

# education otherwise



*No. 184 – October 2008*

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE IS: 1<sup>st</sup> November 2008**

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

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

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

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Vacant

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**Editor for the next Children's Pages: Laura Healy** **Deadline: 20<sup>th</sup> October 2008**

Please send all material to the Children's Pages Co-ordinator who will forward it to the relevant Children's Editor. This is to ensure that if there is a last minute change, submissions from other children will not be lost.

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

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## EO MERCHANDISE

At time of going to press, the online store is temporarily offline due to maintenance.

## Welcome...

To the October edition of the Education Otherwise Newsletter.

This would've been the academic year that my daughter started school, except I've known from before she was born that I wouldn't be sending her. Still, it's strange, as a home-educator who originally de-registered my two oldest children from school, to have a child who hasn't started.

My main pedagogical interest is with Steiner (Waldorf) education and as such, despite my thoughts and feelings (and excitement) about my daughter not starting school, it brings very little actual change to our family life.

She carries on as she has been, deep in what would be considered the 'kindergarten years', full of play and child-led exploration.

With the implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum in September, which became mandatory for Early Years settings (e.g playgroups, preschools, childminders and nurseries), the freedom for our family to facilitate an environment that we believe is right for our young children (pre-5) becomes even more poignant.

Sometimes in the depths of home-ed it can be difficult to imagine the alternative of school, but whether we are autonomous or structured in our approach to HE, it is important to remember that we have the CHOICE to be so.

These choices need to be protected for all home-educators, no matter what their approach. I would urge you to read the GPG News to find out how you can help protect not only our right to home educate, but also our family's right to choose the form that education takes.

Nikki Haxell  
Newsletter Co-ordinator



Any Safeguarding Children concerns should be reported to the NSPCC.

NSPCC Helpline Telephone No.:

0808 800 5000.

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

Childline: 0800 1111





## Diary of a Home-Educating Nobody

By Ross Mounthey

A man from The Times Educational Supplement phoned me the other day. He was a journalist after material for a 'Day in the Life of...' series about people involved in various aspects of education.

I don't know whether you're familiar with the TES but it is not a paper I would have expected to feature such an out-of-ordinary and non-institutional approach to education as home educators have. After all, the Times Educational Supplement is an institution in itself! So I established right at the outset that I didn't want anything negative about HE to appear, since other journalists have been known to twist things round in the past. Poor man, he was quite taken aback, but reassured me that he was pro-HE so I gabbled on happily without him hardly having the chance to get a word in!

I had to fumble around in my mind to work out what a 'typical day' was when he asked me for, as you know, there's nothing less typical than a day HEing. But it all proceeded fairly well until he asked what I did in my former life and I had to go and admit to something I absolutely hate: I was a teacher!

Now the reason I hate to say this is not because I know most HEors like to get their wooden stakes out when they find out, but for lots of other reasons. These being: a) even though there are some wonderful teachers, there also seems to be many of the opposite kind - this being backed up by sad stories my friends tell me of their children's encounters in schools - so it's not a categorisation I'm that proud of! b) It sometimes makes people think that because they haven't been a teacher they can't HE, which of course is in no way the case and c) it gives the impression it is easier for me to HE when in fact the opposite is true.

The reason the opposite is true is because, like many of you, I've had to de-school not only my thinking, but also my teacherish approach to learning in order to HE successfully. And having been entrenched in the profession this has been extremely hard.

You might argue that at least my knowledge from inside school must be an advantage. But not really for, as many agree, a school style approach to learning doesn't always work. And a teacher/child relationship is not the sort of relationship I want with my children; I think it

would be pretty upsetting for the children if I suddenly started behaving like their teachers did - thrusting learning at them without respect for their point of view.

As I pointed out to the journalist; I don't really teach the children at all! Of course, I had to qualify this, before he thought my kids had been totally neglected through all their years at home, by saying that what I do is carrot dangle! I tempt them.

Perhaps the best way to describe how the children's education works is to say that, rather than by teaching, I facilitate their learning but it's essentially a shared thing. Their position in their education, and the influence they have over it, has always been important. I don't take the stance of being someone who is superior, who talks at them or dictates what they should do, or who doesn't value what they bring to it, like teachers tend to do. Instead the children are completely *involved* and engaged in *all* the processes, planning, and decision making. They are engaged by hands-on experiences, discussion, interaction, questioning, listening, talking, finding out for themselves, experimenting, practising, sharing, seeing and doing. Their learning is active rather than passive. They share the responsibility for their learning rather than simply being a receptacle for it. Teaching doesn't really come into it.

This is quite hard for some people to understand because teaching has always been considered an essential ingredient to learning. But it needn't be. Teaching, or sharing of knowledge when it's asked for, is a helpful tool. As is showing or demonstrating something. But it isn't an essential tool. It isn't the only way to get children to learn either. Children can learn for themselves. Information is available to everyone via the Internet now. And many children learn much more effectively by experimenting and finding out, by making loads of mistakes thereby having loads of experiences and insights into how to get it right, than by being passively spoon fed by a teacher!

When we first decided to HE many people assumed it was because I thought I could teach my children better myself. Far from it. We HEed partly because we wanted to get poor and intrusive teaching out of our children's learning experience. And partly because the approach to learning in schools was not in my mind good for children and it put them off.

So, as I told the journalist, teaching plays no part in our HE. And I am mightily glad that it hardly plays a part in my life any more as I never felt comfortable with it. Teaching may be part of school life. But it doesn't always have to be part of a learning life. I almost wonder whether teaching is a remnant of an archaic system that our children don't need any more. Now that we all have ready access to knowledge, (which is originally what teachers were needed for), what our children perhaps need instead are inspirational leaders, learning mentors and loving encouragement from a caring adult.

Anyway, let's hope the journalist paints a good picture of a day in the life of a HEor in his article. (I think he's used a lot of 'writer's licence'!) I was very cheeky and asked him to mention my book *Learning Without School: Home Education* which is due to be published at the end of the year by Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

I also asked him a few questions of my own in return, just to keep him on his toes! And guess what? He was a teacher in his former life too. You'd think the government would begin to ask, not only what's wrong with the education system that increasing numbers of families are opting to HE, but also why so many *teachers* are coming out of school too!

*Ross Mountney*

Email: ross.mountney@tiscali.co.uk

(The article was expected to appear in the TES on 19<sup>th</sup> September)

## OPEN TRUSTEE MEETING EDUCATION OTHERWISE

Saturday November 15<sup>th</sup>, 11am - 4pm  
Library Theatre, Paradise Place, Birmingham B3 3HQ

This meeting in central Birmingham is open to all members and volunteers in Education Otherwise. Places must be booked by October 31<sup>st</sup>. See below for contact details.

The entrance to the Library Theatre is opposite the Central Library in Paradise Place, between the Conservatoire and Paradise Forum.

The Library Theatre is half a mile from Birmingham New Street Station and just off Paradise Circus Queensway Roundabout.

For parking details put "Birmingham city centre car park map" into google or telephone 0121 303 1111 general enquiries at Birmingham City Council. Birmingham also has a Park and Ride Scheme. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/birmingham/travel/bus.shtml> 0870 608 2608 will give further information about public transport including Park and Ride.

Agenda items for discussion should be submitted in writing by October 15<sup>th</sup> to [fnicholson@education-otherwise.org](mailto:fnicholson@education-otherwise.org) or c/o PO BOX 325 KINGS LYNN PE34 3XW

**Submit Agenda items for discussion in writing by October 15 to Fiona Nicholson, contact details below.**

For a chance to meet the Board of Trustees and see Education Otherwise in action please book your place by October 31st.

CONTACT DETAILS: Fiona Nicholson, Tel: 08445 868812 Email: [fnicholson@education-otherwise.org](mailto:fnicholson@education-otherwise.org)  
Write to PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW

### Free Resources on Citizenship and Young Volunteer Projects

To mark **Make A Difference Day** on Saturday October 25<sup>th</sup>, Community Service Volunteers organisation is offering free resource packs and lesson plans to home educating families and groups who want to learn more about volunteering and citizenship. The packs are directed towards Key Stages 3 & 4 and we are told they contain lots of activity ideas. The aim is to raise awareness of community issues and encourage young people to volunteer in projects that tackle these issues. The topics include diversity, fair-trade, young people and the media. To find out more about your free lesson plans follow this link: <http://tinyurl.com/6oyl7r>.

To get your free lesson plans and activity ideas through the post just email [difference@csv.org.uk](mailto:difference@csv.org.uk) with your name and address, saying that you are a member of Education Otherwise.

We would like to make free resources information a regular feature in the Newsletter. So if you have any tips for free lesson packs or resources please get in touch with Nikki the newsletter co-ordinator.



## Government Throws Out Motherhood

Government disrespects traditional role of motherhood  
by forcing single mothers and fathers out to work

By Rowenna W Williams

**NOTE FROM EO GOVERNMENT POLICY GROUP:** The article below represents the personal views of the author, Rowenna Williams.

However, as reported in previous newsletters, EO Government Policy Group has been talking to members of the Social Security Advisory Committee, to the Head of the Parent Employment Division at the Department of Work and Pensions and also to other stakeholders such as One Parent Families/Gingerbread. We are also in dialogue with Ministers and Members of Parliament.

At the time of writing it is our best guess that the Government cannot conceivably meet its target of the commencement date of November 24th for the new regulations. The regulations were held back by the Social Security Advisory Committee and were not laid before parliament by July. This means that the earliest possible date for MPs and Lords to see the regulations will be the second week in October. The regulations have to be passed by affirmative resolution which means that both houses have to vote in favour. We believe that the latest advice

from the Department to JobCentre Plus staff is that the welfare reform has been delayed. In addition, Education Otherwise has made a very strong case for home educators to remain on Income Support.

As always the latest news can be found on the EO campaign site where you can also sign up for rss feed and automatic email notification of new posts to the site.

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

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Article by Rowenna W Williams.

The Government is blackmailing stay-at-home single parents on benefits to disregard their roles as parents. From October 2008 single parents will have to take whatever work is forced upon them regardless of their situation or they will lose their income support.

This attitude shows the growing disrespect of this country towards the traditional role of motherhood and all its benefits.

Though the government states that they will consider individual cases, this blanket attitude towards single parent families and their children is discriminative. The children of these families did not choose to be in this circumstance yet they are not allowed the basic right to have a parent at home to create a nurturing environment for them; they are also punished for the actions of their absent parent. Some single parents choose to go out to 'paid' work and this is very well supported by the state, yet those who choose to stay at home to do the 'un-paid' work of childrearing and homemaking are being forced to be absent from their children's upbringing. In these days of disaffected young people we need to support those parents who wish to stay home to create a good foundation for the lives of these young people.

There are many situations when a young person or child needs the support of having their parent at home.

Though the traditional role of motherhood and homemaker is invaluable for the future of the next generation and our communities there are other circumstances to which the government are turning a blind eye.

Consider a family that are recovering from traumatic domestic abuse. Most families that escape domestic abuse still have to have contact with the abuser, so here the abuse and trauma is perpetuated. The recovery for the surviving parent and children can take years. The creation of a stable, supportive and nurturing home is paramount to this recovery and enables these children to grow into flourishing young adults. The government's action will assist domestic abusers by making the financial support needed to escape unavailable, resulting in a decrease in the safety of many children and their abused parents.

Consider the family that is recently bereaved. Again, the process of grief and recovery to enable the growth of flourishing young adults depends on the remaining parent being supported to sustain a nurturing home life. The availability of income support can aid such families in these terrible times.

Consider the home educating family. Home education is legal in this country, yet the children of single parents will be discriminated against if that parent is unable to find 'paid' work that fits in with full time education or if their locality, skills and support network cannot sustain 'paid' work. Some single parents have to leave work to support children and young people that have had such an awful time of school that they need their parents' full attention to be receptive to learning again. You may think why should the government financially support these single parents that home educate? A single parent with one child receives just under £5,800 pa of income support; it costs upward from £3,900 for the government to finance each child in school. Not only are these parents educating their own children they are doing it at a financial benefit to the state.

#### **Loss of community support**

It is estimated that two thirds of single parents contribute towards our volunteering sector at a saving of almost £1billion to the government annually. Some local and national groups will struggle to continue if they lose their volunteers. Some of these groups support vulnerable members of the community, a sector that has seen decreasing funding from local and national government. We look here at those volunteers who are registered with a group, what about those that work within community groups of their own accord? Those who watch over elderly neighbours, who care for the children of neighbours, friends and family, who help the less able members of our communities to go shopping or change a light bulb. All this is unrecognised by our government. All contributions towards sustaining the local community. Many of these individuals are not in 'paid' work, many are single parents. From October this year, both the recognised and unrecognised volunteering single parents will no longer be available. Will the national and local government be funding workers to cover all this work? Who is willing for taxes to be increased further if they do?

#### **Financial Support**

The government has stated that they are supporting parents in work by paying for

childcare. Child carers are diminishing in numbers due to increased government legislations. Where are the 742 thousand single parent families going to find childcare if there are no provisions? Is the government expecting these children to walk the streets while their parents are forced to take work of inappropriate hours? How many businesses provide flexible hours? How many businesses will employ single parents knowing that they will have to provide flexible hours?

