-based chat lists which allow unmoderated interactions and our responsibility as Trustees to provide a service that does not put our members children at risk. EO is currently busy reviewing various forum software options for maximum flexibility and security, with the intention of having the children's forum up and running as soon as possible after closing down the Yahoo list. Further details will be given about this as soon as possible.

We must remind EO members who use Internet forums and chat-rooms to familiarize themselves with Internet safety and to make this clear to young people.

Yours sincerely,

Trustees

The new EO Children's Forum is almost ready to open. We are using new forum software, which has taken a little longer than anticipated to set up on the EO server. Eventually all forums will be moved over to this new software.

In the mean time Parents/carers of children who would like to join the Children's Forum should send an email to childrensforum@education-otherwise.org asking for an invitation. The email should include the family name, the child's email address (if different), postcode and either the EO membership number or the first line of the postal address. The EO Children's Forum Group will then send you information about how the forum will work and an invitation to join.

The EO Children's Forum Group

Volunteering in Education Otherwise

Firstly, this is an advance notice to all volunteers in Education Otherwise. Trustees will soon be sending out new paperwork which will be relevant to all volunteer positions in EO. The new paperwork will also go out in future to all new volunteers. Our aim is for everyone to have a clear idea about the work that volunteers have agreed to do. Volunteers will also know where to go if they have issued that need to be raised.

Perhaps you are reading this because you have sometimes thought that you would like to volunteer in EO but don't know how to go about it.

Volunteers are the bedrock of Education Otherwise. There are many volunteer opportunities in EO. Some volunteers say that they want to "give something back" because they really appreciated the help they were given by Education Otherwise when they first started home educating or when they were going through a rough patch. Others might feel that they lacked help and support when they needed it themselves so they want to make sure nobody else is in that position later. Volunteering is also a good way to meet new people and to become part of a social network.

If you are thinking about volunteering for EO it will be useful to find out more about what current volunteers actually do. If you can't get to Open Trustee Meetings you can still read reports and articles on the Members Forum and in the Newsletter.

The next thing may be to find out more from somebody who is already doing the job. You can read what they have written about their work (eg via minutes of meetings or if they write an article about their work for the newsletter) or you can phone or email the co-ordinator or convenor of a Group for a chat without any commitment. You can find contact details on the inside back page of the EO Newsletter. From EO Trustees

Update on the Consultations for the New M&As

Further to my article in the last edition of the newsletter I thought that it would be good to update you on how the consultations for the new M&As are going and what the timescales for the project are.

You may recall that I explained that some time ago the trustees were advised by the legal profession and the Charities Commission to update and modernise the Memorandum and Articles of Association - the set of legal rules that govern how EO is run.

We have had a few responses and a few people asking why the changes are necessary. In a nutshell the old set of rules - M & As are just that: Old! They do not allow for things such as electronic communication, and they govern such things as trustee numbers.

At the EGM that was held in London the proposed new M&As did not receive a big enough majority vote to see them passed. There were 39 votes in favour of the new M&A and only 22 against. Company law says that we need to have a 75% majority

so although more people voted for than against there weren't quite enough.

You received a set of M & As with the last but one Newsletter. If you have lost them you can ask for another one to be sent to you.

If you would like to suggest any changes to the document you still have time to do so. You can send your suggestions to me. My address is at the bottom of this piece or to the main EO address.

The trustees have asked me to point out that the consultation period will run out at the end of June. After the period ends, the trustees will look at everything sent to them and draft a new set of proposals. These then have to go to the Charities Commission to make sure that they are legal and once that is done they need to be voted on.

This vote will take place at an EO meeting sometime in the autumn.

If you have any suggestions or questions please do not hesitate to get in touch. I can also explain how you can arrange to have a proxy vote at the meeting even if you can't get to it, or don't want to attend.

My address is,
Roarke,
124 Chislehurst Road, Orpington,
Kent BR6 0DW

EO address is:
Education Otherwise, PO Box 325,
Kings Lynn, PE34 3XW

you can also reach me via my email:
alexander.roarke@educationotherwise.org

I look forward to hearing from you.
Roarke

Looking for Volunteers for the Helpline

We are looking to recruit new volunteers for the Helpline and if you have ever thought about giving a few hours of your time to help others who are thinking about home educating then please do get in touch. As the option of home education becomes more widely known, more and more parents are turning to EO for information and support. Many get information from the website; but personal support is still in great demand.

We are currently making some changes to the helpline in line with best practice. EO is now an associate member of the Telephone Helpline Association. The THA will be providing Level 1 helpline training during a day in September or October in the Midlands which will be paid for by EO.

