

Education Otherwise



February 1989  
Newsletter No. 64

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DEADLINE 1st MARCH 1989

Contributions for the next Newsletter should be sent to the Editors by the deadline, and all material intended as such should be marked "For Publication". Contributors are asked to ensure that they include their name and address.

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The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Editor or of Education Otherwise as a whole.

# EDITORIAL

There were few certainties when we first decided to home educate our children. My only guides were my instincts ( I first found faith in them whilst breastfeeding), and the knowledge that there were some other parents in Britain and America doing the same thing. But 5 years on, I would say to Helen Graham and Vanessa Meredith, press on! You are definitely not doing anything harmful, in fact the most harmful thing you can do to a 5 year old is to put him or her in the middle of a 20th Cent. classroom and leave him there. In the words of the Irish authoress and exponent of home education Maire Mullaney "Anything School Can Do You Can Do Better." Fontana/Collins. And there is everything to be gained in terms of a closer family, a deep and intuitive understanding of your own children, and therefore the possibility, I suspect of guiding them into the right careers and interests, that is if they don't decide for themselves according to what Maria Montessori calls the "unfolding of a child's inner blue-print." I am continually saddened at the number of teenagers and adults who find themselves in jobs they hate, and for which they seem ill-suited. Does anyone else agree with me that somewhere in this home education business we should have some answers to this sad state of affairs. Does anyone know of any book or research that connects childhood interests and choice of toys and games with adult job satisfaction?

Thinking that my sons would be eternally deprived, I fell into the "Suburban Housewife Taxi-ing Trap" as I now call it. I felt compelled to be taking them early on to specialist lessons in all kinds of things. The arrival of their two little sisters effectively put a stop to all that, and the boys breathed a sigh of relief! Like most people in the west, I suppose, I grew up with the impression that unless I produced the goods (whatever they were), I had no right to breathe the same air as everyone else, and certainly I was not valuable simply because of the breath of Life within me. It has been, and continues to be an uphill struggle against giving my children the same kind of impression. I find immense help from a book called "The Transformation of the Inner Man" by John and Paula Sandford, Bridge Publishing, especially the chapter on Performance Orientation. Whilst I am committed to excellence (the typing in this Newsletter may make you think otherwise!), I don't want my children to think that my love for them is conditional upon their good performance in any given situation.

I don't know how many books I have read lately (mainly from the States, I confess), but all expressing the following discoveries, not mere hunches: that a warm, responsive and reasonably consistent parent can in a couple of hours a day or even less, easily outdistance the teacher who has 20 or 30 or more children in her care; it is time for teachers to stop trying to convince parents that they can outparent them, and to turn parental feelings of inferiority into feelings of self-worth as the world's best teachers of their own children; and that children who have been home-schooled and then subsequently attend school after the age of 10, generally make better "raw material" for teachers and usually outstrip their peers who may have been in the system from the age of 3, showing themselves to be more creative and capable of independent thought.

Thanks partly to my understanding of Maria Montessori, namely through her book "The Absorbent Mind", and a belief in God's loving involvement with His Creation, I have been thrilled to discover in each of my children and those of my friends, special gifts and aptitudes which when nurtured and encouraged give the child a feeling of quiet confidence and value. Whilst Jonathan and Ruth find most academic skills a fairly easy matter, Peter struggles with each of the 3 R's. He more than compensates however with his musical ability and the instinctive and efficient way he tackles most chores. If I hadn't opted to home - school, I might never have discovered these gifts in him, as I would probably have been worrying constantly at his poor academic performance.

Both Norman and I feel that we like the children better through having them at home for the best part of the day, and although it has been a severe test in determination and we have often felt misunderstood and misjudged, the rewards more than make up for it eventually.

I hope everyone finds something of help and interest in this Newsletter. Over the years I certainly have. And thanks for all those interesting phone calls.

Best wishes, Judy & Norman Allan, Paisley, Scotland.

PROBLEM CHILD

How shall I deal with Roger, Mrs. Prodger?  
I've never yet been able  
To sit him at a table  
And make him paint a label  
For the salmon in the Kinergarten shop!  
But he's full of animation  
When I mention a dictation,  
And he never wants a spelling test to stop.  
I've encouraged self-expression  
And intentional digression  
But I think I'll have to let the system drop.  
For the normal child like Roger,  
Is a do'er, not a dodger,  
And your methods Mrs. Prdger are a flop.

How SHALL I deal with Roger, Mrs. Prodger?  
I've had projects on the fairies,  
On markets, shops and dairies;  
I've had projects on the prairies,  
But the little fellow doesn't want to play:  
Instead he has a yearning for unreasonable learning,  
And wants to do arithmetic all day.  
He shows a strong proclivity  
For purposeful activity,  
And doesn't want experience in clay.  
So I rather think that Roger  
Is a do-er, not a dodger,  
And how would you deal with Roger, can you say?

J.E. Faulks

(From a children's poetry book compiled by Jennifer & Graeme Curry  
called 'My Name, My Poem.'

submitted by Angela Thompson, 'Elterwater', 16, Kenyon Rd., Wigan, Lancashire.

SUSSEX OUTINGS

Contact; Sue Petzsaff 089 26 61319

Mon. Feb 6th - Meet outside Glass Cage @ Drusilla Zoo, Alfreton - 11.30.  
Drusilla's is mentioned in the Green Consumer Guide as an honourable exception to most Zoos by R.S.P.C.A., and won the first University's Federation for Animal Welfare Award for its new Beaver Enclosure, but you can just go straight to the Adventure Playground if desired.

Mon. Feb 20th - Meet @ "The Jungle Tumble", The Patio, Old Town, Hastings @ 11a.m.

Mon. March 6th - Meet @ "Drusilla's " as above.  
Contact Sue Petzsaff or Erica Richardson if queries.

## TIME

I like time to be unhurried. What is her need to rush? She was debased by men as they forgot she was a child of nature too. But she is still there in splendid array, when the winter marine sun is setting. Still to be found in the hypnotic waves and dappling sunlit glade. Still finds fulfilment in the child's unblinking eyes, his astonished wonder.

Only the poet of the soul can feel the true nature of time. Her flowing continuity, her richness fo subtle presentation, giving depth and variety to perception. Experience, learning and love develop in her embrace Her past is living, shaping memory, her present tingling expectancy and her future tantalising hope tinged with a mite of apprehension.

Time embraces the humble and the mighty, this infinitesimal alpha and omega of existence. Time can be appropriate to the furthest bounds of the universe and its innermost molecules. She can adjust to suit the needs of the moment the innumerable creatures can find their own levels in her. In the face of man's using her, labelling her, calibrating her, time yet retains her integrity.

The essence of time is the whole of creation.

John Swatridge (9). 32, Carey Park, Killigarth, Polperro, Looe, Cornwall.

### Nurturing Peter's Musical Ability.

In the Editorial, I made reference to the fact that I finally stopped dragging my boys along to specialist lessons whilst they were still fairly young. I thought I might try and squeeze in a paragraph or two about how I proceeded after that. Thanks to a Music Supplement about 3 years ago, I borrowed two books from the Library - Suzuki's "Nurtured by Love", and "Choosing the Right Instrument for Your Child" Atarah Ben Tovim. From these books, I gleaned two things: one that the best instrument for a 6yr. old to begin on might be the recorder if no Suzuki School is available, and that "a few minutes of practice with joy, is better than half an hour of boredom". So using the book "Sing, Clap and Play the Recorder", available at all Early Learning Centres, we began. I gave Peter a 3 - 5 minute lesson daily, and after that he was free to experiment on his own for as long as he liked. I was very soon redundant as he made sense of the note chart for himself. Since then, he has taught himself about 12 guitar chords and about 6 on the mandolin. We recently hired a flute and a family friend comes to the house once a week and follows at my suggestion, a similar method to the one we employed for the recorder. After a short lesson, they play duets, Kenny on the flute and Peter on the recorder. (Incidentally, Kenny is self taught and has no formal music qualifications) I still insist on the 5 minutes daily practice and it usually spills over into a longer period of experimentation - today he was overjoyed to discover that he could almost put "Jingle Bells" together!!

By the way, it is possible to learn the recorder alongside your child using the Early Learning Book. In fact, I think it is probably true for most home-educators that we are constantly learning along with, or even a pace behind our children. Peter is still hoping that someone will teach him to lay bricks properly - it might have to be me!!!

Judy Allan - 36, Thornly Park Drive, Paisley.

# REGIONAL NEWS



## NORTH LONDON PARENTS AND CHILDREN'S GROUP

We are meeting at Swiss Cottage Community Centre, 19 Winchester Road NW3, close to Swiss Cottage tube, on the first Sunday of every month.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>
Sunday 5 February	11.30am - 2.30pm	Co-operative Games
Sunday 5 March	"	French Day
Sunday 2 April	"	First Aid
Sunday 7 May	"	Electronics

EO members from all areas, or anyone else with an interest in otherwise education, are welcome at these meetings. Please bring food or drink to share for lunch. There is a charge of 50p per family to help cover the cost of hiring the premises (except on 2 April, when we must charge £1 per family, to include a (rather nominal) payment for the Red Cross instructor who is running the workshop).

Generally we try to gear activities so as to offer something of interest to all ages, from the very youngest up to adults, though here again there's one exception this time: Michael Thompson tells us that his May workshop, a "practical demonstration of the woodboard electronics featured in the Electronics Corner pages of recent Newsletters", will be suitable for adults and older children.

For further information about North London activities, contact Jeffrey Benge (883-7906), or (for Swiss Cottage meetings only) Andrea Granville (328-4138).

### ALSO NORTH LONDON

Every Monday, a few of us try to meet at around 11a.m. to spend the day together somewhere in London.

February 27th - Meet at London Zoo. Please join us.

For more details ring Sandra (01 249 0945)  
or Carmel (01 881 2395)



### West Yorkshire

Although our winter party had to change venue and time, it was a great success for our first venture of this kind. Eleven adults and nineteen children came to enjoy fun-and-games, excellent shared food and a chance to meet and talk.

#### Coming events:

- February 7 Pancake Party! Sue Lyon's house (0274-638337 to book). Fun-and-games. Small charge.
- February 21 Bradford Colour Museum. Pre-booked educational visit. Meet entrance 10.15. 15p per child.
- March 14 Working Horse Museum, Halifax. Meet 10.30. £1.10 adult, 65p children. Book with Alison Tribe 0422-606618 by March 1 please.
- March 15 Parents' meeting 32 Delph Lane, Woodhouse, Leeds 6, 8.00 p.m. Phone Mike Blackwell for instructions 0532-434835
- April 11 Standing Hurst Farm, Huddersfield (new-born animals; spinning and weaving demonstrations). Meet 1.00 p.m. £2.00 max per family. Phone Alison Tribe 0422-606618 for travel details and booking by April 1 please.