There are many that receive job seekers allowance that do not have children to nurture. There are many absent parents who receive benefit. There are many absent parents who do not contribute towards their children's upbringing. Yet it is the residing single parents who are having their income support removed. The government claim to be working towards bringing children out of poverty.

From October they will be forcing many families into poverty.

**The government targets those who have not chosen their circumstances.**

It is a very small minority that start out being single parents by choice. It is a situation in which parents find themselves and they work extremely hard to make life as loving and nurturing as possible for their children. The government wish these parents to leave their parenting and contribute 'financially' to the economy. Single parents and many others in our society are fastidiously working to improve and sustain their communities 'unpaid'. Their contribution to society is unvalued because it cannot be measured in £s.

Like most single parents, I did not choose to be a single parent. It was circumstance that led me into this situation. I do not sit in front of the TV watching soaps, drinking coffee; I am an active parent with an ability to juggle time, finances and voluntary as well as paid sessional work. I am very fortunate in that I have skills that can translate to being self-employed, that I have supportive family and friends. Not every single parent has the blessing of being in these circumstances. Many are alone and unsupported, tarred and judged, targeted and discriminated.

The traditional role of motherhood is being undermined, and this continuing attitude contributes towards an attitude that considers what is traditionally 'woman's work' valueless. This harks back to the days that women and their roles were not equal in our society and is today being positively promoted by our government.

*Rowenna W Williams*

If you would like a copy of this article to distribute to your local press, please email me on rowenna73@hotmail.com

## GCSE's and Me!

I worked for 4 GCSE's this year and then my son took them in May / June. WE received our results in August. This is an account of whys and hows of the journey we made together.

D has been home educated since the day I attended a prospective parents evening at the local school and was horrified by the numbers of children, attitudes of staff and ethos of the school that I felt I couldn't allow my son to go there. Luckily a friend knew and told me about home ed.

So we began our journey through the primary years, doing an hour or two per day of semi structured activities, then enjoying exploring, creating, visiting and finding out in a gentle way that suited us.

All went well during the primary years, we could see that D was learning and progressing and was happy, sociable and communicative. It was a wonderful few years, but secondary education loomed....

I have 4 O'Levels, which don't include maths or English, and remember my own secondary education as a long struggle to make sense of all the work I was expected to do. How then could I help D through the subjects required at secondary level which obviously include maths and English? I could not do secondary education at home. So armed with many questions, I headed off to local secondary schools and found

one that I liked the look of and then took D to have a look around, and give him a chance to ask his own questions. I had not figured on his reaction at all. He saw beyond the fantastic new building, equipment and opportunities. He asked his questions and after quizzing the maths and history staff concluded that they didn't love the subjects they taught, and wondered if they liked children? So now we hesitated on the edge... secondary education at home?

We went for it. The first year of secondary education whizzed by. WE worked in a slightly more structured way, spending 2 - 3 hours a day working. We roped in "Nanna" for an hour a week maths tutoring and employed a French national for an hour a week to start us on a modern foreign language.

Then the "do gooders" began! IN one month about five people told D that this home education was all very well, but he'd never get any GCSE's at home and wouldn't get to University or into a decent job. This was like a red rag to a bull. D rose up to the challenge with stubborn determination, he'd get GCSE's and get them early, and then turn to these people and say "Oh yer I can!"

Me in a panic, determined son, twelve months to GCSE's... HELP!

Luckily I met someone who had done GCSE's at home and so asked a few questions, then armed with some website addresses I began the task of researching. D chose maths because he loves it, IGCSE so no course work involved. Biology because he'd done quite a lot already. Classical civilisations because he loves history and RE was chosen as he already had a good foundation, as we are a Christian family. In WE jumped, learning side by side, we battled and tackled, and suddenly we were working for longer periods of time and then suddenly we home educated, our world shrank it needed to. Christmas came and went and we were well on track. Then came February, suddenly the call came from the local private school wanting confirmation of our intention to take GCSE's. It was now real, it was happening and we paid the required fees.

The school was really good, allowing us to visit the building and familiarise ourselves with it before exam season. They made everything really easy.

Then we hit a wall. Thirteen weeks to go, we could not track down some required books. We drew a blank at the library and Waterstones informed us that many GCSE book lists are churned out each year without the board checking that the books are still in print.

We practised some exam papers, help things emerged that we had not done - sit still for 2 hours deprived of drinks or the toilet and complete work to time in silence. D knew all his R.E, but could only complete 3 out of 6 questions in the one hour he would have. I had a panic and wondered if I should have sent him to school.

D hadn't wanted anyone to know he was doing exams, he didn't want people making a fuss or putting pressure on him to "pass" His choice so we agreed, but I would have liked to have phoned a friend and had my panic with some one. D and I discussed my worries and his worries and drew up a timetable and looked at how to revise. He was given time and space to revise but also time to blob out and play - then we went out for the day. We carefully talked through what he'd feel if he got a "U" grade. His response was amazing, "So what, school kids have been coached to learn and regurgitate facts since they were 7. I Know I've tried my best and if I don't pass I'll do it again, and this year can just be a practice."

Week 12 and back on track, revising hard and practising the dreaded working to time. We discovered revision websites and he enjoyed these as fun not work and I tried to relax and work trips and treats into his week - and of course maintain the balance that the two younger children needed for their own home ed adventure.

The house grew dustier and I tried not to feel guilty as I spent less time with the younger children, but explained to them that in May it would be their time and their chance to have more of my attention.

D may not have learned to rush work out to a tight time scale, or sit still but he also had not learnt to be nervous about exams. He had been right not to tell anybody about his plans because those "do-gooders" were unable to awaken any fears in him- there was no pressure or expectations, other than that he hoped all of his hard work would pay off with results recognised by the do good community.

Over the year D has learned dogged determination to tackle his work and spend time working when he would rather do something else. He has taught himself so much and asked for help when he needs it. If nothing else this year D has learned how to work and learn.

At our inspection we "forgot" to inform our LEA advisor about D's GCSE plans, it never came up, after all D was only in year 8!

This has been a challenging year, but I believe D was right to tackle things early, giving himself time to focus well on a few subjects, knowing he still had time to repeat if necessary.

OH and as for those results, they are unimportant. The real result can't be graded. It is seeing a young man mature in his abilities and take responsibility for his own education which is priceless. But, OK with his permission, I'll share D's results with you.

#### Religious Studies &

Christian Perspectives OCR: B

Maths Edexcel IGCSE higher: B

Biology Edexcel IGCSE higher: C

Classical Civilisations OCR higher: D

Martin Hall

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## NEW EO CHILDREN'S FORUM

The new forum where EO children can chat and make friends has now opened and is proving popular.

There is a 3 step process to join:

- 1) Your child needs to register by clicking on the "Login" Icon on the main page of the EO website - [www.education-otherwise.org](http://www.education-otherwise.org)
- 2) A parent needs to register for their own login on this new board, so they have easy access and can supervise their children.
- 3) A parent needs to complete and return a permission form - this form will be sent to your child's email address automatically on registering. Email: [childrensforum@education-otherwise.org](mailto:childrensforum@education-otherwise.org) if you need another copy of this form.

Once these three things have been done, then we can activate your accounts and your child/ren can start posting.

There are three boards for children to use on the forum which suggested if very approximate ages - under 11s, over 11s and 16 - 18 year olds and also a gallery for their drawings and artwork.

Email: [childrensforum@education-otherwise.org](mailto:childrensforum@education-otherwise.org) if you have any queries or difficulty joining.  
EO Forum Admin.

### New Contact Details?

To ensure you don't miss any mailings from EO, can you please let the Database Administrator know if you move house or change any of your contact details (eg. address, email address, phone number, numbers of children, etc)

Email: [database@education-otherwise.org](mailto:database@education-otherwise.org) or telephone Lynda on 08445 867541.

Can EO volunteers also let their line manager know please? Thank you.

# Unschooling In New Zealand

By Lori Forsyth



When I read the paragraph in the newsletter saying that people most enjoy reading about real experiences I agreed that is true for me too. So I thought I would put fingers to keyboard and type a bit about our life as a home educating family with one teenage daughter, Sophie, age 14.

I wrote two years ago about my dilemma with Sophie's very determined choice to be completely unschooled. I shared that I was concerned because although she was reading voraciously, she was being very reluctant to doing any writing whatsoever. In response I received some wonderful emails of support from other HE families with teenagers and they really helped me keep my confidence through a rough patch.

I am now happy to report that Sophie writes almost as much as she reads, which is every day, sometimes for hours on end. She is writing

stories, and tells me she has at least 20 different 'novels' on the go, switching between them as inspiration for the next part of the plot takes her. How amazing is that?!

I have so far only seen one piece that she wrote. I was looking over her shoulder one day and saw a file named "Pandora's Box". I asked her about it and she said she had rewritten the myth of Pandora because she felt that in the standard version Pandora was portrayed harshly and unfairly. Sophie wanted to portray a more sympathetic version of the character which she felt was more just. That's a Libran for you! I was charmed by her motivation and impressed by the maturity of her writing. Where had she learned all that grammar and sentence structure? She had flatly refused to comply when I tried to show her the basic rules of grammar a few years earlier!

I have to say that now she is writing, I have stopped worrying about her education and whether we have done the right thing. When she was just reading and absorbing, as Ian Wild said, there was no evidence that anything was going on at all in her head. Now I know she is creating and producing external evidence of her thought processes, I happily leave her in peace. I don't ask to see her writing because I don't want to interfere. If she wanted feedback from us she would ask for it. At the moment she is simply writing to please herself and in doing so I believe she is strengthening her ability to be self-referencing, something few of us who went through the school system have managed to maintain. Instead I have spent my life worrying what others think of me and whether I measure up to expectations (as evidenced when I projected onto Sophie that she wasn't writing at a specific age which I felt was 'normal'). And she does email her stories to a friend for comments and upgrades - an exchange which is much more appropriate than parental intervention.

So our days pass in a blur of activities which absorb each of us individually but we bump into one another in the kitchen from time to time and always at supper for a family meal. The rest of the day we get on with our own business.

My partner and I both work part-time so one of us is always home with Sophie. She is never seen before midday and stays awake late into the night. This is not my rhythm but I accept that it is hers and can't see any value in trying to change it when there is no need for it to be otherwise.

Sometimes I am appalled at the lack of structure in her life. Frankly when there was that flurry a few years ago of people writing in the EO newsletter about their structured HE systems, I felt quite envious. I would have loved to do HE in that manner - that is how I imagined it would be. But no. My daughter's temperament just does not suit that kind of input.

How will it all turn out? I haven't a clue, but with the metamorphosis over the past 2 years I am more trusting than I was before. Although I

can't imagine how she will fit into a 'normal' lifestyle as an adult, I realise that life is changing so fast these days with the twin catastrophes of climate change and peak oil, that I can't imagine how life is going to be for any of us in a decade. I don't know what skills are going to be of value, and so I leave my daughter in peace, trusting that she is developing what and how she needs to and that somehow it will all work out. The main thing, as a mother, is knowing and observing that she is happy and creative, and right now that feels enough.

Lori Forsyth, Waiheke Island, New Zealand  
lori@quest13.co.nz

### Ordering Books

When ordering books, please consider ordering from Amazon through the link on EO's website as this will result in a small referrer commission for EO. You just need to click on the 'In Association with amazon.co.uk' button.

Click on the "Visit our Shop Icon" on the main page of the EO website - [www.education-otherwise.org](http://www.education-otherwise.org) and then click on the "Powered by Amazon.co.uk" link at the top right.

### Media Questionnaire

There is a short questionnaire available, looking to collect feedback on media coverage of home education, and members' views on EO's policy with regards to the media.

I would be grateful if you could take the time to complete the survey. It is anonymous - no identifying personal data is requested, and your IP address is not saved either.

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=3JrPVg4aCA7N4PATGujdEA\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=3JrPVg4aCA7N4PATGujdEA_3d_3d)

I will be the person collecting the responses, and I will make these available to members after they have been seen by the Trustees.

Thanks,  
Ann Newstead, Media Spokesperson

## The EO Questionnaire

Many thanks to all the members who filled in the EO Questionnaire last year. We plan to publish selected summaries of the results in the Newsletter and we will also upload a full statistical breakdown to the passworded area of the EO Members Forum in due course.

This month we are focusing on the answers to the first section of the questionnaires which were returned by families who at the time of filling in the questionnaire had been members for up to 2 years. We found that we received roughly the same number of responses from people who had been members for up to 2 years as we received from those who had been members from 3- 10 and 3 responses from former members of EO.

It has proved almost impossible to generalise from the results since members have very varied experiences of being in EO. Trustees are studying the full breakdown of questionnaire results with the aim of seeing where we are getting things right and where we could improve our service to members.

### How long have you been a member?

Less than 1 year = 22 ; 1 year = 34 ; 2 years = 27

### Has your membership ever lapsed?

2 years = 3 yes/22 no

### Did it lapse inadvertently?

2 years = 3 yes/1 no

### If so for how long and why did you decide to rejoin?

few months/couldn't afford to renew.