We ask that all our volunteers take this training unless they can show that they have training in something equivalent. Every Volunteer will have supervision and support and a place to offload after challenging phone calls. This is to ensure that all volunteers receive professional support in order to carry out this role and also to look after themselves.

We are intending to be more flexible about the hours per helpline shift, so if you only have one or two half-days a week, don't let this prevent you from volunteering. We would just ask that during this time, you can ensure that you will be available to take calls. If you're interested and would like to find out more or have any questions then please contact:

Jo Berry, Tel: 08445 868821,
jo.berry@educationotherwise.org

or

Pauline Butterworth, Tel: 08445 868826
p.butterworth@educationotherwise.org

Looking for Volunteers for E-mail Support

We are looking to form a team to offer information and support to the public by email and through a new public area of the EO forum. There will be support and training for this important work which can be done in your own time.

If you have any questions or are interested then please write to: eoemailhelpline@education-otherwise.org

Children's Pages Liaison

A Children's Pages Liaison volunteers is needed to help the children produce their newsletter. Due to the contact with children and young people in this role, you will need to apply for an enhanced CRB disclosure. This will be arranged and paid for by EO.

If you have computer skills and can encourage the children to bring interest and innovation to their newsletter, please contact: eocouncil@education-otherwise.org or Education Otherwise Association Ltd., PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, PE34 3XW

EO Monthly Volunteer Update Co-ordinator

This post would suit someone who has good organisational skills and who could give up to 6 hours time per month. The job requires co-ordinating EO information needed for the bulletin, putting it together, typing it up and then sending it on to all volunteers on the mailing list.

You would need easy access to the internet in order to retrieve the information. The update is sent to volunteers in between Newsletters.

To find out more about this volunteer post please contact Fiona Nicholson: fnicholson@education-otherwise.org

Volunteer Wanted for Admin Support

Do you live in the Kings Lynn area ?

Could you give 10 hours a week of your time (ideally 2 hours a day Monday to Friday, though there could be some flexibility in hours) to assist with routine paperwork and envelope-stuffing for EO membership packs and other mailings.

With new home educators joining Education Otherwise all the time, we send out hundreds of new membership packs a month and many other mailings. You would be working on your own in a small office. Unfortunately health and safety regulations mean that the room is not suitable for children.

Own transport an advantage. Public transport information from Kings Lynn to St Germans can be found here <http://www.norfolkgreen.co.uk/> or phone 01553 776980. Bus number 46/47 every 2 hours but please check timetable for exceptions and restrictions.

You will be asked to complete a routine CRB check which will be arranged by Education Otherwise.

Please contact Lynda Hitchman for further details and a Volunteer Application Pack

database@education-otherwise.org Tel: 08445 867541

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.

Areas needing a Local Contact:

England

Cleveland
Essex South East
South Gloucester
Gloucester
Hampshire
Herefordshire
Kent South West
Lancs. Bolton
London West
Manchester South
Merseyside
Norfolk Breckland
Staffordshire South
Surrey
West Midlands, Birmingham and Solihull
West Midlands Dudley
Yorkshire West, Leeds
Yorkshire East ,Hull

Scotland

Perth and Kinross
Argyll and Bute
Edinburgh and Lothians
Inverclyde and the Ayrshires
Glasgow
Fife

Wales

Ceredigion. Maddie Woolridge is resigning due to ill health. Our best wishes to her.

Glamorgan

New Local Contacts

Oxfordshire: Louisa Southey Tel:
08445 868914 Email: brighton-lc@education-otherwise.org

Yorkshire, West Wakefield: Nicole
Gledhill Tel: 08445 868874, Email:
wakefield-lc@education-otherwise.org

Nottinghamshire: Jenifer Walters
Email: notts-lc@education-otherwise.org

Leicestershire: Sharan Marston Tel:
08445 868847, Email: leics-lc2@education-otherwise.org

Bedfordshire: Pauline Curl Tel: 08445
868894, Email beds-lc@education-otherwise.org

Brighton & Hove: Karen Pettitt Tel:
08445 868914, Email: brighton-lc@education-otherwise.org

Dundee & Angus: Marley Laurie. Tel:
08445 868896, Email: dundee-lc@education-otherwise.org

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

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!)

**Gwersyll Dewi Sant 2008
St Davids Camp
Sat 28th June – Sat 5th July**

A quiet family camp in the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park
Coastal organic farm campsite (steep path with steps to beach)
one mile from St Davids.
Stunning scenery, bird watching, castles, boat trips, surfing,
walks for all abilities.
BRING YOUR BIKES!