General enquiries and suggestions for future events to:  
Sue Lyon 0274-638337

### BERKSHIRE AND HAMPSHIRE.

On December 16th, three Berks and Hants families with children in the younger age group met

Next Meeting February 18th at the Sternhell/Peacocks - Tel 0628 32262 for details.  
at 2.30 p.m.

### SOUTH DEVON

A group of families from the Totnes area of Devon meet regularly on Monday Afternoons. For more details please ring: Jill and Ken Beagley on Totnes 867140.

### GWYNEDD

The Gwynedd LEA now sends out well balanced, informative and accurate information for home educators, which includes the Central E.O. address.  
Patricia Knox, Pen Llewened, Bodedern, Holyhead, Gwynedd, LL65 47A.

At our last meeting we arranged the following dates:

- 11.2.89 Meeting at Steve & Pip's house, 153 Albert Rd 0742 552703. Some activity will be organised.  
 17/3/89 Mary is organising a Welsh day  
 contact Mary for details 0742 883955.  
 14/3/89 visit to working horse museum Halifax together with  
 W.Yorks region. Contact Terri 0226 791071  
 25/3/89 "egg-orientated" meeting at Terri & Alan's house.  
 phone Terri for details 0226 791071. 2.00 pm  
 11/4/89 visit to a farm in Shelley for lambing together with  
 W Yorks region. Contact Terri for details.  
 13/5/89 Puppet making with papier mache, my house, 91  
 Osborne Rd S11 2.00 pm 0742 553836  
 29/5/89 Evening planning meeting without children at Angie  
 & Ian's house 79 Wellcarr Rd, 0742 749156

There will be fortnightly swimming sessions alternating between Sheaf Valley baths and Stocksbridge baths. Every other Friday at 12.30. Phone me to find out where and when.

For over a year now we have had a weekly music group session at my house led by Ian. These will now take place on Thursday morning at 10.00 am. Besides music we hope to do drama, movement, crafts etc all depending on what parents offer and what the children are interested in.

CHILDREN'S PAGES Having suggested a need for something in print for our children in the December N.L. the following explains the

inclusion of 'childrens pages' in this edition of the N.L.

I had anticipated having to make a separate childrens N.L. with separate postage etc. However when I spoke to Ken and Jill Beagley at Amas, they suggested we try and make the first one as a part of the main E.O. N.L. to try and assess what fellow E.Oers response would be.

I spoke to Lesley Kilbride (Pub. Sec.) who anticipated us having bring up the suggestion at a later E.O. meeting, which could of course take a frustratingly long time.

I then phoned Judy Allen this months editor and she was willing to take the risk and include a 4 page childrens supplement in this N.L.

We hope that your children (and you) enjoy it, and please let us know what you think about the inclusion of childrens pages in future N.L.'s.

It may mean a few less pages for you to read, but from those of you I have spoken to it seems that this would be a small and welcome sacrifice.

The Beagley Family is keen to put together more childrens pages, so do send any material that you'd like published to them.

LISA HALL DAVEY Judgement Cottage, Leddington, Dymock, Glos. GL182DZ

# LETTERS

PLEASE HELP!!!



We have been EO members for a little over two years. Steve has been a Headmaster of one Independent School, and for a year worked as Senior Teacher in a newly established parent controlled Christian School. He has now left full time teaching so that we as a family can devote our energies towards supporting troubled families, and encouraging families to consider home education themselves.

We have been asked by a national organization, "Christians in Education", to produce a booklet which they can give to parents who make enquiries about home education. As part of our research we would like to hear from Christians who are, will be, or have been home educating their children. We would like to build up a list of families but we do NOT intend to publish this list in the booklet. The list is purely to provide us with contacts with folk who have a breadth of experience. Please, therefore, if you fall into this category, could you get in touch with us.

We particularly want to hear of people's experiences, their problems - especially in starting, the philosophy behind their work - are there parents who believe that home education is part of their Biblical responsibility? and of the relationship families have with their own church or fellowship?

Please contact us - we'd be ever so grateful.

Steve and Lyn Richards, 37, Balmoral Crescent, Dronfield woodhouse, Sheffield, S18 5ZY

Dear EO,

We have recently joined the ranks of home educators, and on the whole we are all enjoying the experience very much. Our reasons for withdrawing Helen from State School are complex and many, and our emotions run along as many tracks with one day feeling able to cope, and another day feeling that we have done the wrong thing. It is as we learn to cope with these wayward emotions that the friendship of other EOers has proved so valuable, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ray and Ann Chiverton-Munt for their part in keeping me on the straight and narrow. Congrats. too o. the birth of their baby boy, 3-12-88. Also thanks to other folk who have encouraged me as I have battled with my fears and forbodings. We as a family have greatly appreciated all of you, and hope the friends made will grow deeper.

Helen is an only child and we would really love to have contacts with other families around this neck of the woods. We are moving to a village near St. Alban's (Wheathampstead) until Sept. 1989, so anyone near there is welcome to drop in for coffee and a chat. I do feel that Helen needs contact with the outside world, so please don't be shy, and do call in. Our temporary abode is:

9, Allen Close, Wheathampstead, Herts. A message can be left on 01-421-1404.

We are Christians and belong to the Free Church (U.R.C.) My husband is the minister, and apart from the church activities we are kept busy reading, walking and visiting places of interest and beauty.

Helen loves the T.V. Quiz games, having lots of cuddles and stories, board games, going to the play park, tap and ballet dancing, and most of all I think she loves to be creative in any way she can!

I like to cook, do my writing course, and teach Helen at home. Ian is in the middle of a Master's degree in Theology, so we aren't bored in our household! Is there anyone out there who would be willing to teach Helen in the areas of music and languages? What we would do to is join others in small groups with a mutual interest.

Do any other Christians out there use a Bible based curriculum? We are happy enough with what we are using, but I would like to know what else is available.

Many thanks to EO members for just being there, and making help available to parents considering other forms of education.

Vanessa, Ian and Helen Meredith.

Dear E.O.,

Are there any other Naturists out there? I've looked through back newsletters and a group for E.O. naturists is mentioned more than once, but nothing seems to come of it. Better luck this time?

Get in touch, perhaps we can get together around the country.

from: Julie and Stephen Turnbull,

48, Front Street, Cockfield, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, DL13 5DS

Dear E.O.,

Isobel Bogucki in December's Newsletter, stated that her house has "flatsurfacitis". We have suffered from this chronic disease for years, but we are coping!

- (1) Think vertical. File everything vertically, the most recent on top. After a few years the weight of such structures good compaction, hence stability.
- (2) Think vertical (2). Train children to write standing up, write on doors.
- (3) Think vertical (3). Just pile up books in columns and tell anyone who comes round that you are just in the middle of spring cleaning! If you group columns together, you can pretend that you are into alternative seating,
- (4) We chant every morning at breakfast: "This house is an organic entity, and evrything in it deserves to be so." Repeat till you convince yourself.
- (5) Visit other people often! their flatsurfaces are so exotic!

Hope this helps; now where are the envelopes? Oh yes -they're down the back of the fridge!

Yours in chaos, The Laifeartaighs, aka The Frantic Five.  
273, Uxbridge Rd., London, W12 9DT.

Dear EO,

With reference to Ms I.Bogucki s letter in the December newsletter, I too have experience and suffering of flatsurfacitis. She may be interested in knowing that the installation of bookshelves is now banned in my home because, like the M25, they just fill up. Finding floorspace for the Hoover is irrelevant because the contraption is usually blocked with playdough and unmentionables.

Her husband is probably fighting to hang on to his own small enclaves of space; chucking him out of the house will increase available surface area only marginally, but at the expense of extra washing up for herself. May I suggest that trips to the Oxfam shop and jumble sales are strictly rationed and that children's books are purchased on a quality criteria rather than by the hundredweight. However the only real solution to her dilemma is to purchase the house next door and move all personages there, leaving behind all the paper and toys in blissful peace.

Yours sincerely,  
Robert Bogucki.

# Pen Pal Page

## PEN PALS

Dear E.O.,

My name is Lucy Pearn. I am 7 years old. I like riding my bike, collecting shells, making things and playing board games. I would like a pen friend preferably someone who lives near the sea, like I do. I promise to reply to anyone who writes to me.

THE GARDEN HOUSE, BALLAUGH, ISLE OF MAN.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear E.O.,

My name is Oliver Pearn and I am 8 years old. I like inventing things. I like carving wood too, especially making boats. I also like playing chess. I would like a pen friend with similar interests.

THE GARDEN HOUSE, BALLAUGH, ISLE OF MAN.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear E.O.,

My name is Thomas Wells. I am 12 years 5 months. I have educated at home for 3 years 5 months. I would like a pen pal who is interested in computers, chess, football, the environment and I like animals.

PRINGLE HOUSE FARM, NEW BRANCEPETH, DURHAM, DH7 7HZ

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Miriam From Wales,

I would have loved to answer you, but you didn't put your address and surname on your letter.

Love Daniel Whitmore

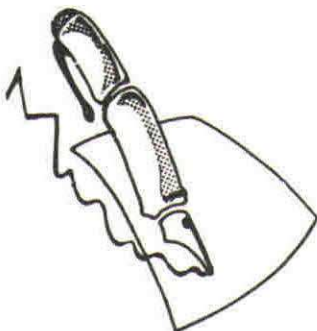
DANIEL WHITMORE, BRAMBLE COTTAGE, ELDERSFIELD MARSH, GLOSTERSHIRE, GL19 4PQ

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear E.O.,

I would like a pen pal. I am 10 years old, and my hobbies are horse riding, sewing, art and writing books. My brother is also wanting a pen pal, he is 12 years old and he mainly likes computers and he is called Thomas.

From JESSICA WELLS, PRINGLEHOUSE FARM, NEW BRANCPETH, DURHAM, DH7 7HZ





# *An Alternative School on a Boat.*

Since 1969 "L'Ecole en Bateau" have been operating expeditions mainly in the Mediterranean, demonstrating the educational possibilities of living, learning and travelling together, everyone participating totally in the tasks of daily life. They operate two vessels "Karrek Ven" and "Paladin". The expeditions continue with the emphasis on three main points.