### Have you ever sought help from your local contact?

Less than 1 year = 2 yes/ 12 no ; 1 year = 24 yes/ 14 no ; 2 years = 14 yes/ 13 no

### Have you found it easy to decide who to contact within EO if you needed information about anything?

Less than 1 year = 9 yes/ 20 no ; 1 year = 27 yes/ 3 no ; 2 years = 13 yes/ 6 no

### Have you contacted any of the other Useful Contacts or Council Members from the back page of the Newsletter?

Less than 1 year = 3 yes/ 11 no ; 1 year = 7 yes/ 26 no ; 2 years = 13 yes/ 6 no

### Which postholders have you contacted?

Helpline ; Autonomous support ; GCSE Contact ; Webmaster ; School phobia ; Treasurer ; Local Contacts  
Co-ordinator ; Council Members ; SEN support

### Do you attend local home education group meetings?

Less than 1 year = 6 yes/ 9 no ; 1 year = 19 yes/ 15 no ; 2 years = 17 yes/ 10 no

### Do you think local groups should be more closely associated with national EO. If so, how?

Less than 1 year = 2 yes/ 6 no ; 1 year = 8 yes / 11 no ; 2 years = 8 yes/ 10 no

### **In what ways have you benefited from your membership of EO?**

Discounts; contact list; newsletter; truancy card; social contact; information and advice; confidence to de-register; learn from experience of those who have gone before; feeling part of national movement; feeling that help is there when needed; regional diary in newsletter; penpals; legal information; friends for children; shows LA that I am committed to home education; friends; activities; subsidised trips; local groups; don't feel isolated any more; GCSE contacts; recommended reading; knowing others are there if I need them; local contact; getting a copy of School is Not Compulsory; online support list.

### **Are you happy with the level of support you've had from EO?**

Less than 1 year = 12 yes / 1 no ; 1 year = 26 yes/ 2 no ; 2 years = 19 yes/ 5 no

### **Have you had any problems in your dealings with EO? If yes, please indicate nature of problems**

Less than 1 year = 0 yes/ 13 no ; 1 year = 2 yes/ 32 no ; 2 years = 5 yes/ 21 no

Problems with LC. No response to volunteer offer. Delays in postholders replying to queries or issues.

### **Do you feel connected to EO and part of national organisation**

Less than 1 year = 7 yes/ 5 no ; 1 year = 15 yes/ 13 no ; 2 years = 10 yes/ 14 no

### **Are there ways in which EO could make better links between national EO and local members?**

Less than 1 year = 2 yes/ 6 no ; 1 year = 9 yes/ 16 no ; 2 years = 7 yes/ 6 no

### **Would you be interested in doing voluntary work for EO?**

Less than 1 year = 3 yes/ 5 no ; 1 year = 9 yes/ 16 no ; 2 years = 11 yes/ 12 no

### **Are there ways in which EO could make it easier for members to get involved in the work of the charity ?**

Less than 1 year = 2 yes/ 1 no ; 1 year = 7 yes/ 10 no ; 2 years = 6 yes/ 2 no

## **New EO Website**

After many months of behind the scenes work, Education Otherwise is proud to announce the launch of their newly redesigned website on 1st October 2008.

The improved Education Otherwise site succeeds in combining the best of the old site with newly revamped information together with new features. We hope it will help the charity fulfil its mission statement and for the site to be the first portal for anyone looking for more information about home education. We are particularly pleased to be able to point to the new Contact Form that for the first time means that the network of volunteer postholders within EO can easily be contacted.

Many members tell us that they would like to be able to give a link to their Local Authorities. As such we will also be continuing to rework and promote the Information for Local Authorities section, which aims to provide them with information on home education as a reference tool.

We are sure that you will enjoy the improved usability and navigation of the site and if you have any comments we would love to hear from you. Please use the online Contact Form and send your comments to the "Webmaster".

Over the next few Newsletters, we will be highlighting particular aspects of the new site.

Martinmas: November 11<sup>th</sup>

St Martin's day (Martinmas) is the feast of Martin of Tours who was a Roman soldier. He was born c.AD316 in what is now Hungary and was the son of a Roman officer in Pavia, Italy. The most well-known legend about him is that he cut his red woollen cloak in half in order to share it with a beggar. That night he dreamed that Jesus was wearing the half of cloak he had given away and that he told the angels, "Here is Martin, the Roman soldier who is not baptised; he has clothed me." After this dream Martin converted to Christianity and became a monk.

Later in his life he became Bishop of the Church of Tours and over his lifetime became known as 'The Glory of Gaul'. He died around the age of 81.

He is considered to be the patron saint of beggars, vintners, equestrians, soldiers, tailors, innkeepers, alcoholics and geese. He is usually depicted riding on a horse handing half of his cloak to a beggar or relinquishing his arms. Sometimes he is depicted riding on a donkey. This latter depiction is based on an apocryphal story that whilst walking to Rome the devil appeared and mocked him for not riding on a donkey 'as a bishop should'. St Martin turned the devil into a donkey and rode him to Rome urging him on with the Sign of the Cross.

The remaining piece of cloak (cappa) was preserved as a relic and kept in the 'cappella', the root of the word chapel (through Medieval French 'chapele', meaning 'hooded cloak').

Martinmas was seen as the beginning of Winter (that snowflakes signal the arrival of St. Martin on his white horse) when animals were butchered and another time when the Harvest was celebrated. It was a time of feasting before fasting as in Western Europe from the 4<sup>th</sup> Century to the late Middle Ages the day after Martinmas marked a 40 day period of fasting. It is traditional to eat goose at this time, but also the 'special' bits of carcasses, for instance black pudding.

In some European countries various cakes and breads are eaten. In Germany children are given Martinsmannchen (bread shaped like a man holding a clay pipe). In Poland horseshoe-shaped biscuits are eaten. In Italy biscuits shaped like the saint on horseback are eaten.

It is said that one can predict the weather over Winter on this day: "If geese at Martin's Day stand on ice, they will walk in mud at Christmas." And although seen as the beginning of winter, sometimes there is a spell of good weather called "St Martin's Summer" (also known as an Indian Summer).

On this day it is traditional to walk a lantern procession, carrying paper lanterns and candles and singing songs about St. Martin in return for treats. Often a man dressed as St Martin will ride ahead of the procession on a horse.

Another possible way to mark this day would be to remember those less fortunate than you, in remembrance of St Martin's kindness to the beggar. Perhaps sort through clothing to donate to a charity shop or volunteer to help provide food from a local soup kitchen. Although not inspired by Martinmas, a friend of mine, Sarah, regularly organises parcels to a Women's Refuge that is run by a friend of hers. This year she's organised a scarf knit and it's a great idea (because when you need to leave somewhere quickly, you don't always remember to bring along this sort of thing, in the past she's organised toiletries and other little bits and pieces to send). If you are handy with knitting needles or a

crochet hook, perhaps make a few scarves and hats to take to your local Refuge or to an organisation such as Shelter to distribute to the homeless. Alternatively, if you'd like to join Sarah's scarf knit, please e-mail me (Newsletter Co-ordinator) on [nlco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org](mailto:nlco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org) and I will pass your contact details on to her.

Nikki Haxell

*Sources:*

<http://www.fisheaters.com/customtimeafterpentecost15.html>

<http://www.catholicculture.org/liturgicalyear/activities/view.cfm?id=1193>

<http://www.montessori.com.hk/Martinmas.html>

## Crafty Corner

### Making Paper Lanterns

You can make paper lanterns for Martinmas (or to brighten up a windowsill for any of the autumn festivals - if you struggle carving out a pumpkin at Samhain/Halloween, these may be easier to make!)

They are fairly simple to make, but allow time for the various steps of the project (i.e. a few days).

You will need:

- Watercolour paper (16" x 12")
- Watercolours
- Vegetable Oil
- Scissors
- Tealights or candles
- Metal votive candle holder (if not using tealights)
- A large rock (or something heavy)

#### DAY 1

1. Take a sheet of quality watercolour paper.
2. Have the child paint a pretty picture with watercolors on it.
3. Let it dry overnight.

#### DAY 2

1. Take a paper towel dipped in vegetable oil and rub it over the painting.
2. Repeat until the paper is saturated with the oil. This oil-saturated paper will reflect candle-light beautifully.
3. Let it dry overnight.

#### DAY 3

1. Mark off eight 2" strips, three inches from the bottom of the paper as shown in the diagram below.
2. Cut the strips, but do not cut them off the paper.
3. Form your lantern by rolling the two ends of the painting together, overlapping by one inch.

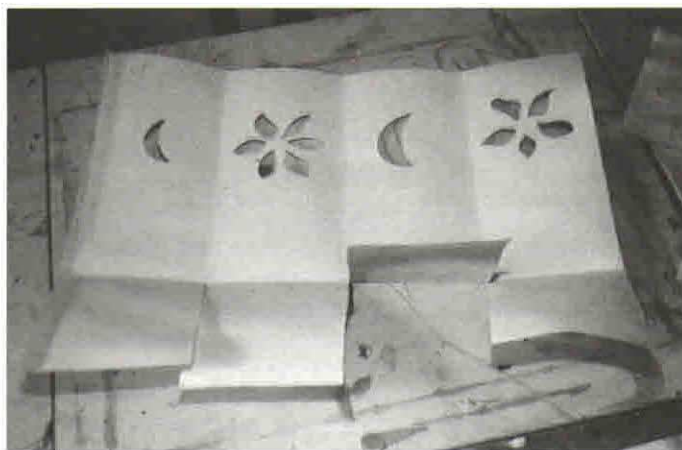


4. Glue the sides of the lantern down along the overlap.
5. Clip with a clothespin until dry.
6. Fold up the strips of the lantern to form the base.
7. Glue into place.
8. Stand your lantern up and place a large rock or a mug into the bottom of it to help give it shape.
9. Let it dry overnight.

#### DAY 4

1. Glue a small metal votive candle holder on the bottom of your lantern.
2. Punch two holes on either side at the top of your lantern for your handle.
3. Make the handle for your lantern out of a piece of yarn 16" long.
4. Place a votive candle in the metal base of the lantern.

Source: <http://www.montessori.com.hk/Martinmas.html>



### Making Jam Jar Lanterns

An alternative to making paper lanterns is to use jam jars. Even very young children are capable of making these with a little help. For them you will need:

- Jam jars
- PVA glue
- Various colours of tissue paper (and black paper if desired)
- Tealights

Cut or tear strips or shapes and stick them to the jam jar. You can either layer them, or cut out silhouettes from black paper and place over the coloured tissue paper.

Once dry you can either attach string to the top of the jam jar (or using wire and pliers, fashion a metal holder for the top) to hang, or place them on a surface.

They will hold tealights

## Talking Teenagers

This is the second book by Ann Boushey, a follow-up to her book written three years ago. Ann is the mother of Jon, an American teenager on the autistic spectrum. In this book, which included interviews with schools and a lawyer, Ann covers everyday issues from vacations and birthday parties to more complex subjects such as making a will. As well as explaining how they, as a family, have dealt with particular situations, Ann also includes her own thoughts and feelings and, sometimes, unanswered questions.

'Talking teenagers' is very easy to read cover to cover, or simply pick it up and browse a chapter. Although by the time your AS child makes it to the teen years, you have probably worked out the best way of tackling most topics through trial and error, I found it comforting to read about someone experiencing the same feelings and concerns and reassured that I'm not doing such a bad job after all. Please note that a couple of chapters concerning wills and educational policy may not be directly relevant to the UK

Mary Wheeler

Mother of 18 year old with Aspergers Syndrome

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## The Diddakoi by Rumer Godden

This book is about a girl called Kizzy who lives in a gypsy wagon with her gran, until gran dies and Kizzy's life changes dramatically. She lives with different people and has to learn to deal with the challenges of living a very different life. We all gave this book 10 (or more!) out of 10. This is a very moving and dramatic story, with very realistic and believable characters and situations. We would recommend this book for anyone aged 5 and over, but it does have some very emotional bits in it and some of the situations Kizzy finds herself in make for quite uncomfortable reading. (Keep the Kleenex handy!)

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## The World According to Humphrey by Betty G Birney

This is a book about a clever hamster who lives in a classroom, except on weekends when he visits different people's houses and teaches them and helps them solve their problems. We thought it was good, but a bit 'cheesy American'. It was an easy, fun read that would probably be enjoyed more by younger readers than older ones, and children who like animals. We gave it ratings from 7/10 to 10/10 (the higher scores came from the younger children).

Reviewed by Huddersfield Home Educators Book Group (aged 6 - 12)

## New Government Bill May Be Unlawful

How dare the government tell me I have to work when I am busy providing a full-time education for my son. If I do not provide a full time education for my son I do not qualify for child benefit. I will refuse point blank to have anyone else look after my child as nobody is capable of doing the job of looking after him as well as I do, I am his mother.

With relation to "European convention on human rights, 1st (Paris) protocol, article 2: No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching. The State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical beliefs."

In the case of all single parents in receipt of income support the State has assumed responsibility for all of our children's education by actively providing the sole source of funding for that education in the form of income support. Withdrawing that income support will take away our ability to ensure such education according to our religious and philosophical beliefs and does not respect our rights in clear breach of human rights law in Europe and all single parent home educators should begin legal action immediately on implementation of the Government's ruling. I certainly will be.