Excellent facilities include laundry and farm shop

(Tourist Information Centre 01437 720 392)

Campsite VERY popular, to avoid disappointment, book BEFORE 10-6-08

and quote "Home Education Camp" for pitch in field #1

to: Wyn & Christine Evans,
Caerfai Farm-St.Davids,
Pembrokeshire, SA62 6QT
01437 720 548
www.Caerfai.co.uk

WARNING - CAMPSITE ON CLIFF TOP - CAN BE VERY WINDY

TENTH STUDLAND BAY CAMP, DORSET

Friday 18th to Friday 25th July 2008*
Chrystia & Keith warmly welcome all Home Educating families.

A wild and beautiful area – pine forest, lowland heath; 4 miles to sea, dunes & bird sanctuary; Dorset steam Railway nearby – to beach at Swanage. Free outings to Corfe Castle. Cycleways and paths thru woods to sea. Camping in large field backed by pine woods, stream; Access to facilities at adjoining Burnbake campsite.

We bring canoes, cargonet, ropeswings, craft materials

Marquee, fire barrel. Bring bikes, drums, instruments. Morning ~ acapella / gospel / taize singing

Cost for whole camp £110 a family (Concessions and daily rate available)

Teenagers welcome, with families only.

**Information & booking: Chrystia & Keith,
75 Kent House Rd, Sydenham, London SE26 5LJ
020 8776 8597**

EXTRA!! Continue the fun at a family camp on
***Friday 25th July – Sat 2nd August in Bridport, Dorset**
£5:00 per adult per night, children free.

**AND ask about our fabulous late AUGUST camp
With open fires!**

One-to-One General and Specialist Computer Training

In your own home with a qualified, experienced computer trainer.

Using remote access, all you need is a broadband internet connection.

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Contact KMA Training 01273 483319 / 07773011252
email kmatrain@btinternet.com
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DO YOU WANT TO EARN AT HOME

WHILE YOUR CHILDREN LEARN AT HOME?

As a single mum home educating my daughter that's exactly what I wanted!

I can now show you how to earn an unlimited income whilst still enjoying treasured time freedom and total flexibility to work around your family.

Call Barbara on 01308 455603

for an informal initial discussion
or Take the Tour at

www.globalhealthwealth.com

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.

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 £19.00. 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

2nd PEAK CAMP 2008

21st to the 31st of July

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.

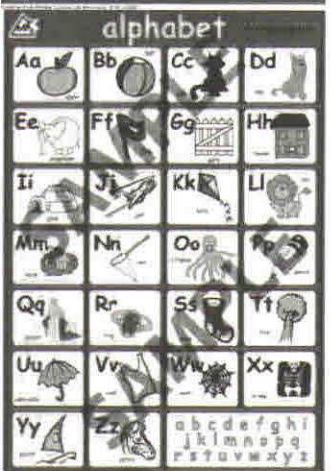
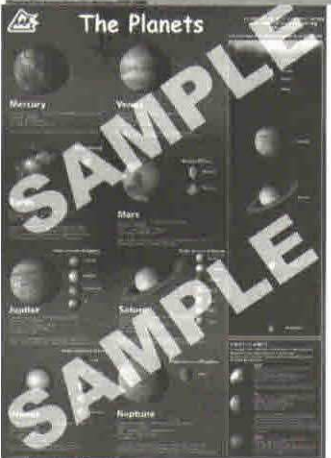
Fees per night:

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 Elly, 07951 130833
or elly.nowell@gmail.com



A3 Posters

Times Tables	£1.80
Dinosaurs	£1.80
Colours and Shapes	£1.80
Alphabet	£1.80
Space	£1.80
Special Offer: Choose any four posters	£6.30

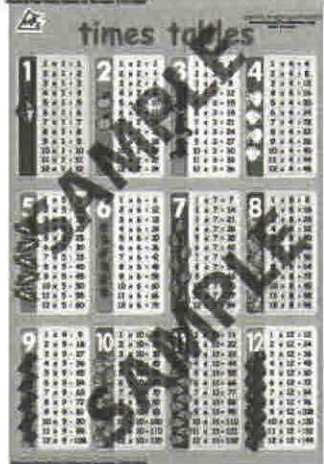
Publications

Early Years	£3.60
Teach Your Own by <i>John Holt</i>	£7.50
Free Range Education, <i>Ed Terry Dowty</i>	£9.90
Home Educating our Autistic Spectrum Children: Paths are Made by Walking, <i>Ed Terri Dowty and Kit Cowlishaw</i>	£13.50
Learning from Home Based Education	£4.50
School's Out, Educating Your Child At Home by <i>Jean Bendell</i>	£3.60
Educating Your Child at Home by <i>Jane Lowe and Alan Thomas</i>	£10.75
Educating Children at Home by <i>Alan Thomas</i>	£9.85
Evaluation and Research in Education, Special Edition Home Education. Guest <i>Ed Paula Rothermel</i>	£6.00
Their Own Voices	£3.15
Paula Rothermel's PhD Research (2002) Leaflet	£0.54