1. RELATIONS on equal terms between young people and adults, everyone has adult rights and status, This is law No. 1!
2. LEARNING through the daily life of these expeditions. Having adult rights also means having the same responsibilities, and there is therefore a lot to do (looking after the boat, arranging the expeditions, participating in the research, making reports, managing the budget, etc.). All this has to be done as much as the adults do it.
3. THE VOYAGE, with its changes of surroundings, soon makes people lose their old habits. Young people drop their passivity and dependence, adults drop their authoritarianism towards the young people.

Their activities have been written up in the press, for instance:- New Society 16 May 1985, Times Educational Supplement 5 August 1988, Yachting Monthly January 1989.

Mike and Liz Johnson have been operating small boats with young crews over a similar period in European waters. The self-reliance of the youngsters being highly valued. "Mary Bryant" has been used for these expeditions since her launching in 1980. "Mary Bryant" is a gaff schooner of traditional design and construction. She is equipped to R.Y.A. sailing school safety standards and has all the usual equipment of an offshore vessel. She is fast and exciting to sail, the rig and equipment

offering plenty of challenge to a young crew. Being of a type developed for work not pleasure, she is very "sea kindly" and is easily handled in adverse conditions. We carry all the equipment for learning and living aboard and making short expeditions away from the vessel.

Our first venture is to run a two month summer expedition using "Mary Bryant". We hope to visit South West Ireland and learn more of its fascinating history, culture and its rich wild life. All this we will study and record by means of photographs, drawings, writing etc., for publication in either L'Ecole en Bateau's magazine "Petit Vogageur" or in another national magazine that has shown interest.

We would like to hear from any young people who would be interested in sharing in our expedition. You would need to be self-reliant and adventurous, aged 11 - 14, but not necessarily an expert sailor, just keen and interested. Costs are kept to a sharing expenses basis. If you would like to write to us or phone we will send all the details.

We would also like to hear from anyone else who would be interested in helping to develop the U.K. group or who can offer any help or advice. Our long term aim is to set up a full time organisation offering the chance for young people to spend one or two years learning through travel on more distant expeditions, but we need to find out if there would be the support for such a venture and to examine the legal and financial aspects.

Contact Address: Mike and Liz Johnson,  
6 Bodinnick Heights,  
Bodinnick-by-Fowey,  
CORNWALL PL23 1LX  
Tel: 0726-87 525

# GCSE

## Further thoughts on GCSE: cooperation with schools?

Doing EO, we have always had two thoughts in mind. One is that such qualifications are at worst a necessary evil. Our children aspire to professional careers - Abi has set her heart on being a doctor - for which exam certificates are essential. The other is that we'd like to avoid the pressure of taking multiple GCSEs simultaneously. Couldn't we start early and stagger the whole process so that spontaneous learning isn't squeezed out? As we all know, GCSE makes EO harder because of the course-work assessment element. Could we find a way of cooperating with school without sacrificing EO ideals?

Our first experiment of using schools began when another EO family registered with a local community school for mother and three boys to take an art class. The 11 year old took and passed 'O' level. Other EOers joined in, taking pottery, woodwork, weaving, French and computing, and two 13 year olds (our Tim and friend Gavin) took and passed GCSE maths. Soon after, the door was closed for obscure reasons that had more to do with policy changes than teacher willingness.

Gavin, who lives in Halifax, went on last year to register with a Further Education college which, in consultation with his advisor, allowed him to take courses even though he's under the magic age of 16. (Many colleges do in fact allow under 16s to attend with "head teachers'" permission.)

However, this strategy was unsuitable for us in Bradford, so we decided to try our local comprehensive, which allows neighbourhood adults to join regular classes. The deputy head is enthusiastic and helpful, and agreed to allow Tim and Abi (12) to register for GCSE Home Economics (Child Development), to be completed in 1989, and Religious Studies, finishing in 1990. Next year we hope to begin another two subjects.

We should add, in passing, that the HE (Child Development), in our case NEA, is actually a good subject to take. A working notebook is constructed from observing and being with a child of five-or-under, which counts for 30% of marks awarded. The rest of the work fits well with being at home and involvement in the real world of parenting, diet, finance, accident prevention and so on.

Our children learn at home, but follow the syllabus in parallel with the comprehensive students. Teachers set and mark course work, while we pay for exam entry. This arrangement was reached after several weeks hacking our way through an undergrowth of red tape, but now has the approval of our upper schools advisor and the Education Directorate at City Hall.

Questions still remain. Should we perhaps bypass GCSE altogether, as one of our local members advocates, and focus on 'A' levels, when the children are ready? Or should we wait until 16, when more options, like VI form college, become possible?

David and Sue Lyon,  
Rainbow Chalet,  
6, Park Cliffe Road,  
Bradford, BD2 4NS.

## One Family's Experience

Having been an E.O. member for about 18 months, I thought it was about time I made a contribution to the Newsletter, especially as we are actually about to embark on Education Otherwise

I have two girls, Kati aged 4 1/4 and Kylee aged 3, and a boy, Jamey aged 4 months. We joined E.O. after I read a letter from a member in "Parents" magazine. At that time Kati was not quite 3, but had already been attending a small private nursery school for 6 months, at Folkstone, Kent where we then lived. My views at that time were that the earlier a child started to be educated the more they would achieve later in life. I did not realize that Kayti had been "educated" since birth - by me!

When we joined E.O. we saw it as an alternative to an ordinary school (which we really did not want for her), and a Rudolph Steiner School (which we could ill afford), but I still believed the earlier that she was "taught" the better.

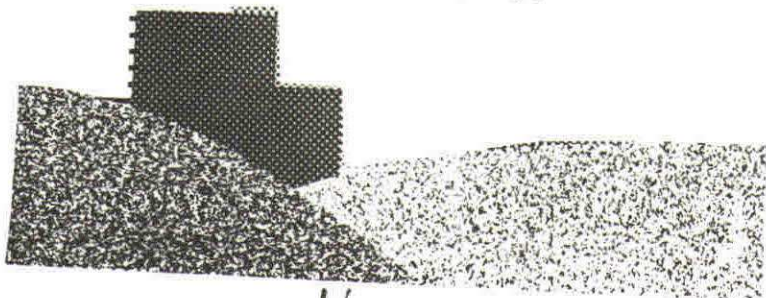
Over the past year or so my views have changed, Kayti learns despite us, and although she has both Maths and Reading and Writing workbooks they are seldom used. Most of what she actually remembers is from answers to the numerous questions she asks.

She loves numbers and doing simple addition sums, but only when she ~~had~~ to do them. Writing comes from making books together, and doing "writing exercises", which she sees simply as making letter patterns with brightly coloured felt tip pens.

Drawing, painting etc she can do at any time as we always have plenty of paints and paper available. As for craft work, well, I occasionally have a bright idea which we sit down together to make, but mostly Kayti has "bright ideas" of her own and has made things totally unaided, such as a rocket made by folding and colouring paper. It wouldn't fly when she threw it so she stuck it on a stick so that she can "fly" it around the room. She made one for Kylee too.

As for reading, she recognizes most of her alphabet, has an insatiable appetite for books, and constantly asks "What does that say?" I'm sure she will teach herself to read.

Even so, I feel that because she attended Nursery School at such an early age, she has missed out on an important stage of development - the make believe stage. Although she does play pretend games with Kylee, she is much more likely to want to be "doing something" ie actually producing something on paper.



Kylee, however, who has only recently started to attend Playgroup a few hours a week, shows very little interest in books, only occasionally paints and rarely draws. She lives in a lovely fantasy world where all things are possible. Give her two of her "Little Ponies" and she will play happily for hours in her make believe worlds. She doesn't even need recognisable toys, one favourite at the moment is getting me to make various sized Playdoh balls which she plays elaborate games with, having them talk to each other etc.

More practically, Kylee can count to 4 (5 on a good day), recognise most of her colours and likes to know what every street sign says. I'm sure that when the time comes she will grasp facts as well as Kayti, but in her own way. Kayti has always progressed at a steady pace, not so Kylee who walked round the furniture at 10 months but didn't walk alone until she was 14 months and was then running everywhere in no time at all, It was the same with things such as toilet training and talking, no progress for ages and then everything all at once.

With all this confidence I hold in my children's abilities, why then did Kayti start school in September when we vowed she never would ?

Apart from the fact that she asked to go, I panicked when baby Jamey arrived as I suffered from post natal depression after Kylee's birth and was afraid I would be unable to cope with 3 children at home.

Cumbria L.E.A. starts children in the year that they are 5, instead of the term that they are 5. As Kayti is 5 in June of the school year 88/89 she was due to start in September. I had already informed them that Kayti would not be starting, and tentatively mentioned that we may wish to educate her at home beyond the age of 5 years, quoting the relevant act. Their reply, that they were sure we realised that after the age of 5 years children must attend school "by law", I duly ignored, intending to let them contact me again at a later date.

Having informed them that we had changed our minds, we had a visit during the first week of term from Kayti's teacher who seemed very nice, and Kayti started at the school of our choice the following Monday.

Despite hating it from the start, and knowing I had made a mistake, Kayti settled well and seemed to really enjoy it from the first two weeks when she was going mornings only. The following week brought the first problem when all the children were to attend full time instead of half in the morning, half in the afternoon. Kayti refused to stay in the afternoon. She has been thoroughly overwhelmed by so many children crammed in the confined space of the classroom in the morning, and burst into tears, begging "Don't leave me alone !" I took her home !

For another 2 weeks she was happy going mornings only and having timeto "do her own thing" in the afternoons. However, after half term she would have to stay full time so the next week I took her again and she stayed reluctantly for one afternoon, and then started going all day and staying for dinners (we live 20 minutes from the school so tooing and froing with Kylee and Jamey in tow was a nightmare as we have no car).

Things started to deteriorate from there, with her saying she didn't want to go to school, and showing progressively aggressive behaviour at home. On Thursday of the week before half term she said she'd been crying in the playground at lunchtime because she wanted to come home for a story. She was also upset because she hadn't been allowed to use a printing set that she'd enjoyed playing with the previous day. I felt awful that this little 4 year old had been crying alone with on one to cuddle her.

Friday was the last day before half term. Kayti came out of school looking miserable and almost immediately had a tantrum involving hitting me repeatedly in the back, pushing Kylee and shouting (she never has had tantrums before). That was it - no more school !