How dare certain members patronise everybody by suggesting ways to balance work and home edding, for some of us that is completely out of the question, we are protected by law and only the European court of human rights can rule on the actions of the State. It is clearly an illegal action and quite frankly I am appalled with EO's response to this blatant breach of the law. I believe it also discriminates against my sons wish to be home educated.

EO has been formed by fighting ridiculous laws like this if we roll over now who knows what the next government move will be.

*Vicki Markwell, 277b New Road Porthcawl South Wales CF36 5BE*

*E-mail: vickimarkwell@hotmail.co.uk*

*Note from Fiona Nicholson, Trustee and Chair of EO Government Policy Group:*

Vicki also sent a letter to trustees and I replied on behalf of EO Government Policy Group with information and assurances about EO's campaigning work in this area. I think there may have been a misunderstanding because the articles about combining paid work with home education which appeared in the last Newsletter were the personal views of the authors concerned, who wanted to share their experiences. It is in no way part of EO's policy stance that all single parents should be in paid employment.

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## Penpal Request

We are from Plano, IL, USA. My daughter, Julia, is 9.5 and likes drawing, crafts, reading, animals, pioneer and native american culture, and American Girl stuff.

She would like a penpal from outside of America.

If your son or daughter would be interested in writing to her please e-mail me at [deepdarkwoods@hotmail.com](mailto:deepdarkwoods@hotmail.com) with 'penpal' in the subject line.

Julia does not have her own email address yet, and this way I can get to know with whom she is corresponding before she does (and giving out our address), plus if you have any questions you can ask them then ☺

Thank you.  
tfjoyner

*Note from Newsletter Co-ordinator:*

*This request is from the Ravelry Homeschooler's list (Ravelry is a knitting forum with many different individual groups). Please remember to use common sense when organising pen pals for your children.*

## Disability and SEN Round Up

The Benefit and Works Guides to DLA and IB have been very popular. We have sent many out to members already, but it isn't too late to request them. As we announced in the August Newsletter, Education Otherwise is now a Professional Member of Benefits and Work <http://benefitsandwork.co.uk/>. By becoming a Professional Members EO now has the licence to reproduce and distribute copies of Benefits and Work guides to EO members. Their guides on Disability Living Allowance and Incapacity Benefit are comprehensive and cover all aspects including renewals and medicals.

If you would like a free copy of these highly-regarded reference works you can contact EO via email or by post. We can only supply the guides to current members of EO so please include your name, address and postcode. If you have your membership number handy please add this as it will save us time in processing your request. On grounds of cost and convenience the charity would obviously prefer to send the guides via email but we will also post guides to you if you don't have internet access. Please email [disabilityawareness@education-otherwise.org](mailto:disabilityawareness@education-otherwise.org) with your name and address and state which guide(s) you require. If you don't have access to email you can also write to "Benefits and Work Guidelines" c/o PO Box 325 Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW. Please give your name and address and state which guide(s) you require.

## Further Top Tip for DLA

### Tips for the Tribunal

Many people are not awarded DLA the first time, and have to go to a tribunal to appeal which can be a scary prospect. Luckily Benefits and Work have produced a DLA appeals guide.

It can be hard to know whether to take your child with you or not. In some cases it may not be appropriate to have the child there as they will have to sit and listen to what is being said about them. On the other hand, if that makes them anxious and their behaviour deteriorates, then it might help your claim if the tribunal can see this for themselves.

Here are three quick tips:

Travel in a way that is appropriate for the disability. If you put in your claim that your child can't cope on public transport, then try not to arrive at the appeal on a bus if you are taking them with you. If you do have to use public transport, explain to them why you had to and how it affected your child.

Dressing smartly is definitely a good idea. But if your claim says that your child can't dress

themselves unless they use certain types of clothing, then they should either be wearing them, or you will need to make sure that you can explain why they are wearing something different and how much extra help it took to dress them.

Watch the Chairperson's pen. Claimants often get themselves into difficulties by talking too much. Answer questions as best you can, but don't just keep talking to fill up silent gaps. You might regret what you say.

From Benefits and Work: "It's true that if there are long pauses and panel members are staring at you it's hard not to blurt something out, just to fill the silence. But what you should do is watch the Chairperson's pen. Is it moving? If yes, then the Chair is still writing notes. The two other panel members know better than to start asking questions until the Chair has caught up. So they're just staring at you to pass the time. Watch the pen. When it stops moving and the Chair looks up, the questions will undoubtedly start again."

## Is a diagnosis necessary or useful when you home educate?

By Christine Waterman

This question has often been discussed on home education forums, and at times there has seemed to be an attitude in some circles that special needs are an invention of schools and the companies that make money out of special programmes and equipment.

However there are families who find, as their child grows, that something is different. They aren't learning or playing like their siblings or peers, and their parent feels caught between wanting the child to develop in his or her own way and feel good about themselves, and a desire to help that child have a full range of opportunities. There is no single answer, but from my own and other people's experience there are some points that are useful to consider when deciding what to do.

I should state that I am specifically talking here about diagnosis of developmental disorders such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Dyspraxia, Dyslexia and ADHD. There is no absolute medical test for any of these. They are all diagnosed on the basis of observation, parental questionnaires and the child's responses to test questions or tasks, and as such they are all subjective. One person may see Asperger syndrome whilst another may see a quirky child with an unusual hobby. Many of the defining behaviours of children with Aspergers or ADHD are things we all do - only to a lesser degree that isn't a problem. This can make it harder to know whether a diagnosis would be helpful, or whether we are just labelling someone in an unhealthy way.

I see the main points to consider as follows:

### **How the child feels about the situation.**

An obvious concern about going for a diagnosis is how the testing, the discussion of the child's difficulties and the possible label will affect the child's self esteem. To some extent this will depend on how the child sees the problem. If for example, they are expressing frustration

with their reading difficulties or co ordination, or worrying about why they are different, then they might welcome greater understanding of their difficulties, and a chance to maybe make improvements. Also, whilst we might be concerned about the effects of a label such as ADHD on the child's self esteem, if their behaviour is really causing a problem, then they might be experiencing other more damaging labels such as stupid, aggressive, spoiled from other children, or sometimes critical extended family members. The child or young person also sometimes has their own private explanation for their differences which can be more upsetting than the reality, and so a diagnosis can come as a relief.

### **How the parent feels about the situation**

From the parents point of view, having a diagnosis gives you something to read up on, to research on the net, and access to support groups. Whilst this may not provide treatment or a cure, it can be a huge help in understanding why your child behaves a certain way and how to help them respond to the situations they find difficult. Parents talk about the relief at understanding that their parenting wasn't to blame. The child isn't being difficult on purpose, and now there are new strategies than can help. Just as a diagnosis of dyslexia can help you rethink your approach to teaching reading, a diagnosis of ASD can help you rethink your approach to doing your supermarket shopping.

However, it is not always necessary to go as far as getting a formal diagnosis to access this kind of information. If you suspect your child has dyslexia, for example, there is a great deal of information available on the internet and in books to help you learn about the condition, and the teaching approaches that other have found helpful. It can therefore be possible to give your child the help they need without going through the process of a diagnosis. Many parents find this a useful way to proceed, particularly when the child is young, and when

they are not expressing concerns themselves about their differences. There are also many parents who believe their child to be on the autistic spectrum, who use the information available on support networks to help them manage challenging day to day situations, and who use the various teaching techniques that have been developed for these children without having the diagnosis formalised.

#### **Help From Outside agencies**

One thing that might change that approach is the need to engage with certain outside agencies. To access help from the health authority, in the form of physiotherapy, speech therapy, or Occupational Therapy it won't be necessary to have a diagnosis at the start, only a clear description of the difficulty, but this process might lead to a diagnosis.

#### **Diagnosis and Disability Living Allowance**

Disability Living Allowance does not depend on you having a diagnosis, just a clear description of how the child's difficulties affect their daily life and the amount of extra care that they need. However it does help if you have reports from professionals to back up what you have to say, so the process of obtaining a diagnosis can be helpful in getting DLA.

#### **Helping with Exams**

It is essential when it comes to getting help with exams - whether that is a scribe, a prompt or extra time. A report from a suitably qualified person is needed, but as the report can be no more than a couple of years old, there is no need to assess the child years in advance. It is worth checking arrangements for this kind of help when they first start studying towards a particular exam to allow time to get the right sort of assessment done, as the report cannot be submitted at the last minute.

#### **Effect on Home Education**

Having a diagnosis will make no difference to whether or not the Local Authority has to provide anything towards your home education. You still have the same right to home educate, and the LA is not obliged to provide funding as long as the child's needs are being met. Whether

or not you mention the child's diagnosis in your dealings with the LA is entirely a personal decision. It may help to explain why the child is working at a different level to the one expected, or why you are taking an unusual approach, but equally it may not be necessary to share that information.

#### **The Process Itself**

The process of seeking a diagnosis can be painful, time consuming, and expensive, and this in itself may be a reason for not doing it. It will almost certainly involve something like the WISC test to assess the child's abilities across a range of tasks and while for some children these will seem like some games with an attentive adult, to others it will be obvious that they are a test and they may be sensitive to perceived failure.

It may be very stressful for some children to co-operate with a couple of hours or more at table-top activities, and some assessors are more skilled than others at making the experience pleasant. Parents may find the questionnaires and observation intrusive, and dispiriting as it causes them to focus on the difficulties. On the other hand, sometimes an assessment is heartening, as it picks up how well a child is doing despite specific difficulties. Another concern is that the assessor has their own pre-conceived ideas, and may be blinded by their own interest in a specific disability that they miss a possible different diagnosis. (for example a dyslexia specialist diagnosed dyslexia and missed a significant visual problem that was causing the reading difficulties, and sensory problems are sometimes overlooked by autism specialists.) Alternatively they may have negative views about home education, and so it is worth trying to find someone who comes recommended.

EO disability group would be interested to hear from people who have undergone assessments who have tips that they can pass on to others. Please send your thoughts on getting an assessment to: [disabilityawareness@education-otherwise.org](mailto:disabilityawareness@education-otherwise.org)

We have a number of items to add to our GPG article in the August Newsletter. There is still time for concerned individuals to respond to a couple of public consultations which will affect home educators. One originates from DWP and concerns proposals to scrap Income Support, the other comes from the DCSF who are looking at ways to tighten up the guidance on "children missing education". Education Otherwise Government Policy Group and EO Disability Group will put in full official responses on behalf of EO but we have also found in the past that responses from individuals can help tip the balance in our favour in the final result. Wherever possible the EO campaign site has the latest tips on how to fill in the consultation forms (which may be completed online or via email or sent through the post.)

## 1/ Welfare Reform

**Lone Parents off Income Support and on to Jobseeker's Allowance when youngest child is 12/10/7**  
At the time of writing there is no date for the publication of the draft statutory instrument amending Income Support entitlement for single parents, but we anticipate that it will be brought before both houses of parliament by the end of October. It will then have to be voted by approval of both houses. EO Government Policy Group intends to press for the regulations to be scrutinised by the House of Lords Merits committee.

The petition for home educating lone parents to remain on Income Support closed on July 22<sup>nd</sup> with 838 signatories. We are currently awaiting a written response from Downing Street.

### **Government Green Paper Proposes to Scrap Income Support**

On the last day of parliament in July, the Department of Work and Pensions published a Green Paper and launched a consultation on scrapping Income Support and moving to a "single over-arching benefit system" comprising Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment Support Allowance. The consultation closes on October 22<sup>nd</sup>. Any measures to abolish Income Support will take approximately 2 years for a new Bill to become law.

Under these proposals lone parent claimants would also be required to undergo mandatory skills training as a condition of receiving benefit once their youngest child reaches the age of seven.

It is important to note that under these proposals any skills training or employment schemes for lone parents with children under 7 will be voluntary. Parents with children under 7 will probably find the experience of JSA to be far more similar to the current Income Support regime for lone parents than to the current standard JSA. However the small print of the regulations about "signing on" and "work focused interviews" and "benefit sanctions" may later be subject to change, particularly if the Labour Government loses the next election. For this reason and many others EO is opposing every change and requiring further exemptions both for claimants who home educate and also for claimants who have children with disabilities. EO is talking with the Chair and other members of the Department of Work and Pensions Lone Parent/Child Poverty Stakeholder Group.

The legal underpinning for some of these measures is already in place but the majority of the proposals will require major new laws not just new regulations. However, the mechanism for the introduction of Employment Support Allowance in October 2008 has already been put in place earlier this year via Statutory Instrument 795 2008.

**Action Point** : Visit the EO Campaign site to check what is happening about lone parent benefits and also to find tips on how to answer the consultation questions about abolishing Income Support. Please remember that the consultation ends on October 22<sup>nd</sup>.

<http://www.freedomforchildrentogrow.org/update.php?show=all> (or put "EO campaign site" into Google.)