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*



Stationery

- Recycled 30cm/12" Rule £1.08
- Eraser (Red or White) £0.41
- Recycled Pencil £0.53
- Recycled Pen £0.77
- Triangular Highlighter (3 colours) £0.89
- A5 Notepads £1.00
- Red Pencil Case £1.35
- Set 10 Coloured Pencils (made from sustainable materials) £4.32

Clothing (T-shirts)

- Navy: Home Education - a real option Sizes M, L or XL £6.00
- Navy: Home Education - a real option
Sizes 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-11 or 12-13 £4.50
- White: SINC Sizes M, L or XL £6.00
- White: SINC Sizes 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-11 or 12-13 £4.50
- Oskar: The World's My Playground Sizes S, M or L;
Purple, Royal Blue or Sky Blue £5.15
- 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

Clothing (Hoodies)

- Hoodie: SINC with triangle logo, Black, Navy
Sizes 5-6, 7-8, 9-11, 12-13 £15.00
- Hoodie: SINC with triangle logo, Black, Navy
Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL £20.00

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- Re-Use Labels (pack 100) £4.00
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- Wristbands (Red) £1.00
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- Car Tax Disc Holder £0.89
- Frisbee (Red or White) £1.79
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- Clip on Torch £4.28
- Clip on Clock £3.59
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				Total (Sub Total plus Postage)	

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 Your Address:.....
 Your Telephone Number:.....Email Address.....
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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

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. The following costs for postage and packing here, and via the website are now as follows:

Order Value	£0-5	£5-10	£10-20	£20-30	£30-40	£40-50	£50+
Postage	£1.00	£1.50	£2.50	£3.50	£4.50	£5.50	£6.50

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, 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/tvheBilingham>, 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.com/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 jaynewoodbank@yahoo.co.uk
- Kendal alternate Mondays, Jo 01539 567005.
- Penrith 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 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 Tuesday, fortnightly Pottery, Neil 01363 82314
- Exeter 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
- North Dorset, meeting in Sturminster
- Newton area. Regular social meetings: June 01258 471949

DURHAM

email list:

<http://ukgroups.yahoo.com/group/tv/he> 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.freeseve.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/SouthGlosHomeEd>

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 emmajeavons@supanet.com
- Romsey/New Forest area, fortnightly, anniemax1@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:

"<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

- FULHAM, and surrounding area group. FRIDAYS from 11 am. Age 5+ (Siblings

welcome of course) Tennis Lessons, Open house, play in park and some field trips. Call Borbala 07930 666354 / Kielan 0779 6687029

- 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 1-3, 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
- Hackney Group, Adventures With Education, Meets weekly in term time, Tuesdays 11-3. Contact Chris 020 7254 4988
- 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
kathrynvglynn@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, jackiecrae@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 10.30-3pm, Wendy 01449 614772, wenlyn@talktalk.net
- 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 0-7, 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, emmajevons@supanet.com
- North Surrey/Croydon meetings, contact Jenny 0208 654 3972 : jen9@blueyonder.co.uk

SUSSEX

- Wealden Home Ed website: www.when.omnia.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, 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_tyneandwear
- 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 give, plus montly outings. Full details of meetings and 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.freereserve.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@yahoo.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@eldekvis.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, Camarthenshire, Rhonda, Swansea. email: childwise.newsletter@talktalk.net
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 jdchapmanaurice@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 to: kruger37@tiscali.co.uk or call Sam on 01978 861011
- Froncysyllte fortnightly meetings, Sam 01978 861011

New volunteers for any of the groups most welcome, with expertise or just an interest. For more information email the group, write to EO's PO Box address or contact one of the Trustees 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 Group**
(financegroup@education-otherwise.org):
Fiona Nicholson, Roarke Newstead, Lynda Hitchman, Janet Simpson
- **Core Govt. Policy Group**
(governmentpolicy@education-otherwise.org):
Fiona Nicholson, Annette Taberner, Ann Newstead, Jo Berry, Kira Patefield-Smith, Natasha Arthur, Janet Wilkinson
- **Disability Group:**
(disabilityawareness@education-otherwise.org)
Fiona Nicholson, Jennifer Skillen, Sheryl Booth, Christine Waterman, Celia McDonagh
- **Scotland Group:**
(scotlandgovernmentpolicy@education-otherwise.org)
Fiona Chaff, Rebecca Kail, Jane Bathgate
- **Website and Publications Editorial Committee (WPEC):** (wpec@education-otherwise.org)
Fiona Nicholson, Jennifer Skillen, Joss Nowell, Lynda Hitchman