It is now the middle of half term week and we are so much more relaxed and happy. Kayti is less aggressive and has started to "do" things again which she never had time for when she was in school. Yesterday was a good day. We made honey biscuits and chocolate covered apples, and paper lanterns with Kayti using a ruler to measure and draw lines 2 cm apart. We read at least half a dozen stories. David (who's a College Lecturer) is also on half term and spent ages in "rough and tumble" games with the girls. They also enjoyed water play by having a bath in the middle of the day.

I have drafted letters to both the L.E.A. and the Headmistress, intending to send them to arrive on the first day after half term. Even so, I have doubts. What if it doesn't work out ? What if Kayti starts asking to go back to school, starts blaming me if she has no one to play with ? We live in a mid terrace in a grottier area of Barrow, we have no garden, just a small yard - don't all E.O.ers live in big houses, or on farms surrounded by masses of open space ?

David has made the final decision, "She comes out", he said. So out she comes ! The letters will be sent and any problems, any reservations will hopefully be wiped out in the coming months by us all being happier again and more relaxed and Kayti will be free ! I'll keep you posted on our progress.

P.S. If any Cumbrian E.O.ers (or anyone anywhere), cares to contact us, or to visit they will be most welcome. We are on the Contract List (ignore the "Pagan" tag as we don't actually hold any specific religious views). Due to having a small baby and no car, visiting for us is limited at present, but we would welcome visits from anyone who doesn't mind mess and chaos.

Helen Graham, 46, Salthouse Road, Barrow in Furness, Cumbria LA14 2AG  
Telephone: 0229 37706



# A legal matter... mainly.

## A KIND OF PROGRESS

I recently asked *my* LEA to meet the costs of my 14 year old son's education by paying for five GCSE correspondence courses, allowing him to enrol on a part time engineering course at the local college of Technology and meeting all the cost of books, materials etc. I also asked for 50% of the costs of our taking part in EO gatherings, visits and workshops on the grounds that these contribute to Toby's wider education. Contrary to what might be supposed the LEA didn't fall about laughing.

My request was invited by the LEA after a three year dispute about Toby's education which has left the LEA in neglect of its duty to satisfy itself that Toby is being educated. Because of the circumstances the usual expedient, of taking action under Section 37 to secure an attendance order to a school, has proved ineffective and the LEA has been obliged to look for other means of complying with its duty. So, after some discussion with the DES lawyers, Barnsley LEA agreed to Toby's enrolment on a BTEC engineering course at college and a few weeks later offered to pay for the correspondence courses and to meet all 'reasonable costs' for materials etc for the BTEC and the GCSE courses. There's been no response so far to my request for 50% of EO costs but I'm working on it.

The LEA could have fulfilled its duty if I had provided information about Toby's education and allowed advisors' visits, but withholding information has been the only effective pressure I could bring on the LEA in order to achieve what Toby and I want. Toby was suspended from school three years ago because of *my* views against compulsory school uniforms and my refusal to accept that schools have the authority to impose compulsory uniforms has meant that no school is willing to admit him. The LEA removed Toby's name from the register on my request and before satisfying itself about Toby's education: a useful mistake. Since then I have used all possible means to secure Toby's right to attend school in non uniform clothes. Section 7 provides endless scope for time consuming appeals which can delay action under Section 37 to the point where such action becomes impossible and this has proved to be the most effective pressure.

Although the progress made so far is not what I'm seeking, it's still progress of a kind and some useful precedents have been established. Toby is very happy with the situation and would not want to attend school again except on a very part time bases to use computers. His right to attend school is still in issue however, and my efforts will continue so that the suspension can be overturned and Toby and I can be compensated. Depriving a child of access to school, providing no facilities for three years and obliging him to study for exams by correspondence course gives plenty of scope for an application to the European Commission on Human Rights.

Our situation is unusual, possibly unique, but the following information could be useful to other EO families.

## Deregistration

Toby's name was removed from the school register in error since the LEA had not had an opportunity of satisfying itself about alternative education. I received written confirmation of deregistration two weeks after withdrawing him from school following his suspension. The DES rules that this was 'improper' but not unreasonable and confirmed that Toby was not a registered pupil. The law is open to interpretation and is clarified by being tested so that precedents are established. Lengthy theorising about deregistration of the kind seen in recent newsletters is unlikely to lead anywhere, but a DES ruling can be used as a precedent. The ruling in this case came almost a year after Toby's name was removed from the register and the length of time had some bearing on the decision that, although there were no grounds for Toby's deregistration as set out in the statutory regulations, nevertheless Toby was no longer registered.

## SECTION 37

A notice under Section 37(1) requiring information about home education can be served when parents refuse information. If no information is given in response to the notice then an LEA can claim to be of the opinion that a child is not being educated. Section 37 cannot be used however, to prevent a parent appealing against any refusal to admit to a preferred school and all such appeals must be heard before any action is taken to secure an attendance order. I applied for Toby's admission to every secondary school and appealed against all refusals. This tied the LEA up with appeals until April 1987 when the remaining appeals were declared invalid on the grounds that I had not complied with the applications procedure. This was a tactic to allow the LEA to start Section 37 proceedings.

## Notice of Intent

A Notice of Intent to make an attendance order can only be served if, in addition to being of the opinion that a child is not being educated, an LEA considers it expedient for the child to attend school. If it is not expedient for the child to attend school then the LEA must consider other ways to satisfying itself, like providing education out of school.

A Notice of Intent does not automatically lead to an attendance order since there is a right to select alternative schools and also to appeal under Section 7(1)(a) against the school or schools named in the Notice. If the alternative choices refuse admission then an appeal under Section 7(1)(b) must be heard. If the alternatives are fee paying schools then the LEA must consider the applications using the same procedure as for any other applications to fee paying schools. So appealing against any schools named by the LEA and applying to schools which refuse admission can engage the LEA in months of procedure. If there are any 7(1)(b) appeals outstanding from before the Notice was served then all these must be heard first.

## Attendance Order

An attendance order should be served within a reasonable time of the serving of the Notice under Section 37(1) and the Notice of Intent. The initial notice is the information upon which the subsequent action is based and a long delay will render the information unreliable. This argument has been used successfully in the past where prosecution has been attempted. I'm not sure of the relevant case but the LEA concerned was obliged to start proceedings again with a new 37(1) notice. Barnsley LEA served an attendance order on me a few weeks after the Notice of Intent and before considering my response to the notice which included an appeal under 7(1)(a) against the school named. Instead, I was invited to repeat my appeal under 7(1)(a) on the grounds that the Notice of Intent was not a decision to admit to a particular school and could not be appealed against. A complaint to the Ombudsman put this right and the LEA withdrew the order. The DES later ruled that a notice of intent is a decision to admit to any school named in the notice and an LEA must hear any appeal before taking further actions.

The 7(1)(a) appeal was not heard however, since the DES also ruled that the withdrawing of the attendance order rendered all the previous action void. I'm sure the attempt to by-pass the consideration of my response to the notice of intent was made to avoid the delay which could make the proceedings ineffective.

A further attempt to secure an attendance order was made earlier this year and a further notice of intent was made naming the same school. In the meantime the school had written to me refusing to admit Toby, despite the fact that it does not enforce its uniform, and I appealed against this decision under 7(1)(b) and also appealed under 7(1)(a) against the decision to admit, as contained in the notice of intent. The LEA would have been in the position of giving evidence against itself which added to the pressure to find an alternative way of fulfilling its duty. The notice of intent has no once again been withdrawn and the LEA admitted that it could never obtain an attendance order under these conditions. It is necessary for an attendance order to be in force and not complied with before any prosecution or care proceedings can be taken, so the LEA now has nothing to threaten me with. The intention has been to force me to give information and allow advisors' visits rather than to force attendance at school and as such the proceedings were ill founded and ultimately insupportable.

## Alternative Provision

The DES lawyers have confirmed to Barnsley LEA that people under 16 can attend colleges of Further Education and that LEA's have the power to pay for correspondence courses and make other provision for home educated children. There is no duty to make such provision but there is a discretion, just as there is a discretion to pay for private schooling, and in circumstances where an LEA could not satisfy itself unless it made alternative provision then it could be in neglect of its duty if it failed to exercise the discretion.

It could be difficult to persuade LEA's to pay for correspondence courses where the LEA has expressed satisfaction with the existing education but the GCSE system, which includes coursework for school pupils and different arrangements for external students, can be used to argue that a home educated teenager would not fit into the school curriculum. It would be necessary to argue that suitable education could not be provided in school and also could not be provided without the courses, or other provision.

Obtaining admission to the Technical College at 14 or 15 should be simple and no fee can be charged for anyone under 18. School pupils of this age sometimes attend colleges for particular courses and pupils classed as disruptive in school have been accommodated in Further Education Colleges. In these cases a letter of authorisation is needed from the Headteacher and the student usually remains a registered pupil at the school. For EO people the college will probably ask the Education Department for permission to enrol an under age student but the LEA would need grounds for refusing. Barnsley LEA's Education Committee refused at first, claiming that it was not the LEA's policy, but the college had confirmed that it would be willing to admit Toby and that other under age students had been admitted, so there were no ground for refusing Toby and the Committee had to back down.

Technical College offer a wide range of mainly part time courses, many of which are work related. It's also possible to take GCSE's and A Levels. If Toby's experience is typical then technical colleges are welcoming to under age students.

### BTEC (Business and Technical Education Council) Courses

Toby is taking a BTEC Certificate which is one of the BTEC First Course options. The course is normally a one year part time course for people in work or training. Toby is taking the course over two years and will take the exams for the five units, some this year and some next year, and hopefully have the Certificate by the time he is 16. No qualifications are needed for taking this course but most students have already taken some 16+ exams and so a reasonable level of competence is expected. The engineering course covers maths, information technology, physical science, engineering fundamentals and engineering drawing as well as basic working skills. The Certificate is the equivalent of 4 GCSE passes at C or above and entry to a BTEC Diploma National Course requires either 4 GCSE's or a BTEC certificate. It is possible to obtain a BTEC First Course Diploma through a one year full time course which has eight units and this can be used as a credit for some of the National Diploma units.

The National Diploma has 18 units and involves two years full time study. It is the equivalent of A Levels and can be used as a qualification for entry to an Engineering Course Degree. In addition it is recognised as a 2 year YTS scheme and students can be paid the YTS allowance for the whole of the course.

BTEC courses are available in Engineering, Business and Finance, Distribution, Caring, Construction, Hotel and Catering Studies, Science and Leisure.