## 2/ Children Missing Education

On August 29<sup>th</sup> EO met with the DCSF to discuss proposals in the new Government consultation which seeks to change the statutory guidance on "children missing education". The proposed changes would have the effect of categorising home-educated young people as potentially vulnerable and at risk of not receiving "suitable" education. EO retained the services of barrister Ian Dowty who made some excellent technical points at the meeting which the DCSF policy leads said they would have to take back to their legal team. We have been told that new guidance is due to be published by early December so we have been urging people to get their responses in as soon as possible. The deadline is 5 pm on October 24 but from the point of view of influencing the final outcome the sooner the responses are in the better.

Action Points: Visit the EO campaign site for tips on how to fill in the consultation response form.

<http://www.freedomforchildrentogrow.org/update.php?show=all> (or put "EO campaign site" into Google.)

## 3/ Access to exam centres: new meeting with the Independent Schools Council

By the time you read this EO will have had a follow-up meeting with the Independent Schools Council to discuss access to their examination centres for home educated private candidates. EO also made a detailed submission to the Charities Commission consultation on public benefit for fee paying charities and the advancement of education and we know this is an area where independent schools are anxious to demonstrate that they are offering facilities and assistance to people who can't afford their fees. There will be a report of the meeting on the Education Otherwise website and the EO campaign site and we will also publish an article in the December Newsletter.

## 4/ DCSF Parents Panel and Time to Talk consultation events

EO once again secured invitations for several members to attend exclusive events designed to bring parents' input to the Government's Children's Plan. The National Parents Panel only has 30 parents so we were particularly pleased to be able to send 2 EO reps to the London event in July who were able to make pro home education points all day and also talk freely with Ministers and senior civil servants. By the time you read this we also anticipate that Annette Taberner from the Government Policy Group will have attended a parents focus group in Leeds in September which we understand will only have 5 participants. We are currently being told that a Government Minister will also attend the event. We will publish a report in the December Newsletter.

*Fiona Nicholson* Chair EO Government Policy Group on behalf of GPG members Annette Taberner and Ann Newstead. Contact details: [governmentpolicy@education-otherwise.org](mailto:governmentpolicy@education-otherwise.org) or c/o PO BOX 325 KINGS LYNN PE34 3XW.

### **References:**

DCSF consultation site <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/>

DWP consultation <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/welfarereform/noonewrittenoff/index.asp>

The trustees are pleased to announce that they have chosen to appoint Roarke as "Executive Chair" with immediate effect.

In this role Roarke has become the chair of the Trustees in order to help them fully implement their current program in time for the 2009 AGM. This role is not to be confused with the role of "Chair of EO".

Roarke can be contacted via the new Contact Section of the EO Website.

## The EO Council - Have YOU considered it?

As you may know we are already half way through the EO year which means that the trustees are already looking toward the next AGM. You see that is one of the roles of being a trustee - forward planning.

There are two ways to become a trustee, the first is by public vote at the AGM and the second is to be co-opted. Part of the process of council is to make sure that everyone who wants a chance to be a trustee can be and so at each AGM 1/3 of the elected trustees resign their post. If they wish to they can then re-apply for their old position again and a vote is taken as to whether to re-appoint them or not.

Also any trustees who were co-opted within the year resign and again if they choose to, they can put themselves forward for re-election. The Memorandum and Articles of association (the EO company rule book) says that there has to be a certain number of trustees at any given time in order for the business of EO to be decided and carried out.

At the AGM in 2009 several of the trustees who are due to stand down have expressed their desire to not stand for re-appointment which whilst sad in many ways is also good in others. It allows for members of EO who have an interest in how the organisation is run, to stand for election to the council so that they can have an active part in seeing EO run.

So what does a trustee do? Is it for me? and a thousand and one other questions are hopefully

running through your mind at this point. What follows is a description of what a trustee is expected to do:

**Position Title: Member, Board of Trustees**

### Function

- Provide governance to Education Otherwise, represent it to the community, and accept the ultimate legal authority for it.

### Duties: Planning

- Approve EO's philosophy and review the management's performance in achieving it.
- Annually assess the environment and approve EO's strategy in relation to it.
- Annually review and approve EO's plans for funding its strategy.
- Review and approve EO's five year financial goals.
- Annually review and approve EO's budget.
- Approve major policies.

### Organizations

- Elect, monitor, appraise, advise, support, reward, and, when necessary, change top management.

- Be assured that management succession is properly being provided.
- Be assured that the status of organisational strength and manpower planning is equal to the requirements of the long range goals.
- Approve appropriate compensation and benefit policies and practices.
- Propose a slate of directors to members and fill vacancies as needed.
- Determine eligibility for and appoint Board Committees in response to recommendations of the Nominating Committee.
- Annually review the performance of the Board and take steps to improve its performance.

#### Operations

- Review the results achieved by management as compared with EO's philosophy, annual and long range goals, and the performance of similar institutions.
- Be certain that the financial structure of EO is adequate for its current needs and its long-range strategy.
- Provide candid and constructive criticism, advice, and comments.
- Approve major actions of EO, such as capital expenditures and major program and service changes.

#### Audit

- Be assured that the Board and its committees are adequately and currently informed - through reports and other methods - of the condition of EO and its operations.
- Be assured that published reports properly reflect the operating results and financial condition of EO.

- Review compliance with relevant material laws affecting the Institution.

If the above has left you interested in being a trustee or if it has raised some questions that you would like answered please contact me and I will do my best to answer them.

If you think that you would like to put your name forward to become a trustee the process is really quite simple.

First you need to get a member to propose your nomination and second, you need to announce your nomination in plenty of time.

The deadline for the next Newsletter is 1st November. If you would like to stand at the 2009 AGM you will need to prepare a short piece about who you are and why you would like to stand and get it to Nikki, the newsletter editor by then.

This is so that your details can be published in plenty of time for people to consider your nomination. It does seem a long time away however if we wait until the Feb Newsletter there will not be enough time for people to look at the nominations.

I really hope that you will ask me some questions and I also hope that you will consider nomination. Being a trustee is very hard work: however it is also very rewarding.

My phone number is on the back of this Newsletter and my email is there too. You can also contact me via the new website contact form.

Speak to you soon,

*Roarke*

## Make Sure You Have a Vote at EO General Meetings

At the back of this month's Newsletter you will find a Signed Up Members Form. At present only Signed Up Members are entitled to vote at EO General Meetings. These include Annual General Meetings or AGMs where Trustees are elected and Extraordinary General Meetings or EGMs which may take place between AGMs.

Please note that you can now appoint a proxy to vote on your behalf at meetings which means you still have a vote even if you are unable to attend yourself.

By completing and returning the Signed Up Member form to PO BOX 325 KINGS LYNN PE34 3XW you are ensuring your right to cast a vote. There will shortly be an Extraordinary General Meeting to vote on the revised Articles and Memoranda of Association.

Fiona Nicholson  
on behalf of the Trustees

\*\*\*\*\*

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

I (Print Name):

wish to become a Signed up Member of Education Otherwise Association Limited.

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

Signature of Member:

Date:

EO Membership Number if known:

Address (print in full)

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

EO Company Secretary c/o PO Box 325, Kings Lynn Norfolk PE34 3XW

Please note that Education Otherwise will post any correspondence related to Signed up Members to the member's address as listed on EO's membership database and it is the member's responsibility to keep the Database Administrator informed of any change of address via the PO BOX listed above or by emailing [database@education-otherwise.org](mailto:database@education-otherwise.org)

In any correspondence accompanying the SUM form please enclose SAE if you require confirmation of receipt.

## Team to Help Co-ordinate AGM Event in February 2009

Volunteers are needed to form a team to help organise the February 2009 Annual General Meeting in the Birmingham/West Midlands area. We want the AGM Event to be a day of interest for home educators with stalls, workshops, activities and guest speakers as well as conducting the business of EO. The AGM is where Trustees are elected and is a chance for members to meet the people who work in EO and to find out more about what the organisation is doing. There are a number of short term volunteer roles available running till February 2009. You can arrange to make a shorter or longer time commitment based round your family's needs.

To make the most of our AGM Event we'll need people who can cover the areas of event planning, networking, catering, administration etc. We also need people to help on the day. You might have the skills yourself or be good at finding the right person to do the job. You might not be sure precisely what you can offer, but just want to help.

Some team members will need to live locally, but there will be other ways to make a contribution if you live further afield, so if in doubt please contact the co-ordinators for a chat. This ad will also appear in the December edition of the Newsletter but preliminary work is already underway for the AGM Event so please get in touch sooner rather than later.

Co-ordinators Julie - [julie.bunker@zen.co.uk](mailto:julie.bunker@zen.co.uk) Tel: 07976 710629 or Fiona - [fnicholson@education-otherwise.org](mailto:fnicholson@education-otherwise.org) Tel: 08445 868831

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## Local Contact Co-ordinator Admin Assistant

The work would be helping to update and maintain the database of LC's. Mailing to Local contacts as well as organising networking and

training days over the next year. This voluntary role would suit a young person wanting to gain experience in administration and event management.

Please contact Carla Macgregor if interested.  
Tel: 08445 868827

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## 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](mailto:fnicholson@education-otherwise.org)

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## Looking for Volunteers for the Helpline

We are looking to recruit new volunteers for the Helpline. 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 is providing a training session that will be paid for by EO. There will

also be further training opportunities throughout the year.

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. If you're interested and would like to find out more or have any questions then please contact:

Jo Berry, Tel: 08445 868821,  
jberry@education-otherwise.org  
Or Pauline Butterworth, Tel: 08445 868826  
pbutterworth@education-otherwise.org

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### Flexi-school Support

Do you have current or past experience of flexi-school or part-time attendance at school either at primary or secondary level? Education Otherwise is often asked about contacts who are willing to discuss experiences of flexi-schooling. EO Government Policy Group provides the legal backup information but direct personal experience would be most welcome either via phone or email. We are also interested in finding volunteers who could give further information about flexi-school arrangements for children with Special Educational Needs.

Volunteers are allocated an EO Flextel phone number and EO email address and personal details are not in the public domain. From the point of view of the volunteer if you have Caller Display you also know when you are getting a "work call". This job can be shared.

Please contact Fiona Nicholson of EO Government Policy Group for more information.

fnicholson@education-otherwise.org  
Tel: 08445 868831

or enquirysecretary@education-otherwise.org  
08445 883539

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### Structured Home Education Support

Do you home educate in a structured way? Perhaps you follow a curriculum or have some sort of timetable for your week. Could you be available to answer questions about your methods and/or offer support to new home educators. It would also complement the work done by EO Media team. For this job it is envisaged that you would take referrals from EO Helpline and enquiries team and you might also be approached directly by members who see your contact details published in the Newsletter. The postholder could also work with the Newsletter Co-ordinator on structured home education features since we know that these have proved popular in the Newsletter in the past.

Volunteers are allocated an EO Flextel phone number and EO email address and personal details are not in the public domain. From the point of view of the volunteer if you have Caller Display you also know when you are getting a "work call". This job can be shared.

Please contact:  
enquirysecretary@education-otherwise.org  
Tel: 08445 883539 for more information

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### Single Parent Family Contacts

Do you have experience of home educating as a single parent? Could you be available to provide information and/or support? Education Otherwise Government Policy Group provides additional legal backup information about welfare rights legislation and the EO Helpline also takes general calls and email enquiries and could refer individual queries to the Single Parent Contact. In addition the volunteer for this post could get queries from members who see the contact details in the Newsletter.

Volunteers are allocated an EO Flextel phone number and EO email address and personal details are not in the public domain. From the point of view of the volunteer if you have Caller

Display you also know when you are getting a "work call". This job can be shared.

Please contact:

enquirysecretary@education-otherwise.org

Tel: 08445 883539 for more information

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## Research Contacts

Would you enjoy investigating and organising research into home education methods and achievements. Education Otherwise is often asked for this information by the media and we need contributors to keep our research bank up to date on the website and in our printed materials. For this post it would also be useful to liaise with EO Government Policy Group and EO Disability Group.

Volunteers are allocated an EO Flextel phone number and EO email address and personal details are not in the public domain. From the point of view of the volunteer if you have Caller Display you also know when you are getting a "work call". This job can be shared.

For more information please contact Fiona Nicholson of EO Government Policy Group and EO Disability Group  
fnicholson@education-otherwise.org 08445 868831

or enquirysecretary@education-otherwise.org  
Tel: 08445 883539

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## Anti-Bullying Support

Education Otherwise Helpline and enquiry team receive a number of calls about bullying. We are very aware that bullying in schools is one reason why families decide to home educate. Bullying can have a traumatic impact for years after the event. Could you be available to offer support and information to members. EO Helpline take general calls and would refer specific queries to Anti Bullying Support. In addition members might get in touch directly from seeing your contact details in the Newsletter.

Volunteers are allocated an EO Flextel phone number and EO email address and personal details are not in the public domain. From the point of view of the volunteer if you have Caller Display you also know when you are getting a "work call". This job can be shared.

For more information please contact:

enquirysecretary@education-otherwise.org

Tel: 08445 883539

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## Book Reviews and Software

The Education Otherwise Newsletter includes a review section for new and existing educational material which we feel will be of interest to our members. We need someone who can co-ordinate a reviewing team and also write their own reviews. You would also liaise with the Newsletter Co-ordinator.