Grievances and Complaints:

eocomplaints@googlemail.com or write to
PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW

- *Jo Berry* ~ 08445 868821
- *Pauline Butterworth* ~ 08445 868826
- *Lynda Hitchman* ~ 08445 867541

EO Yahoogroups:

EO runs several email lists with Yahoogroups, including a general one and one for single parents. The Yahoo lists are open to all, members and non-members.

Go to <http://tinyurl.com/56k2w7>
to join one of the lists.

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, 08445 868839
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 08445 868839
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

EO E-mail Lists & Forums

There is a Members Forum on the EO website. It has discussion forums for members to chat and get information about home education etc., as well as EO business, and lots of other info (eg past NL articles, minutes of OTMs, etc). There are also separate forums for EO Volunteers and Local Contacts and a new forum where EO children can chat together.

To access the adult part of the forum, just email forums@education-otherwise.org giving your chosen User Name (4-15 characters long), full name, email and EO Membership No. or postcode. To join the children's forum, email childrensforum@education-otherwise.org for more information on how to sign up.

Who Does What in EO

Trustees -

Letters to: PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE34 3XW

Leslie Barson (London) ~ 08445 868817

lbarson@education-otherwise.org

Jo Berry, (Cheshire) ~ 08445 868821

jberry@education-otherwise.org (Enquiries Secretary)

Gail Borrows (Bucks) ~ 08445 868824

gborrows@education-otherwise.org (Membership Secretary)

Pauline Butterworth (Cleveland) ~ 08445 868826

pbutterworth@education-otherwise.org (Treasurer)

Carla MacGregor (Bristol) ~ 08445 868827

cmacgregor@education-otherwise.org (Local Contacts Coordinator)

Celia McDonagh (Glamorganshire) ~ 029 20483498 or 07763

729055 ~ cmcdonagh@education-otherwise.org

Kelly Moorhouse (Denbighshire) ~ 01824 703690

kmoorhouse@education-otherwise.org

Roarke Newstead (Kent) ~ 08445 868813

rroarke@education-otherwise.org

Fiona Nicholson (S Yorks) ~ 08445 868831

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) ~ 08445 868812

jwilkinson@education-otherwise.org (Co Sec)

Rowenna Williams (Gwynedd) ~ 01678 521348

rwilliams@education-otherwise.org

Judi Wilson (London) ~ 020 8969 7963

jiwilson@education-otherwise.org

Membership

Membership and newsletter subscription enquiries, address changes, membership cards, new member admin, other queries or missing newsletters contact: ~ Lynda Hitchman ~ Database Administrator, Education Otherwise, 22 Lewis Drive, St Germans, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3FB ~ 08445 867541 or 01553 606501 ~ database@education-otherwise.org (Please put EO in the Subject line of emails)

Stationery

Leaflets, posters, compliment slips, membership forms, car stickers etc: free (donations toward postage welcome). 08445 867549 ~ PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW ~ stationery@education-otherwise.org

Volunteers are needed for the following posts/contacts:
EO Stalls, School Anxiety Support.

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 ~ 08445 868831
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 ~ 01584 781341 ~ esco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org

Designated Person: Jim Clossick ~ 08445 869091 ~ For EO members to call if they have concerns about a home educated child and are unsure about phoning the NSPCC.

Enquiries Secretary: Jo Berry (See CM list)
enquiries@education-otherwise.org

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

LearnPremium & EO Members Forum Admin: Lynda Hitchman
08445 867541 learnpremium@education-otherwise.org or
forums@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 nlco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org

Publications Secretary: Joss Nowell (See CM List)

Research Contact: Sue White ~ 08445 868913 ~ 2 Pretoria Villas, Eye Rd., Brome, Eye, Suffolk IP23 8AL
research@education-otherwise.org

Single Parent Family Contact: (Acting) Cal Bailes ~ 0191 241 4870

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

Treasurer: Pauline Butterworth (See CM List)

Publications

Books, information leaflets and back issues of newsletter. For a full list send SAE to: June Rawson, 5 Warwick Road, Ettington, Warwickshire CV37 7SH
publications@education-otherwise.org

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>

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Registered Office Address: 41 St Mary's Street, Ely, Cambridgeshire CB7 4HF