If Toby were taking the whole of the course this year he would be attending college on Friday from 9am to 6pm and on Monday evening from 6pm to 8pm. Classroom time is minimal compared to schools and the work is fairly intensive with homework assignments and private study expected. Toby has followed a general GCSE maths course at home and has worked in a more systematic way than many EO teenagers, so although the work is intensive he enjoys it. He has a particular aptitude for engineering drawing and had started teaching himself the basics from library books. The GCSE correspondence course in maths will complement the BTEC maths and provide extra tuition. Toby wants more computer tuition than is provided on the BTEC course and since we don't have a computer I will ask the LEA to provide this tuition.

## Part Time School Attendance

EO is supposedly seeking the right to part time registration at school and has written to the Secretary of State. I'm fairly confident that this will not really achieve much. Reforms in education law are mainly achieved by creating a problem for the authorities for which the reform is a solution. Part time registration will be achieved when a family presents this as the solution to an obvious problem. Part time voluntary attendance without registration is already allowed in some circumstances and of course some registered pupils are allowed to be absent to pursue courses at colleges where a school cannot offer the courses needed. So the situation is not as rigid as a simple reading of the law would make it appear and the more people who achieve part time attendance at schools and colleges, the more flexible the system will become.

I will be seeking Toby's right to attend the local school for computer studies on the ground that he will not be receiving efficient education without such additional help. The LEA will no doubt refuse since this is the school he was suspended from, but it may offer such tuition at another school instead.

## National Curriculum

Barnsley LEA sought advice from the DES lawyers as to whether the correspondence courses and engineering course conflicted with any duty to conform to the National Curriculum since this is LEA provision and not private provision. Clearly there is no conflict and LEA's cannot therefore try to insist on the National Curriculum being followed by EO families on the grounds that they cannot be satisfied with anything else.

Julie Lyons, 56 Newtown Avenue, Royston, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S71 4HB



## About Storytelling

Dear EO,

I have never actually contributed to a supplement, but usually want to after reading them. My response to 'Storytelling' was no exception. George used to tell stories, wonderfully original, from sometime after his 2nd birthday. Often the narratives were long and involved and developed into "serials". Four or five years later we can still remember his "African Grandmother and her motor bike with the toilet on the back". He would sometimes embark on a long story after dinner to put off bedtime. He usually entertained us on long journeys and, in bed, his older brother would often ask him for a story. Sadly his storytelling has stopped, although he too can remember it. His magical imagination seems to have become full of second hand image - from books, tapes, films etc. Why did this happen? Is there a remedy? Have other families had a similar experience?

Jane Woolfe - 13, Western Drive, Liverpool 19, Merseyside, L19 0LX

oo00oo

## A few true stories....

"Considering he's just a lad of 17 years, River Jude Phoenix has achieved an awful lot of fame and a fair amount of fortune too...he also possesses a truly amazing ability to become the character he's portraying."

River comes from a large family, the other children are called Rainbow, Leaf, Liberty and Summer.

"His first major role, the one he's best known for, was in the film, 'Stand By Me'.... Many young aspiring movie stars find the show biz world hard at first 'cos it usually means leaving their homes and families behind for long periods of time, but River doesn't have this problem - where he goes, the whole family follows. And the same goes for the rest of the kids. If Leaf is shooting a movie in Florida, that's where you'll find the entire clan. So, what happens about their education? Well there are no problems there either, 'cos they're all educated at home anyway! Just imagine, no yucky school dinners or uniforms - total bliss! Their parents also manage their careers so they're a real family business...."

Found in a magazine called 'Young Americans' - in their 'Brat Pack Special'. (June 1987)  
In this issue of the magazine there was an article about a young up and coming actor called River Phoenix, which I thought was quite interesting.

Submitted by: Sue Phoenix, 13, Porden Road, London, SW2 5SA

### A POTTED HISTORY OF JAMES WATT, ENGINEER AND INVENTOR.

Whatever you may think of James Watt's achievements I thought most EOers would be interested in this part of an account of his life I came across recently in DISCOVERY, a sort of children's History Magazine.

"Born at Greenock on the River Clyde, he proved to be a weak and sickly child. As a result, he only started school at the age of 10 or 11. He found the rowdiness of school difficult after his lonely childhood...The other boys teased him because they thought him dull, but he shone when it came to Mathematics and model-making. James' father was a shipbuilder and merchant. His ship-chandler's stores and workshops with their ship riggings and fittings and navigational instruments became a paradise for James. Here he had his own tools and could make models of what he pleased. And so he whiled away his time until the age of 18, when he chose to become an instrument maker and attend Glasgow University." ... and the rest you know.

### MICHELANGELO

.... And for some reason which I've since forgotten, Michelangelo was sent to the country to be reared by a wet nurse and her stone mason husband. His first toys were the stonemason's tools and as soon as he could hold them he was taught to use them. Subsequently, through his own motivation, and possibly some funding from his natural father, he learned some refinements to the trade he had essentially learned from childhood.

Judy Allan.

# ELECTRONICS CORNER..

FILE + COLLECT

NUMBER  
6  
IN A SERIES

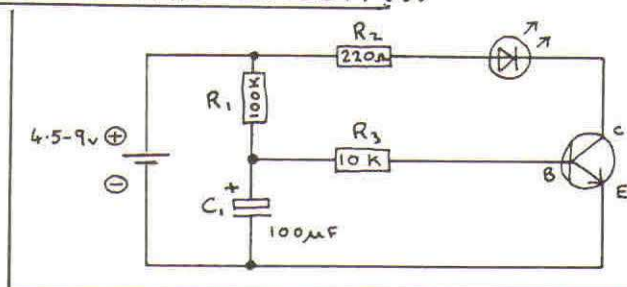
HOW TO MAKE  TIME DELAY...

## NEW COMPONENTS YOU WILL NEED!..

ONLY ONE 100 K $\Omega$  RESISTOR (BROWN · BLACK · YELLOW)  
(AT LEAST 1/3 WATT)

SEND S.A.E. FOR YOUR **FREE** SAMPLE!

## BUILD THIS CIRCUIT!..



### RESISTOR COLOUR-CODE...

220  $\Omega$  → RED · RED · BROWN

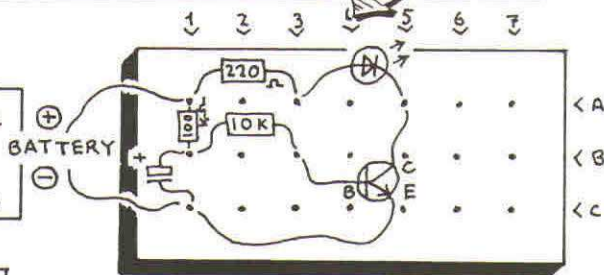
10 K $\Omega$  → BROWN · BLACK · ORANGE

100 K $\Omega$  → BROWN · BLACK · YELLOW

YOU COULD MAKE IT LIKE THIS...

NOTE... ENSURE ELECTROLYTIC CAPACITOR AND L.E.D. ARE THE CORRECT WAY ROUND

(SEE ISSUES 1, 2b + 3)



## HOW TO SET THE TIMER!..

...TOUCH THE BLADE OF YOUR SCREWDRIVER AC THE LEGS OF THE CAPACITOR MOMENTARILY.

SEE WHAT HAPPENS!

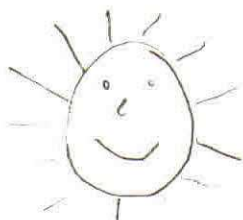
### SOMETHING TO TRY...

- \* CONNECT YOUR OTHER 100 $\mu$ F CAPACITOR ALONGSIDE THE ONE ALREADY INSTALLED.
- \* CHANGE THE 100K $\Omega$  RESISTOR FOR SOME OTHER VALUE.

NEXT TIME... \*HOW IT WORKS

\* RESISTOR COLOUR-CODE CHART.

\* CHANGE POSITIONS OF C<sub>1</sub> AND R<sub>1</sub>



# E.O CHILDREN'S NEWSLETTER

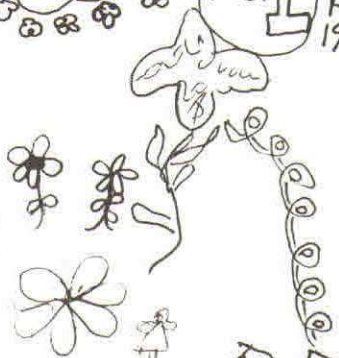
No. 1

FEB 1989

## The SUN AND The Flowers

Oh holy LORD SUN Polish our heads, till they're sparkling with SUN LIGHT. Oh LIGHT of MY eyes Lovely FLOWERS throw UP your colour and make MY rays SPARKING

By BETHANY C80 (Ashburton, Devon)

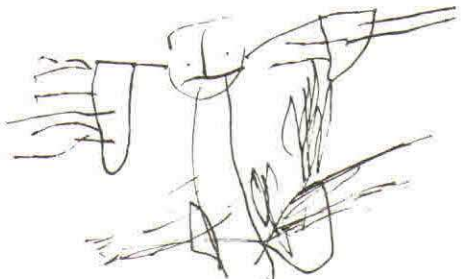


a hut in the woods. oct 88

One day two little children went for a walk. They decided to build a hut, so they gathered up sticks and they gathered up tree stumps and pine needles and earth and then they started to build it. They took all day to build the hut and then they decided to live in it, so they bought a camping stove and a kettle, to make some tea. They had to wash up in the stream. The two children are ten and nine and they live happily ever after.

SAFFRON C2 TOTNES, DEVON.

This story was written by JOSEPH STABLES C60 TINTERN, GWENT



A CLOWN DROPPING WATER ON HIS SHOES LUCY CHEPSTOW, GWENT.

Father Christmas was kind enough to leave me a copy of "The Penguin Dictionary of Modern Humorous Quotations", and I have become rather fond of quoting the following pithy epigram:

"Professionals built the *Titanic*, amateurs built the ark".

Anon

I commend this to the attention of:

- 1) parents who keep feeling they are not 'expert' enough to educate their 'special' children at home.
- 2) 'experts' who keep telling them that they are not.

\*\*\*\*\*

Jean Lovius (Liverpool) wrote the article below, but sent it for publication with some trepidation, fearing it might cause upset. It should not. Differences of opinion concerning the existence or the nature of dyslexia are not relevant to the main point of her article, which urges us to concentrate on abilities rather than disabilities.

#### THOUGHTS ON SPECIAL NEEDS

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John Holt used to say dyslexia did not exist, that it was a problem of school and society.