Volunteers are allocated an EO Flextel phone number and EO email address and personal details are not in the public domain. From the point of view of the volunteer if you have Caller Display you also know when you are getting a "work call". This job can be shared.

For more information please contact:  
nlco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org  
Tel: 01302 863195

Or enquirysecretary@education-otherwise.org  
Tel: 08445 883539

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## Advertising Co-ordinator

The Education Otherwise Newsletter features advertisements from individuals and companies that have services that may be of interest to home-educators. We need someone who can co-ordinate the ads.

This may include keeping a list of advertisers and keeping in regular contact with them to remind them of upcoming copy dates, organising any ads onto the page (including the ability to manipulate images in a program such as Photoshop); liaising with the Newsletter Co-ordinator, Website Co-ordinator, Database

Administrator and the Treasurer. It will also involve some Sales as the Advertising Co-ordinator will be expected to source new business for the Newsletter.

For further information please contact Nikki Haxell, Newsletter Co-ordinator:  
nlco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org  
Tel: 08445 883532

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### Media team vacancy

The current media contact for London and Sussex, Winnie Durdant-Hollamby, has done a brilliant job now for many years but, as her girls

are growing up, she is looking to step down from the role in the near future. We therefore have a vacancy for a London/Sussex area media contact.

Home education is more and more in the news and it is more important than ever that we have regional contacts across the country.

For information about what the role entails, and the support available, please contact the Media Spokesperson, Ann Newstead. Email: media-spokesperson@education-otherwise.org  
Tel: 08445 868839.

## Local Contact Round-up

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 Contacts will be CRB checked.

If you would be like to consider being a Local Contact please contact Carla: 08445 868827 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 like to do.

### Vacancies:

#### England

Buckinghamshire  
Channel Islands  
Cheshire: Crewe and Nantwich  
Cleveland  
Essex: Barking and Dagenham  
Essex: South East  
Gloucestershire  
Gloucestershire South  
Hampshire  
Herefordshire  
Kent: South East  
Lancashire: Blackpool  
Lancashire: Bolton  
London: Enfield  
London: Richmond and Kingston  
Manchester South  
Merseyside  
Norfolk: Breckland  
Shropshire

Staffordshire South  
Surrey  
Sussex West  
West Midlands: Birmingham and Solihull  
West Midlands: Dudley  
Yorkshire East: Hull  
Yorkshire West: Leeds  
Yorkshire West: Calderdale and Kirklees

#### Scotland

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

#### Wales

Ceredigion  
Glamorgan



## No More School

By Meg Harper

This popular and exciting novel for age 8+ about home-educated children is back in print!

Available from Amazon or signed copies direct from Meg (who home-edded her 4 for 14 years!)

Send £8.00 (incl. P&P) per book and your address to: Meg at 6, Turner Close, Warwick CV34 6PZ

Need more info?

Contact her through her website:

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

## Cheap broadband and Phone Calls

The Phone Co-op has introduced a tiered rate for broadband, so 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:

- 1) Go straight to their website [www.thephone.coop](http://www.thephone.coop)
- 2) Go to the EO website
- 3) Phone 0845 458 9000

\*\*\*Remember to quote the affinity number 017\*\*\*

## IGCSE English course for home-educators

Friendly, approachable distance learning course written by home-educator who is also a professional writer, English tutor and AQA examiner.

- Suitable for 12+
- Doesn't assume prior knowledge
- 10 marked assignments with detailed feedback.
- Unlimited phone and email support
- Paper and audio CD format.
- Much more...

For course samples and further details:

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

Phone: (01952) 605865

## 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. A full new year begins on 21 October 2008, so contact us for the new prices or look on the EO website.

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, Guardian lesson packs, whiteboard activities, randomly generated tests, a daily news service for 9 - 14 year old and covers the primary and secondary curriculum.

For more info or a free trial to see if it will suit you and your family, contact Lynda.  
Email: [learnpremium@education-otherwise.org](mailto:learnpremium@education-otherwise.org) or Tel: 08445 867541

## Distance Learning Courses for Cambridge Board International GCSEs

Maths, English, Biology, Physics, Accounting,  
Business Studies, Environmental Management,  
History, Geography.

No coursework required. ODLQC accredited.  
Text book(s), study planner, tutor-marked  
assignments, mock exams all provided. Still **only**  
**£145.**

Key Stage 3 (11-14) courses in Maths, English and  
Science. ODLQC accredited. £105 per subject.

**A complete service for the home  
educator at affordable prices**

**[www.littlearthur.org.uk](http://www.littlearthur.org.uk)**

or Tel: 01720422457 or via ODLQC website

## Advertising in the Newsletter

The Education Otherwise Newsletter has a  
distribution of around 4,300 copies bi-  
monthly.

Our advertising rates are from as little as  
£25.00 per issue (member rate) for an 1/8  
page (although 1/8 may be upgraded subject  
to space).

Rates for inserts are also available and are  
offered on a first-come-first-served basis  
(inserts are limited to two per issue).

If you are interested in advertising in the  
Newsletter please contact:  
[advertising@education-otherwise.org](mailto:advertising@education-otherwise.org) or call  
01302 863195 and speak to Nikki Haxell  
(Newsletter Co-ordinator).

## SPECIAL NOTICE Learnpremium Website

Learnpremium, the online educational resource,  
offers almost complete coverage of the core  
curriculum followed in schools through a huge  
range of lessons, interactive resources,  
activities, worksheets and tests delivered in  
one handy website.

The price EO can offer members is a huge  
discount from the £200 - £300 Learnpremium  
charge individuals. It buys you access to the  
Primary resource, the Secondary resource and  
the LearnNewsdesk and can be used by all the  
family. At the time of going to print we  
haven't confirmed the price with  
Learnpremium for the new year which will start  
on 21 October 2008, so if you want to find out  
more then email: [learnpremium@education-otherwise.org](mailto:learnpremium@education-otherwise.org)  
or phone 08445 867541.

We will put up new prices on the EO website  
and in the EO members forums as soon as  
they're confirmed. For early notification, then  
send me your email address and I'll contact  
you when prices are confirmed with joining  
details.

## 2009 Annual General Meeting

The Trustees of Education Otherwise  
Association would like to announce that the  
date for the **2009 Annual General Meeting** is  
February 21<sup>st</sup> to be held in Birmingham.

The venue detail will be published in the next  
Newsletter.

If you have an item that you would like to see  
discussed at the meeting you need to submit  
this to the Database Administrator by the  
14th December. This is so that it can be  
considered for inclusion on the agenda to be  
published with the February Newsletter.

Email: [database@education-otherwise.org](mailto:database@education-otherwise.org) or  
Post to:

Education Otherwise AGM, PO Box 325, Kings  
Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW

All regular meetings listed below are included automatically in every issue, and may be run by either EO members or by home educators who aren't EO members. Please call the group organiser on the number given or email them for further details of the meetings/events in your area. This is a completely revised list of groups, and some group organisers have yet to renew their entry so won't be listed in this issue. The EO Local Contact for each area is listed, and they may be able to give you details of other groups in your area.

To Group Organisers: please remember when giving details of events that the EO newsletter can be read by people who are not EO members. If you would like your group to have a listing or if you have any changes to make to your existing entry you will need to complete and return a permission form. Please email Jo on: regionaldiary@education-otherwise.org or Tel: Jo on 08445 853894 and she will send you one. You can also obtain a permission form by sending an sae to Education Otherwise Regional Diary, PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW or by downloading one from the Official EO Forms board of the members forum on the new EO website.

Each adult whose contact details are listed for your group needs to complete a permission form before we can add their details to your entry, so if someone new wants to be added to your groups listing as contact, they will need to ask us for one of these forms before we can add their name and number or email address to the Regional Diary? Can group organisers please let Jo know of any changes to venues, days and times or contact details for the group.

Please call the group before attending to make sure it is happening, and if not please let me know. Not all groups listed are EO groups.

## England

### **AVON**

**Bath LC:** Louise, 08445 003907 : bath-lc@education-otherwise.org

### **BEDFORDSHIRE**

**LC:** Pauline, 08445 868894 : beds-lc@education-otherwise.org

### **BERKSHIRE**

**LC:** Lynn, 08445 868842 : berkshire-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Berkshire Home Educators**, email list for home educators in Berkshire and surrounding areas:  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/BerkshireHomeEducators>

**Heroes**, support group for young people who are home educated, Dawn, 01628 783107 :  
[www.homeeducators.co.uk](http://www.homeeducators.co.uk)

### **BRISTOL**

**LC:** Ian, Tel: 08445 003756 : bristol-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Bristol Home Education Learn Place ( HELP)**, meeting Monday & Friday, Carla: 0117 9354389 :  
[carla-maria@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:carla-maria@blueyonder.co.uk)

### **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

**LC:** Georgeanna, 08445 003763 : bucks-lc@education-otherwise.org

**MKHEN, Milton Keynes Home Educators Network** extends a warm welcome to all.

Activities, social events and support. Also has an excellent relationship with LA.

[www.mkhen.org.uk](http://www.mkhen.org.uk) : Georgeanne : sienna-swift7@powernet.co.uk

### **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE - SOUTH**

**LC:** Sandi, 08445 003859 : southbucks-lc@education-otherwise.org

### **CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

**LC:** Sarah, 08445 003769 : cambs-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Peterborough Home Educators**, friendly group meeting twice weekly for activities including art, crafts, science, ice skating, bowling, cooking and lots more, Sarah : [sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com](mailto:sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com) : 07784 169260

## CHESHIRE

**Cheshire-South LC:** Carrie, 08445 003781 :

cheshire-lc1@education-otherwise.org

**Cheshire-East LC:** Gillian, 08445 853874 :

cheshire-lc2@education-otherwise.org

**Cheshire-Macclesfield LC:** Debbie, 08445

003832 : macclesfield-lc@education-

otherwise.org

**Mid Cheshire Home Educators**, bi-monthly

meetings and regular outings, Ange :

che@talktalk.net :

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

**SCANS-HEAG**. Regular activities, meetings and

trips for all ages. Separate teen activities.

Carrie, 01782 786720 : scans.heag@yahoo.co.uk

**CLEVELAND LC:** Pauline, 08445 868897 :

cleveland-lc@education-otherwise.org

## CORNWALL

**LC:** Natasha, 08445 868849 : cornwall-

lc@education-otherwise.org

**Festivals and Photos SW**. A contacts group set

up to help home educating families keep in touch

and provide opportunities for meeting up and

photography; sharing their interest in the local

culture and environment. Examples for a meet up

are: local festivals, fetes, fayres, home

educating and National Trust events, country

side walks and picnics etc :

andrew.denise@hotmail.co.uk

**Cornwall Home Educators** meet every Thursday.

For a copy of local newsletter contact Michelle.

Newsletter also covers other home ed events in

Cornwall: micha.dickson@virgin.net : 01326

250298

**Menheniot nr Liskeard**, Small School, Mondays

term-times. Activities aimed at 5-11

years.10.30am-1.30pm followed by time for

playing, Tania, 01822 835902

**Penzance**, PZ Home Ed, Monday pm for

workshop during term-time, Ruth, 01736

350887

**CUMBRIA LC:** Jayne, 08445 003793 : cumbria-

lc@education-otherwise.org

**DERBYSHIRE - DERBY CITY LC:** Karen,

08445 003796 : derby-lc@education-

otherwise.org

## DEVON

**East Devon & Exeter LC :** Kate 08445 003798

: eastdevon-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Festivals and Photos SW**. A contacts group set

up to help home educating families keep in touch

and provide opportunities for meeting up and

photography; sharing their interest in the local

culture and environment. Examples for a meet up

are: local festivals, fetes, fayres, home

educating and National Trust events, country

side walks and picnics etc :

andrew.denise@hotmail.co.uk

**Exeter**, Free Range Learning, Pottery sessions

weekly in well equipped studio. Neil, 01363

82314

**Exeter Free Range Learning**, meets

Wednesdays, social group for all ages, Annie,

01392 434167

**Exeter Free Range Learning Youth**, Youth and

Social group every Tuesday, Erinn, 01392

434167

**DEVON-NORTH LC:** Jo, 08445 868843 :

northdevon-lc@education-otherwise.org

**North Devon**, Home Grown Kids, Twice weekly

meetings and events. **Swimbridge**, Weds 1.30-

4.30pm **Barnstaple**, Fridays, Funderzone Term

time only, Jo, EO Local Contact North Devon

: 08445 868843

**DEVON-SOUTH LC:** Bridget, 08445 003804 :

devons-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Dart Valley Home Ed Network**, Out and about

visits: Natural History, History and Photography

and more. Members only internet group. Hannah

& Gordon, 01803 762788 : lindnich@tesco.net

## DEVON/DORSET/SOMERSET BORDERS

**Home Education Centre**, 2 days/week.

Workshops, sports, activities and support.