People diagnosed as dyslexic do not fit scholastic norms. Any mis-match in ability and development can be very inconvenient for everyone else - not necessarily for the person involved as they are often deeply interested in all sorts of lovely exciting things others haven't thought of yet...indeed, may not be capable of because they are maturing and developing in different ways.

John Holt felt that if someone - at any age - wanted to do something, they would. He was deeply pleased with his own ability to learn to play music in his middle age..... It's incredibly exciting to see a blind person ski....

We are what we believe we are. Other people can enable, or - because of a lack of belief - make it almost impossible for us to learn what we want.

Jean Lovius.

\*\*\*\*\*

Jean feels it would be useful to have a special needs meeting some time - even a small one, maybe only a day. Maggie Swatridge thinks so too (see her P.S.-supplement page 4). So do I. Do you? Send your ideas to SYLVIA JEFFS (address etc. on back cover).

Returning to the dyslexia debate: When I read the following article in 'The Guardian' in November last year, I felt that it expressed many of my own feelings and concerns - having spoken to so many parents whose children have been described as lazy or stupid or even brain-damaged because of their difficulties with reading.

The author, Geoff Bookbinder, is a retired educational psychologist, now working for the Open University.

ONE PERSON'S DYSLEXIC IS ANOTHER'S POOR READER.  
-----

There are few people today who have not heard of dyslexia. Many eminent people claim to have been afflicted and it has received constant and positive media attention. A strong and flourishing dyslexia movement has established a nationwide network of clinics to which parents can take their children to be assessed and diagnosed.

The dyslexia movement claims to have helped many children with reading and spelling difficulties who might otherwise have been left to struggle unaided in their schools. So how can there be anything wrong with this? Why are there still many professionals, myself included, who believe that the use of the term may be helpful to some but harmful to others?

First of all, we have to ask what dyslexia is. This may be a simple question to ask but it yields a variety of answers. Fervent believers in dyslexia do not agree about the criteria used to diagnose it. Some think it is mainly concerned with faulty eye movements; others believe it is more a matter of crossed laterality, or left-right confusion; yet others assert it is centrally connected with auditory sequential memory - such as the ability to repeat correctly a string of digits, the days of the week, months of the year or the multiplication tables.

Whatever their differences however, they all believe they can distinguish dyslexics from other poor readers by their own particular criteria. They also agree that where there are certain background factors which may be associated with poor reading progress - such as a disadvantaged home, inadequate teaching, or a low IQ score - the term "dyslexia" should rarely be applied. This of course, excludes the vast majority of poor readers and places the dyslexic child as the elite of this group. But it also seems to involve a basic contradiction.

If, as the dyslexia lobby claims, there are clear clinical signs which separate the dyslexic from other poor readers, then whoever exhibits such signs must be dyslexic. But if such a child is thought to come from an unsatisfactory home or obtains a low IQ, he is assigned to the category of a poor reader and is denied the 'dyslexic' label. In practice it is the size of the gap between IQ and reading age that predominates in deciding whether or not a child is dyslexic. This involves a number of questionable assumptions, two of which are the validity of IQ tests and the existence of a strong correlation between IQ and reading. The former is increasingly disputed, and the latter has been shown to be false.

This prominent role of IQ in diagnosing dyslexia means that children from acceptable homes - usually middle-class - who do well on IQ tests but who have reading or spelling problems, are more readily selected as dyslexic even when they show relatively few of the "characteristic" signs recognised by their practitioner. It has thus become largely an ailment of the socially privileged.

Parents are greatly relieved and comforted when told that their child's difficulties are not due to laziness or stupidity, but to a specific neurological condition called dyslexia. The child can now be said to suffer from a condition which demands treatment and sympathy rather than pressure and disapproval. And many children welcome this diagnostic label which appears to recognise their frustrating struggle to acquire literacy - and they may be encouraged to respond to alternative approaches.

This is the positive side of dyslexia. The negative side is in the implication it has for the majority of slow readers, who are automatically disqualified from ever acquiring the label. If the diagnosis of dyslexia shows that poor reading progress is not the child's fault; that it is neither stupidity nor idleness; that the condition merits sympathetic help rather than blame - then what does this imply for slow readers who are not so diagnosed? Does it not invite the belief that, unlike dyslexics, they have these negative attributes? That they are unintelligent, uninterested and/or lazy and that their poor attainment in literacy is due to these factors? Poor progress can therefore be expected and accepted - and we need not worry too much about them.

If we are not careful, we will have a kind of apartheid divide between dyslexics and the mass of poor readers. The former will become the deserving few for whom there will be increasing pressure to provide scarce resources which may have to be diverted from the majority whose difficulties go unrecognised and who do not have parents who are sufficiently articulate or influential to press their case. The latter children will continue to be devalued by the education system while the former, by virtue of being diagnosed dyslexic, will hope to escape or minimise this devaluation.

Dyslexia is, thus, a socially divisive term which unwittingly exacerbates the educational advantages of the privileged and the disadvantages of their less fortunate peers. It is not a question of whether dyslexia exists - but of whether it is allowed to exist for some but not for others.

(Thanks to Mr Bockbinder and to 'The Guardian' for permission to reprint.)

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I hope that some of you feel sufficiently moved by any of the above to comment or to make your own contribution, so that this important debate is continued. The next 'special needs' issue will be in October 1989. Deadline 1st. September 1989.

Maggie Swatridge (Cornwall) feels that this article may seem depressing. (Actually it's interesting because it tells something of 'statementing' and some of its consequences .)

#### CHANGES?

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'Labelling may now be unmentionable...but isn't disability still the preoccupation? Ability and character buried beneath it? Isn't the 'treatment' standard for all? And both too hush-hush for parents to 'know' about? Intervention time and again, whether suitable or unsuitable?

Readers with 'healthy' children must wonder why it is we find ourselves so bound. Our children have even fewer rights than other kids. With unique differences they are pressed to fit an institutional mould. The testing and bureaucracy seem almost continuous. (Beware, incidentally, of reports of reports - thus purporting to be 'confidential' and 'not available' under Reg.10 of the 1981 Ed.Act, which states that copies of any information used must be given to parents.)

Can we support each other to put our foot down when needed? Be co-operative, but not submerged by professionals or bureaucrats? We are the experts and carers of our individual children, responsible right now and for their future.

E.O. gives us security to ensure that the 1981 Act is made to be beneficial. Statements should be solely to protect each child's right to appropriate provision, and every caring parent should be respected. (Let the other parents know that E.O. is 'there' for them too, as choice and/or necessity.)

We are privileged to be able to provide for the whole child and his/her life experience. No-one knows the individual child better. If we cover the educational aspects of 'conventional' thought we are secure legally, and then also free to add what we find more beneficial, be it holistic and/or specific.

We've been in this position for 6 years! E.O.ing included the most basic 'living skills' and simultaneous pursuit of a broad range of material up to University standard, even though John has no independent means of 'output'. (Our form of communication was seen but not believed!) Recently we have been vindicated - and need to evoke the right of E.O. to protect us now from over-zealous interest in his 'brilliant' intellect, and reassessment, of course! (Will it be any good pointing out that the only mandatory re-assessment isn't till a child is between 13.5 and 14.5 years of age?!) John's strange and severe voluntary neuro-motor dysfunction remains - the focus of our research and more 'alternative' therapies within a rich, holistic approach to life.

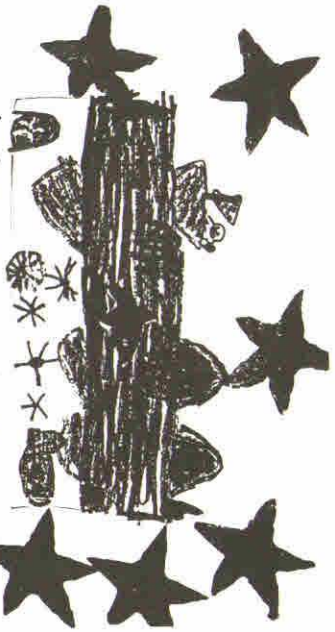
So be of good cheer - give your child the 'input' you think is appropriate even if 'output' is way down. We can each be an increasing force for good (and sanity!)

P.S. How about meeting at a campsite sometime?

All the best for '89.

Maggie Swatridge.

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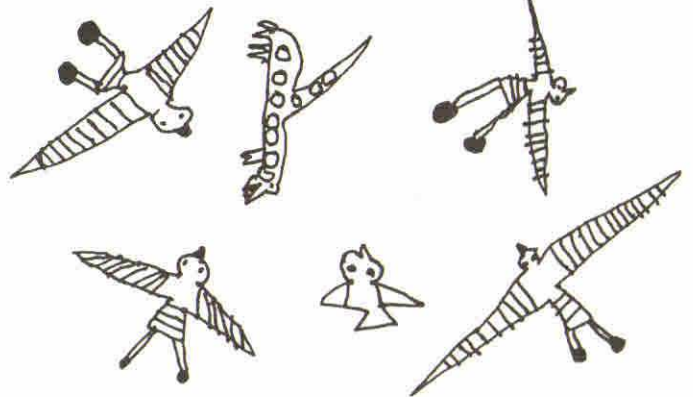


I like living by the  
 See. We have got  
 a nice dingle for  
 climbing trees in. we  
 have got lots of Room  
 for visitors and

Camper's Martha  
 orbach 66

CWIKHAFFAU, SARMAU  
 LLANDYSSUL, DYFFID.

Tom  
 CHEPSTOW, GWENT.



### THE E.O. WORDSEARCH

Can you find the 12 words with E in their spelling?  
 To make it easier for younger members the answer  
 are on the back page of this E.O. Children's News letter

G	E	O	G	R	A	P	H	Y	S	N	B	W
S	B	T	L	E	O	P	A	R	D	L	U	R
X	P	W	O	E	N	I	Z	T	C	H	O	Y
R	H	L	D	N	G	S	P	E	O	P	L	E
Y	M	I	B	O	V	R	Y	M	W	U	X	
L	V	C	O	E	E	D	O	Q	A	F	P	T
S	U	O	E	N	A	L	L	E	C	S	I	M
H	T	N	O	E	L	L	A	G	G	T	O	K
K	R	E	O	R	G	A	N	I	S	E	R	C
U	F	M	E	H	T	A	P	O	E	T	S	O

# The two STICK INSECTS

Once upon a private hedge  
 Two stick insects lived  
 And one stick-insect layed some  
 eggs. And then there weren't two  
 stick-insects there were a hundred  
 stick insects MELISSA (9) TOTNES, DEVON

MAKE YOUR FRIENDS FOAM AT THE MOUTH WITH ASH'S SHERBERT FIZZ.  
 MIX TOGETHER: 2 SPOONS OF CITRIC ACID CRYSTALS  
 I SPOON OF BICARBONATE OF SODA  
 6 SPOONS OF ICING SUGAR

Sherbert fizzes because it contains an acid and a carbonate.  
 Inside your mouth the citric acid crystals dissolve and mix with  
 the bicarbonate of soda - producing bubbles of carbon dioxide  
 that make the fizzy feeling.