[www.homeeducationcentre.org.uk](http://www.homeeducationcentre.org.uk) : Karen, 01460

30461 : karen@homeeducationcentre.org.uk : or

Louise, 01460 61325

## DORSET

**Dorset-North LC:** Sharon, 08445 003807 :

ndorset-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Dorset-East (Bournemouth) LC:** Vicki, 08445

003726 : Bournemouth-lc@education-

otherwise.org

**Dorset-East (Poole) LC:** Carol, 08445 003848 :

poole-lc@education.otherwise.org

**Festivals and Photos SW.** A contacts group set up to help home educating families keep in touch and provide opportunities for meeting up and photography; sharing their interest in the local culture and environment. Examples for a meet up are: local festivals, fetes, fayres, home educating and National Trust events, country side walks and picnics etc :  
andrew.denise@hotmail.co.uk

**North Dorset, HEOND (Home Educators of North Dorset),** Friendly group, meeting weekly in Sturminster Newton, June, 01258 471949 :  
bugchick@mac.com

**Bournemouth, HEED,** Bournemouth weekly Monday meetings, Carol, 01202 677066 :  
carolstonehe@yahoo.co.uk : www.he-ed.org.uk

#### **DURHAM**

**LC:** Karen, 08445 868841 : durham-  
lc@education-otherwise.org

#### **ESSEX**

**LC:** Corinne, 08445 003808 : essex-  
lc@education-otherwise.org

**Chelmsford,** monthly meetings, 3rd Thursday, 2 - 4pm. Sarah, tower@tesco.net : Lena,  
choccyfudge-go@yahoo.co.uk

**Leigh on Sea,** Thames Kids Club, meetings held Fridays from 11am to 3pm in Leigh on Sea. £3 per family. thameskidsclub@googlemail.com :  
Roxy, 01702 334521: Raquel, 07958 045885 :  
Thea, 01702 309869

**Essex Home Educators,** meetings monthly in Chelmsford, Colchester and Tiptree, and weekly in Southend. There are also regular meetings for swimming, bowling and ice skating, etc., and at least two trips out around the county each month. Details of all these in Essex Epicycle Newsletter available by email, Corinne :  
epicycle@wavy.org

#### **GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

**Cirencester and Cotswold Meetings.** Will answer queries about home education in general and offer information about local groups and activities. Pam: pjp@ragingbull.com : 01285 721008

**Stroud,** email group keeps families in touch, anyone can arrange an activity or get together, Nick, 01453 840036 : nick.weir@localfood.org.uk

#### **HAMPSHIRE**

**Southampton and area, SEEDS,** for children age 3+, home educators in Southampton and area, Lyn: www.groups.yahoo.com/group/seeds1  
**Havant area, ActiveO,** meetings most weekdays : www.activeo.org.uk : Julie 01243 552472

#### **HEREFORDSHIRE (+ Monmouthshire)**

Monmouth Home Educators, meetings on Tuesdays at Rockfield Community Centre for fun and friendship, arts, crafts, games and sports - football, hockey, rounders, cricket. All ages welcome. Check for dates and times. Roxy, 01989 768128 : cdsnhf@googlemail.com

#### **HERTFORDSHIRE**

**LC:** Maya, 08445 003816 : herts-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Herts Home Educators Yahoo Group** for events and friendship. To join please email Karen: karenbartlett@btinternet.com

#### **ISLE OF MAN**

**LC:** Anthony & Leandra, 08445 003949 :  
isleofman-lc@education-otherwise.org

#### **ISLE OF WIGHT**

**LC:** Shara, 08445 003819 : iow-lc@education-otherwise.org

#### **KENT-North West**

**LC:** Ann, 08445 868839 : kent-lc@education-otherwise.org

#### **UK Home Educators - Kent**

Fortnightly meetings in Chatham. Regular park days and monthly activities. Ann: kent-lc@education-otherwise.org : 08445 868839

#### **KENT & SUSSEX & SURREY** (on the border of all 3 counties)

F.L.A.G.S, active group meeting weekly during termtime for hall activities, sports and outings. Karen, 01732 864524 : karenlow@uwclub.net :  
www.flags-education.org

#### **LANCASHIRE**

**Joint LC:** Pam, 08445 868908 : lancs-lc1@education-otherwise.org

**Joint LC:** Kath, 08445 868829 : lancs-lc2@education-otherwise.org

## LEICESTERSHIRE

**LC:** Sharan, 08445 868847 : leics-lc1@education-otherwise.org

**Syston HE.** A fun and lively group for the under 10s. We meet twice a month and each session has a theme - with art and science activities to help explore the topic.

Tammy, mathamsam@btinternet.com : Vikki, martinvikki@aol.com : Christine, christine\_wells@yahoo.com

## LINCOLNSHIRE

**LC:** Janet, 08445 868862 : lincs-lc@education-otherwise.org

## LINCOLNSHIRE SOUTH

**LC:** Susanna, 08445 003861 : southlincs-lc@education-otherwise.org

## LONDON

**East LC:** Stephen, 08445 003821 : londoneast-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Enfield LC:** Tina, 08445 868836 : enfield-lc@education-otherwise.org

**North, LC:** Tina, Tel: 08445 003823 Email: londonnorth-lc@education-otherwise.org

**North West LC:** Tina, 08445 003826 : londonnw-lc@education-otherwise.org

**S.E. LC:** Keith & Chrystia, 08445 003827 : londonse-lc@education-otherwise.org

**SW Joint LC:** Rehena, 08445 003828 : londonsw-lc@education-otherwise.org

**SW Joint LC:** Lei, 08445 003829 : londonsw-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Waltham Forest LC:** Jo & Jerry, 08445 003867 : walthamforest-lc@education-otherwise.org

**West LC:** Betsy, 08445 003831 : londonwest-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Middlesex LC:** Betsy, 08445 003834 : middlesex-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Central LC:** Tina, 08445 853876 : londoncentral-lc@education-otherwise.org

**UK Home Educators, Kent/London - Meetings in Bromley and Orpington.** Outings and group events monthly. Ann: kent-lc@education-otherwise.org : 08445 868839

**London-NW, The Otherwise Club.** A community centre for families choosing to educate their children out of school, Leslie, 020 8969 0893

**Dulwich, Woodland Club,** age 8-teen. Science, Maths, various speakers, social afternoon. Idyllic venue. Gina, 020 8299 1135

**Woodlands Study Group,** 11yr old and over: English, Maths and Science classes every Monday, term time in Dulwich SE22 : deniseriddy@aol.com

**East London, Magpie Home Educators.** Meet every Friday, 1-3pm for social activities. All ages welcome. Corner Forest Lane and Magpie Close, Forest Gate. Annalise, 020 8500 1053 : annalise@tesco.net

**Haringey Home Education Club.** Group meets alternate Weds 12-4pm. See www.hhec.org.uk for details. Gaby, 020 8881 9463 : contact@hhec.org.uk

**Hackney, Adventures with Education.** Hackney group meets weekly in term time, Tuesdays 11am-3pm, Chris Swift 020 7254 4988

## N. IRELAND

**LC:** Shevaun, 08445 003842 : nireland-lc@education-otherwise.org

## NORFOLK

**LC:** 08445 003836 : norfolk-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Thetford,** swimming and indoor sports/play. Waterworld Leisure Centre, Thetford, Term-time Thurs 2.30-4.30pm, but weeks can vary so please ring first. Faye, 01953 681785

## NORFOLK-WEST

**LC:** Desiree, 08445 853878 : norfolkwest-lc@education-otherwise.org

**West Norfolk Home Educators,** email list for home educators in West Norfolk: <http://groups.yahoo.com/WestNorfolkHomeEducators>

## NORFOLK-SOUTH

**LC:** Anne, 08445 868904 : norfolksouth-lc@education-otherwise.org

## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

**LC:** Imogen, 08445 003841 : northants-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Northants HE.** Informal Group that meets regularly for various activities

[www.northantshe.org.uk](http://www.northantshe.org.uk) :  
info@northantshe.org.uk

**NORTHUMBERLAND-North**

LC: Mink, 08445 003843 :  
northumberlandnorth-lc@education-  
otherwise.org

**NORTHUMBERLAND-West**

LC: Liz, 08445 003844 : northumberlandwest-  
lc@education-otherwise.org

**NOTTINGHAM CITY**

LC: Damian, 08445 003846 : nottinghamcity-  
lc@education-otherwise.org

**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**

LC: Jenifer, 08445 003961 : notts-  
lc@education-otherwise.org

**OXFORDSHIRE**

LC: Louisa, 08445 868873 : oxfordshire-  
lc@education-otherwise.org

**RUTLAND**

Iain & Jacqueline, 08445 003853 : rutland-  
lc@education-otherwise.org

**SHROPSHIRE**

**Newport, Nr Telford, Newport Home Education Group**, meetings 1st and 3rd Friday every month. Outings on other Fridays, from 12.30pm, for all ages. Julieann, 01952 401571, weshalllook@aol.com

**SOMERSET**

LC: Vivian, 08445 003858 : somerset-  
lc@education-otherwise.org

**Festivals and Photos SW**. A contacts group set up to help home educating families keep in touch and provide opportunities for meeting up and photography; sharing their interest in the local culture and environment. Examples for a meet up are: local festivals, fetes, fayres, home educating and National Trust events, country side walks and picnics etc :  
andrew.denise@hotmail.co.uk

**Wells Swimming Group**, meets weekly for swimming at Wells Leisure Centre - term time only. Lesley, 01749 689241 :  
mumfordturner@hotmail.com

**FAB Times** (local Somerset email newsletter), to subscribe for this free monthly e-newsletter, email Nicola: fab@phonecoop.coop

**Wiveliscombe/Taunton area group**, monthly meetings on 1st Tuesday of month at Oake Village Hall, plus regular outings. Maggie, 01984 624651

**Somerset/Dorset/Devon borders, Home Education Centre**, 2 days/week. Workshops, sports, activities and support.  
www.homeeducationcentre.org.uk : Karen, 01460 30461 : karen@homeeducationcentre.org.uk : or Louise, 01460 61325

**North Somerset Home Education Group**, weekly childrens gym, walks, outings etc, Vicky, 01275 848425 : victoria.preston@yahoo.co.uk  
**Shepton Mallet, FAB Home Education Group Social Meeting** - Fortnightly on Tuesdays from 1.30-3.30pm at Shepton Mallet Scout Hut, Old Wells Road. £2.50 per family to cover refreshments and hire of hall. Mandy 01749 347799 : Jojo 01458 443674

**STAFFORDSHIRE**

LC: Carrie, 08445 003862 :  
staffordshirenorth-lc@education-otherwise.org  
**SCANS-HEAG**. Regular activities, meetings and trips for all ages. Separate teen activities. Carrie, 01782 786720 : scans.heag@yahoo.co.uk  
**Stafford HESEO (Home Educators Supporting Each Other) Meeting** 2nd and 4th Wednesday each month, 12-3pm, bring lunch. Karen, 01543 422577 : karen@karisto.co.uk

**SUFFOLK**

LC: Sue, 08445 868913 : suffolk-lc@education-otherwise.org  
**Wetherden**, meetings, 3rd Friday of the month 10.30am till 3pm, Wendy, 01449 614772 :  
wenlyn@talktalk.net

**SURREY**

**Godalming Group**, meets alternate Mondays. Serves South West Surrey and surrounding area. Ruth : www.swsurrey-home-ed.co.uk

**SUSSEX & SURREY & KENT** (on the border of all 3 counties)

**F.L.A.G.S**, active group meeting weekly during term time for hall activities, sports and outings. Karen, 01732 864524 : karenlow@uwclub.net :  
www.flags-education.org

## SUSSEX-EAST

**LC:** Winnie, 08445 003863 : sussexeast-lc@education-otherwise.org

**HEDGE** based in **Hastings**, meet every Friday :  
www.hedge-education-org : Catherine, 01424 812213

**Forest Row**, regular social gatherings and tutorial groups. Winnie, 01342 826087 :  
artofchange@msn.com

**Brighton LC:** Karen, 08445 868914 : brighton-lc@education-otherwise.org

## SUSSEX-WEST

**Chichester area**, **ActiveO**, meetings most weekdays : www.activeo.org.uk :  
Julie 01243 552472

**TYNE & WEAR(NEWCASTLE):** Rosemary,  
08445 003866 : tynewear-lc@education-otherwise.org

**WARWICKSHIRE LC:** June, 08445 003869 :  
warks-lc@education-otherwise.org

## WARWICKSHIRE - COVENTRY

**LC:** Sarah, 08445 003792 : coventry-lc@education-otherwise.org

## WARWICKSHIRE - RUGBY

**LC:** Fay, 08445 003852 : rugby-lc@education-otherwise.org

## WEST MIDLANDS

**Wolverhampton & Walsall LC:** Debbie, 08445 003871 : wolverhampton-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Sandwell:** Andrea, 08445 003856 : sandwell-lc@education-otherwise.org

**HELM Newsletter**, HE related articles and events throughout the West Midlands and surrounding areas.

helmeditor2112@blueyonder.co.uk : Jane, 01562 720046 : Andrew, 07709 468140

## WILTSHIRE

**LC:** Shena, 08445 868907 : wilts-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Salisbury**, social group meets Monday, fortnightly, 1-4pm. Large hall, skate park, play park, football pitch, basketball. Inside we have games, pool and tabletennis. We have a real mix

of ages including teenagers. Very friendly and new faces welcome. Ally, 01722 710525

## WORCESTERSHIRE

**LC:** Sue, 08445 868846 : worcs-lc@education-otherwise.org

**North Worcestershire/Kidderminster** meetings, please see Worcs newsletter or contact Gail,  
01562 822034 : gail@1921.net

## YORKSHIRE EAST

**LC:** Alison, 08445 003874 : yorkshireeast-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Withernsea LC:** Linda, 08445 003873 :  
withernsea-lc@education-otherwise.org

## YORKSHIRE NORTH+EAST

near **Malton**, meets weekly, Mondays, 12-4pm,  
viv@flamingoes.co.uk : 01904 788374 (York and surrounding area) or tess@chrisgeall.com :  
01947 825772 (East N Yorks)

## YORKSHIRE NORTH

**LC:** Denise, 08445 868852 : yorkshirenorth-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Harrogate Home Ed Group**. Meetings held on 1st and 3rd Thursday each month. 13.30 to 15.30 at Great Ouseburn Village Hall, between York and Harrogate. Kate:  
eldiva1@googlemail.com : 07724 065091

## YORKSHIRE NORTH+WEST

**N/W Home Ed Group**, meets **Skipton** monthly and **Bradford Gym Club** - Meets weekly. Regular meetings and outings. Judith, 01756 791356

## YORKSHIRE SOUTH

**Barnsley LC:** Amanda, 08445 868854 :  
barnsley-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Doncaster LC:** Nicola, 08445 003806 :  
doncaster-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Rotherham LC:** Jayne, 08445 003851 :  
rotherham-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Sheffield LC:** Fiona, 08445 003857 : sheffield-lc@education-otherwise.org

## YORKSHIRE WEST

**Bradford LC:** Gillian, 08445 853891 : bradford-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Wakefield LC:** Nicole, 08445 868874 :  
wakefield-lc@education-otherwise.org

**Huddersfield, Book Group**, Monday, monthly, 2-3pm. Marsden Library - age range 6-12 yrs. Jane, 01484 645034

**Huddersfield, Art Workshops**, Thursday, monthly, 10-11am, ages up to 8yrs. 1.30-3.30pm, ages 8+. Huddersfield Art Gallery. Mandy, 01484 460026 : Jane, 01484 645034

**Huddersfield Group - Lunch and Chat**, Thursday, monthly, 11.30 to 1.30pm. Mandy, 01484 460026

## Wales

### **ANGLESEY**

LC: Nick, 08445 003713 : anglesey-lc@education-otherwise.org

### **CARMARTHENSHIRE**

LC: Louisa, 08445 868893 : carms-lc@education-otherwise.org

### **CONWY**

LC: Dawn, 08445 003791 : conwy-lc@education-otherwise.org

### **DENBIGHSHIRE**

Joint LC: Sam, 08445 003794 : denbighshire-lc@education-otherwise.org

Joint: Julie, 08445 868916 : denbighshire-lc1@education-otherwise.org

### **FLINTSHIRE**

LC: Sarah, 08445 868851 : flintshire-lc@education-otherwise.org

### **GLAMORGAN, SWANSEA**

LC: Louisa, 08445 003864 : swansea-lc@education-otherwise.org

**GWENT**: Bronwen, 08445 003812 : gwent-lc@education-otherwise.org

### **GWYNEDD**

Joint LC: Nick, 08445 003813 : Gwynedd-lc@education-otherwise.org

Joint LC: Judy, 08445 853879 : gwynedd-lc1@education-otherwise.org

**Tregarth**, Creative Learning and Support, meet every Wednesday 12 - 5pm. Free weekly newsletter of events via email. Active website at: [www.creativelearningandsupport.co.uk](http://www.creativelearningandsupport.co.uk) Nick - EO LC for Anglesey + Gwynedd, 01407 811049 : Julie, 01286 678181 : [jdchapmanmaurice@aol.com](mailto:jdchapmanmaurice@aol.com)

## **MONMOUTHSHIRE (+ HEREFORDSHIRE)**

**Monmouth Home Educators**, meetings on Tuesdays at Rockfield Community Centre for fun and friendship, arts, crafts, games and sports - football, hockey, rounders, cricket. Check for dates and times. Roxy: [cdsnhf@googlemail.com](mailto:cdsnhf@googlemail.com) : 01989 768128

**PEMBS LC**: Yvette, 08445 003847 : [pembroeshire-lc@education-otherwise.org](mailto:pembroeshire-lc@education-otherwise.org)

**POWYS LC**: David, 08445 003849 : [powys-lc@education-otherwise.org](mailto:powys-lc@education-otherwise.org)

## **NE WALES/BORDERS,**

**WREXHAM LC**: Sam, 08445 003872 : [wrexham-lc@education-otherwise.org](mailto:wrexham-lc@education-otherwise.org)

**Froncsyllte, HENWOS**, fortnightly group meets 10-4pm. Social play and chat. Monthly newsletter for NE Wales area activities and events: [kruger37@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:kruger37@tiscali.co.uk)

## *Local contacts for Scotland and Overseas:*

### Scotland

**Angus, Dundee, Perth & Kinross**: Marley, 08445 868896 : [dundee-lc@education-otherwise.org](mailto:dundee-lc@education-otherwise.org)

**Borders**: Jane, 08445 003716 : [borders-lc@education-otherwise.org](mailto:borders-lc@education-otherwise.org)

**Aberdeenshire**: Fiona, 08445 003712 : [aberdeenshire-lc@education-otherwise.org](mailto:aberdeenshire-lc@education-otherwise.org)

**Highland & Isles**: Lesley, 08445 003817 : [highlandislands-lc@education-otherwise.org](mailto:highlandislands-lc@education-otherwise.org)

**Clacks, Falkirk, N Lanarks & Stirling**: Janice, 08445 003789 : [stirling-lc@education-otherwise.org](mailto:stirling-lc@education-otherwise.org)

Other areas of Scotland - EO Scotland Group - [scotlandenquiry@education-otherwise.org](mailto:scotlandenquiry@education-otherwise.org)

### Overseas

**Australasia** .... Nicky, Email: [australasia-lc@education-otherwise.org](mailto:australasia-lc@education-otherwise.org)

**Europe** .... Diana, 08445 003809 : [europe-lc@education-otherwise.org](mailto:europe-lc@education-otherwise.org)

**Americas** .... Sandy, 08445 853873 : [americas-lc@education-otherwise.org](mailto:americas-lc@education-otherwise.org)

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](mailto:database@education-otherwise.org) (please put EO in subject line of e-mails)

## Small Groups:

- **Finance Group** Tel: 08445 003986  
([financegroup@education-otherwise.org](mailto:financegroup@education-otherwise.org)):  
*Fiona Nicholson, Roarke Newstead,*  
Lynda Hitchman
- **Govt. Policy Group** Tel: 08445 003987  
([governmentpolicy@education-otherwise.org](mailto:governmentpolicy@education-otherwise.org)): *Fiona Nicholson, Annette Taberner, Ann Newstead, Jo Berry, Kira Patefield-Smith, Janet Wilkinson, Julie Bunker*
- **Disability Group:** Tel: 08445 003984  
([disabilityawareness@education-otherwise.org](mailto:disabilityawareness@education-otherwise.org))  
*Fiona Nicholson, Jennifer Skillen, Christine Waterman, Celia McDonagh, Julie Bunker*
- **Scotland Group:** Tel: 08445 003989  
([scotlandenquiry@education-otherwise.org](mailto:scotlandenquiry@education-otherwise.org))  
*Fiona Chaff, Rebecca Kail, Jane Bathgate, Jan Atkinson*
- **Website and Publications Editorial Committee (WPEC):** ([wpec@education-otherwise.org](mailto:wpec@education-otherwise.org)) Tel: 08445 003991  
*Fiona Nicholson, Joss Nowell,*  
Lynda Hitchman

## 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 Spokesperson:** Ann Newstead, 08445 867548 [media-spokesperson@education-otherwise.org](mailto:media-spokesperson@education-otherwise.org)

**Northern Ireland:** Marion Kenny, 08445 884528 [ni@education-otherwise.org](mailto:ni@education-otherwise.org)

**North East:** Eva O'Rourke, Wilsden 08445 884529 [northeast@education-otherwise.org](mailto:northeast@education-otherwise.org)

**Wales (S):** Celia McDonagh, Cardiff, 08445 884531 [wales1@education-otherwise.org](mailto:wales1@education-otherwise.org)

**Wales(N):** Edwina Theunissen, Wrexham, 08445 884532 [wales2@education-otherwise.org](mailto:wales2@education-otherwise.org)

**South West (Acting):** Kay & Simon Smith, 08445 884533 [southwest@education-otherwise.org](mailto:southwest@education-otherwise.org)

**South East:** Ann Newstead, Kent 08445 003978 [southeast@education-otherwise.org](mailto:southeast@education-otherwise.org)

**London:** Winnie Durdant-Hollamby, 08445 884534 [london2@education-otherwise.org](mailto:london2@education-otherwise.org)

**Isle of Wight:** Shara Ouston, Ryde, 08445 884569 [iow@education-otherwise.org](mailto:iow@education-otherwise.org)

## Grievances and Complaints:

[complaints@education-otherwise.org](mailto:complaints@education-otherwise.org) Write to  
PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW

- *Jo Berry* ~ 08445 884596
- *Pauline Butterworth* ~ 08445 884597
- *Lynda Hitchman* ~ 08445 884598

## 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.

## EO E-mail Lists & Forums

There is a Members Forum on the EO website, with 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 separate forums for EO Volunteers and Local Contacts and a new forum where EO children can chat together. For access to the parent's forum, email [forums@education-otherwise.org](mailto:forums@education-otherwise.org) with chosen username, full name, email and EO Membership No. or postcode.

To join the children's forum, email: [childrensforum@education-otherwise.org](mailto:childrensforum@education-otherwise.org)

# Who Does What in EO

**Trustees** – Email: trustees@education-otherwise.org  
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) ~ 08445 883514 ~  
cmcdonagh@education-otherwise.org

Kelly Moorhouse (Denbighshire) ~ 08445 853899  
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) ~ 08445 853896  
jnowell@education-otherwise.org (Publications & DPO)

Vicki Skinner (Dorset) ~ 08445 883513  
vskinner@education-otherwise.org

Annette Taberner (S Yorks) ~ 08445 003992  
ataberner@education-otherwise.org

Janet Wilkinson (Cambridgeshire) ~ 08445 868812  
jwilkinson@education-otherwise.org

Judi Wilson (London) ~ 08445 853897  
jwilson@education-otherwise.org

## Memberships

Membership and newsletter subscription enquiries, address changes, membership cards, new member admin, other queries or missing newsletters contact: ~ Lynda Hitchman ~ Education Otherwise, PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE34 3XW ~ 08445 867541 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 ~ c/o PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW ~ stationery@education-otherwise.org

## Data Protection/Confidentiality/Privacy

Data Protection Officer ~ Joss Nowell ~ 08445 003706  
dataprotectionofficer@education-otherwise.org

Database Administrator - Lynda Hitchman ~ 08445 867541  
database@education-otherwise.org

## Useful Contacts

If you need help in dealing with your LA/EA please ring your Local Contact or any Council Member. If you have a query not covered below please contact your nearest Council Member.

**Anti Bullying Support** ~ Vacant ~ 08445 003692 \*\*\*

**Autonomous Education Support:** Maya Lucas ~ 08445 003697  
c/o PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW

**Campaign Team Contact:** Fiona Nicholson ~ 08445 884593  
c/o PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW  
governmentpolicy@education-otherwise.org

**College Contact:** (Acting) Roger Scaife ~ 08445 868918  
c/o PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW  
~ collegecontact@education-otherwise.org

**Concessions:** Lucinda Smart ~ 08445 003698  
concessions@education-otherwise.org

**Designated Person:** Jim Classick ~ 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 ~ 08445 883539  
enquirysecretary@education-otherwise.org

**GCSE Contacts:** Sarah Cook ~ 08445 003708  
gcsecontact@education-otherwise.org

**LA Liaison Volunteer:** Julie Beviss ~ 08445 003709  
laliaison@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 emails)

**Local Contacts Co-ordinator:** Carla MacGregor ~ 08445  
003876 lcco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org

**Membership Secretary:** Gail Borrows ~ 08445 003879  
membershipssecretary@education-otherwise.org

**Newsletter Coordinator:** Nicola Haxell ~ 08445 883532  
nlco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org

**Publications Secretary:** Joss Nowell ~ 08445 003886  
pubssecretary@education-otherwise.org

**Research Contact:** ~ Vacant ~ 08445 884519 \*\*\*

**Single Parent Family Contact:** ~ Vacant ~ 08445 884527 \*\*\*

**Special Needs:** Christine Waterman ~ 08445 003887  
c/o PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE34 3XW

**Treasurer:** Pauline Butterworth ~ 08445 003889  
treasurer@education-otherwise.org

\*\*\* To find out more about volunteering for these roles, please contact the Enquiries Secretary, details above.

## 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:

Education Otherwise, PO Box 325  
Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW

Helpline 0845 478 6345

Information can also be found on the Education Otherwise website:

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

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