Bubbles in fizzy drinks are made of carbon dioxide.  
 Add some sherbert to your drink and make it fizz.

## JOKES

WHAT IS A FROGS FAVOURITE DRINK? .....CROAKA-COLA.

WHERE DO FROGS HANG THEIR COATS? .....IN A CROAK ROOM.

There are two snakes in a jungle. One snake says to the other,  
 'Are we supposed to be poisonous?' and the other snake says, 'Why?'  
 'Because I've just bitten my lip,' says the first snake.

ASH (8) DYMOCK, GLOS.

I went to a planet; I went through space.  
 I bought some clothes in a case.  
 thousands of stars showed me the way.  
 I traveled for a night and a day.

the hare and the bear met by the shore.  
 The bear was hungry, so he ate the hare.

by Magdalen Stables (8) TINTERN, GWENT

**E.O. WORDSEARCH ANSWERS**

- 1. MISCELLANEOUS 7. LEO
- 2. REORGANISE 8. NEON
- 3. GEOGRAPHY 9. VIDEO
- 4. OSTEOPATH 10. PEOPLE
- 5. GEOMETRY 11. GALLEON
- 6. LEOPARD 12. GEORGE.

**My Penny**

i had a penny a brown penny,  
i put the penny in my pot. The next  
day i got my penny and went to the  
shop i spent my penny i went dack  
home and i told my mum i spent my  
penny in the shop

ANNA HARGRAVES (7)  
TOTNES, DEVON



by claudie (9)  
TOTNES, DEVON

The cart we  
go shopping in

A jidnriding A rhino  
And an ogre with a sword

A dragon breathing fire  
and i'm getting quite bored.

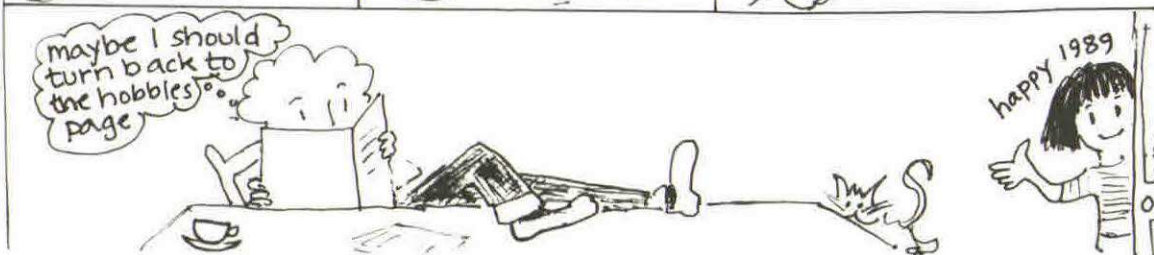
ROWAN (5) WARLINGHAM, SURREY



WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED THESE CHILDREN'S PAGES.  
WE LOOK FORWARD TO RECEIVING YOUR WRITING,  
DRAWINGS AND IDEAS FOR THE SECOND E.O.  
CHILDREN'S NEWSLETTER BY 15<sup>th</sup> MARCH 1989,  
AT 'ORANGES', ST. CLEMENTS TERRACE, HARBERTON,  
TOTNES, DEVON TA9 5SN. (0803) 867140.

# Life Skills 1989 ...

EDUCATING ARCHIE  
by SEG





# BOOKS

## FLEXISCHOOLING

A recent editorial in the E.O. Newsletter contained the comment that alas, Flexischooling was still just a gleam in Roland Meighan's eye.

Not any more!

First of all there is the book

**FLEXISCHOOLING : EDUCATION FOR TOMORROW - STARTING YESTERDAY** just published by Education Now, a non-profit making publishing co-operative based in Ticknall, Derbyshire which also produces the magazine *Education Now* ( The first issue contained an article about Education Otherwise )

Secondly, there is the school - Dame Catherine's School, Rose Lane, Ticknall which under the headship of Philip Toogood has been running for a year as a pioneer school developing some of the flexischooling principles. It already has its first award as the most outstanding project in the Shell sponsored Derbyshire Villages Competition 1988

Thirdly, news trickles in about a few more schools trying out one of the flexischooling approaches of particular interest to E.O. members, of education partly undertaken at home and partly at the local school, following on from the example of Lewknor Primary School in Oxfordshire.

### The Theme of the Book:

Families that have chosen to educate their children at home tend to become well pleased with their decision and to see it as the best option currently available. The evidence is on their side. Is this the beginning of the end for schools? Are they about to become as obsolete as canal boats and steam trains? Does the arrival of computers, videos, satellite T.V. and the communications revolution mean that schools are heading for the same fate as the dinosaurs? Many of the home-based educators do not necessarily think so. They can see a better idea still - a flexible partnership between homes and schools working to an educational contract.

Roland Meighan takes this idea as the starting point for exploring the regeneration of schooling. Without jettisoning the more positive features found in some current schools, he demonstrates how a flexible model of schooling suitable for a complex post-industrial society can be constructed. Although flexischooling sounds like a futuristic concept, a central argument of the book is that the key components are already available and in practice in different homes, some schools in the U.K. and elsewhere, and in various other community locations. The outcome is a new blueprint for education to replace the current 'day prison' model designed in the 1870's, which has outlived its usefulness. The Danish Government has allocated £38 million to investigate ideas for the school of the future. The book argues that home-based educators in the U.K. and elsewhere have already pointed the way.

FLEXISCHOOLING by Roland Meighan, with a Foreword by James Hemming and a Postscript by Philip Toogood, is available price £5-95 post and packing free ( cheques with order payable to Education Now ) from Education Now, P.O.Box 186, Freepost, Ticknall, Derbyshire DE7 1XZ (No stamp required)

**Roland Meighan**  
113 Arundel Drive,  
Bramcote Hills,  
Nottingham NG9 3FO  
Telephone 0602 257261

## Another Book Review - "Bullying in Schools"

At long last here is a book for teachers, by teachers about the problem which no teacher likes to admit exists. Here it is estimated that between five and ten per cent, (two or three in a class of 30 children), are bullies. Another two or three per cent are victims. Both bullies and victims have severe educational problems, and since it is the school system itself which provides the fertile ground for bullying by insisting on teaching children in large groups - not of the child's own choosing, it is the schools which need to find a remedy for it.

In the school which my youngest daughter attended, when she was five, the bully got a smack and my daughter a sweet. As I spend £15 a week on fresh fruit to give my children, the only harmless form of sugar, I took rather a dim view of this. She has been out of school ever since and is now ten. Progressive teachers have devised forms of group therapy in which children are enabled to identify acts of bullying and imagine in the role play what it feels like to be bullied and to devise ways of dealing with it. This can form part of English, History, Geography and perhaps other lessons - or it can be an after school activity.

In classes which have experienced such help, children are happier and work together better, but all the classes need help to free the schools of bullying. Typically, in a book by teachers, parents are seen as part of the problem, but are not greatly involved by teachers in its solution. Sometimes parents are asked by the school to discuss the problem, or are merely asked to consent to the children being put into a group to help deal with it. In one survey, about a quarter of the children expected parents to help them deal with the problem of being bullied.

Bullying can be very hard to detect. It can vary from violent physical attacks, extortion of money, threats, libel, to pitying remarks about a child's appearance - it takes many forms and may only be perceived as bullying by the victim.

Victims often resort to absenteeism says Ken Reid in his contribution to the book. Schools blame the home background and the child's lack of ability. They do not acknowledge that the school itself or the bullies within it cause absenteeism. Teachers are unaware that absentees stay away from school because they are afraid, and staff sometimes hardly care; so pupils are forced to look after themselves or simply opt out.

Nowhere in the book is the possibility mentioned that parents could take a more active role in solving the problems or even take over the child's education themselves. This must form a part of the next book on the subject.

From: Frances Howard 38 Hampden Road, Hitchin, Herts Sg4 0LD  
Review of "Bullying in Schools"  
Edited by Delwyn P Tattum and David A Lane  
Published by Trentham Books £7.95  
From David Lane 21 Limehouse Court, Morris Road, London E14

# Books for GCSE.



## GCSE - Information about Books and Courses

In reply to Jan Taylor (December newsletter) I don't think Jan will find any reputable correspondence courses cheaper than NEC.

What are the alternatives ?

1. NEC offer course books only at approximately £25 (no tuition)
2. Do it yourself.

Many EOers choose the second alternative for some or all of their GCSE preparation.

Having obtained syllabuses and past exam papers Jan would now need to select text books to cover the courses and then provide her son with as much feedback as she can in the way of comment, correction, discussion and encouragement as he works through the text book course.

Additional resources such as BBC Education Radio & TV experimental work for science etc etc are also a good idea.

Here is a list of books recommended by members. It is not exhaustive and she might like to visit one of the Educational Publishers School Book Exhibitions - see Diary of Exhibitions in 1989 - to see a wide selection of books. Incidentally the exhibitions cover the whole age range infant to secondary, not just GCSE or Dillons Education Bookshop, 37 Upper Berkeley Street, London W1, telephone 01 706 3040 wide range of text books in stock, all ages.

## English Language

Reference: Concise Oxford English Dictionary  
An English Handbook by WG Bebbington  
Schofield and Sims £8.95  
Very readable, excellent book

### Short, One or Two Year Courses

A New English Course for GCSE by Rhoni Jones published Heinemann/NEC £4.50 designed for individual study. Good and thorough.

English on Course: an integrated approach to GCSE by Rhoni Jones, published Heinemann £4.95 an updated revision of the above, with more oral English practice.

Integrated English: a course in English language and literature by George Wiley and Mary Dunk published Cambridge University Press £3.50.

GCSE English for 16+ by Judith Baxter published Cambridge University Press £3.95.  
A one year re-sit course.

English Plus: a practical scheme of work for the examination years by T McSweeney and M Elam published Longman £4.50 TES recommended.

Courses for 4-5 years the last one or two books being GCSE level

The Art of English: a certificate course by Keith Newson 5 books published Schofield & Sims £4.24 each. Very good.

Oxford Secondary English by John Seely published Oxford University Press 4 books approximately £3.95 each, 4 teachers books approximately £3.00 each.

English Passwork by John Griffith and Theresa Sullivan 4 books published Longman approximately £4.00 each.

#### Revision Aids

Let's, Longman and Macmillan all publish revision aids for most subjects. These deal with core exam requirements and are a very useful aid to revision, but not a substitute for a more thorough coursebook.

#### Additional books for practice in one or other element of the course

Summary and Directed Writing by RA Banks and FDA Burns published Heinemann and Stoughton, a large selection of exam exercises.

Oral course work: this very long list of suggestions is recommended by LEAG: Core skills in communication by Irving and Smith published Macmillan.

Communicate ! by Foster, Carter and O'Shea published Macmillan

Choices published Oxford University Press:-

- Its your choice, topic cards by Lynch published Edward Arnold.
- Contemporary English 1 and 2 by Foster published Macmillan.
- Questions for Society 1 and 2 by Mullen and Pitts published Edward Arnold.
- Open to Question by Nicholson published Edward Arnold.
- Problem Page by Parker published Edward Arnold.
- Would you believe it? by Brandling published Edward Arnold.
- Plays like dilemmas 1-3 by Walker published by Edward Arnold.

Responses: practical assignments for GCSE English by Sheila Black published Basil Blackwell £4.50 comprehension skills.

Graded practice in summary and directed writing by Roy Dyche published Longman £2.95 TES recommended.

## Mathematics

### Short Courses

SMP Individualised Mathematics Complete Pack 11 books published Cambridge Univ Press NEC £25 the set. A two year course designed for individual study includes scheme of study, regular self test units, revision practice as well as explanatory text and exercises, complete with answers

### Longer Courses

SMP New Numbered Books 1-5 published Cambridge Univ Press 9 books approximately £5.00 each. 5 teachers books £6.50-9.50 each. The original Nuffield 'New Maths'. Regularly revised and updated since its introduction in the 1960s it is still an excellent and fun maths course, good text and packed with exercises, problems, puzzles and revision exercises. Often thought to be only for the really bright it is in fact a approachable course but with plenty for real maths enthusiasts to get their teeth into. SMP Individualised Maths (above) is a condensed version of this.

Graded examples in Mathematics by Mr Heylings published Schofield & Sims 9 books £3.45 each. 9 teachers ~~books with~~ answers £3.25 each. The last book is revision Excellent for last two years before exam.

### Revision and Practice

General Mathematics Revision and Practice with Answers by D Rayner published Oxford Univ Press. Boring - lots of drill practice and exercises but handy crisp revision guide and useful as such.

Mathematics Revision Notes for GCSE by P Jenkins published Schofield and Sims £3.25. OK to use yourself as a teacher-reminder, but not much use to pupil.

Examples in Modern Mathematics at O Level compiled by BP O'Byrne published Schofield and Sims £3.65. Answer book separate £2.85. 'Excellent practice in examination style problems. Good for working up exam technique.

A good scientific calculator eg Casio fx-570 £15.00 and learn how to use all the functions.

# Computing Studies

No recommendations, but the following noted from publishers' catalogues.

Comprehensive Computer Studies by Peter Bishop published Edward Arnold £5.25 reference book to A Level.

Computer Studies for GCSE by Mark Bindley published Basic Blackwell £6.25 Answer book £6.95.

Computer Studies Software for GCSE. BBC Software Package by Mark Bindley and Tom Speechley. (2 discs and short teachers guide) £19.50 plus VAT. Basic Blackwell.

# Physics

Physics for GCSE by Digby Swift published Basil Blackwell. Large print, lots of photos, diagrams and cartoons, but not simple minded. Excellent use of everyday examples and things you can do with little equipment. Exercises but no exams.

Physics a course for GCSE by Gilbert Rowell and Sidney Herbert

\* The Practical Explosion by Close, Sutton & Ward published Oxford Univ Press £15.00 practical physics, illustrations excellent age 16 - adult.

'Surely you're Joking Mr Feynman' by Richard Feynman 'for a taste of what its like to be a real scientist .. the autobiography of one of the greats'.. tells of his interest in science from childhood .. very amusing and enjoyable I can wholeheartedly choose this recommendation.

## Revision

Letts Revise GCSE Physics and similar revision guides.

## Equipment

A great deal can be done at home. Accurate measure of small quantities required.

Griffin & George, Bishop Meadow Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire, England  
Telephone 0509 233344

Complete range of science equipment and materials, from test tubes to satellite tracking. Full range of laboratory chemicals and microscope slides for biology too. Chem/Bio/Phys?electronics minimum order £50.

\* I'm wondering if this should read: 'The Particle Explosion'?

Societies: Maths Association, BAYS (Brit Assoc Young Scientists) ASE (Assoc for Science Education) : activities and magazines conferences.

Magazines: New Scientist, Scientific American

Physics a practical approach by DM Bishop published Macmillan £3.95 described as 'the best O Level physics book I have come across' check for GCSE coverage.

GCSE Physics by Tom Duncan published John Murray £6.25 TES recommended.

Explaining Physics by Stephen Pipe (GCSE Education) published Oxford £5.95.

Revised Nuffield Physics gen.eds. . EM Rogers and EJ Wenham published Longman 5 pupil books £6.50-6.95 each. 4 teachers books £18.00 each. Expensive but fun: an action rather than a reading text, so difficult to skip or select from. This is a longer course designed to cover 4-5 years.

Introductory or core tests which should be supplemented with fuller text books.

Core Physics by Geogg Cacket, Ron Kennedy and Alastair Steven published Oxford £4.95.

Physics for Today and Tomorrow by Tom Duncan published Murray £5.50 TES recommended. Excellent.

Think Physics published Schofield and Sims simple study aid.

Background Reading or Additional Texts

Physics in Action: gen ed Gordon Raitt. Series of topic books excellent or real lift physics related to GCSE syllabus. Highly recommended.

1. Forces: building a cantilever bridge; 2) Electricity circuit
3. Electricity - electromagnetism 4) Heat and temperature
5. Vibrations and radiation.

All by Gordon Raitt, published Cam Uni Press £2.95-3.95 each answers and exercises in the text.

I hope these recommendations are of some use, and suggest Jan also contact Val Yates (on GCSE contract list) for further advise on computer studies.

NB also local libraries stock or will reserve text books.

Sent in by: Anat Karnenka, 62 Gotham Place, Aycliffe, Co Durham DL5 4QD

NOTICE ABOUT NATIONWIDE EXHIBITION OF BOOKS

(Organized by The Educational Publishers Council, 19, Bedford Square, London)

<u>February</u>	08/09	Scotland	Glasgow	EPC -
	22/23	Education South West	Bristol	BEEA -
	*	Gwent	Cwmbran	EPC
	28	London Schoolbook	London	EPC
<u>March</u>	01	London Schoolbook	London	EPC
	07/08	Durham Exhibition	Durham	NUT/NAHT
	08/09	Buckinghamshire Exhibition	Aylesbury	EPC
	10	North of the Tyne	Gosforth	NUT
	15/16	Education North West	Salford	BEEA
	28/29	NATE Conference/Exhibition	Swansea	NATE
	30/31	Maths Association	Sheffield	EPC
<u>April</u>	*22	Berkshire Special Needs	Bulmershe	BEEA
	19/20	Hertfordshire Exhibition	Welwyn Garden	BEEA
	27/28	Hampshire NUT	Eastleigh	EPC
<u>May</u>	30/31	NAHT Conference	Llandudno	EPC
<u>June</u>	28/29	Dorking NUT	Dorking	EPC
<u>July</u>	26/29	UKRA Conference	Ormskirk	EPC
<u>September</u>	25/29	Education Northern Ireland	Londonderry/ Belfast	BEEA
<u>October</u>	18/19	London Special Needs	London	EPC
<u>November</u>	13/17	Education Scotland	Edinburgh/ Aberdeen	BEEA

CONTACT NAMES:

Ruth Stuart, EPC Exhibitions Organiser: 01-580 6321  
 Monica Warren, Director, BEEA: 01-247 9320

Submitted by Anat Karnenka,

PS Many thanks to Rajan Naidu for his excellent letter in the December Newsletter: it was a splendid and intelligent answer and I'm sure he expressed the feeling of many readers.

A LETTER FROM W.E.S. (WORLD WIDE EDUCATION SERVICE)

So ... you are educating your children at home. Well, we wish you good luck and determination!

There are several thousand people who follow a similar path as you will know from your membership of Education Otherwise. In case you were wondering, home-education is not a recent phenomenon. Apart from the fact that in centuries past the rich would organise their children's education at home anyhow, in 1887 Charlotte Mason formalised a modern-day movement of which home schooling was an essential part. That was the year when the Parents' National Educational Union was born. Eventually parallel strands developed within the movement; as well as 'home schools', several dozen schools in the more traditional mould were established.

For the last 100 years the PNEU has provided a back-up for families that have wanted to follow this path. Whilst initially the bulk of the followers of the PNEU were families based in Britain, a large proportion of its clients were, for example, missionaries who went abroad with young families knowing that they would be out of this country for the best part of their lives. As schools spread all over the country and faith in mainstream education increased, the demand in the UK dropped considerably. Since the second World War the demand has been primarily for families of people working abroad - missionaries, contract workers, anyone usually from the Commonwealth (that is, families who use English as the medium of education) serving in countries with a different language or educational system. In the early 70s the work of providing the educational service was given the name of the World-Wide Education Service and to younger generations that is how we are better known.

Our material is suitable for children from years 5 to 12. For younger children we offer a nursery pack ('Learning to Learn'). For older children we can recommend a suitable correspondence course subtly different from a home school system.

The curriculum we provide covers the subjects to be studied by the parent and the child in that period. The material is designed so that the parent can adapt it to the child's ability and interest. In some subjects the child will be able to move faster and more time will have to be spent on some others; this flexibility that home education offers is one key element which distinguishes it from conventional schooling. Our curriculum material is constantly revised and updated. We consider it the most important part of our work and are very conscious of its prestige and reputation. The DES has stated that a family following this curriculum will keep up with conventional education. Together with the curriculum we provide appropriate book lists and can also supply teaching material (for some parents it is difficult to obtain crayons, paints, design equipment) if necessary.

We like whenever possible to meet the parents and the child before they embark on this path. Through this first meeting the WES tutor starts to know the child and the child the tutor. The contact is maintained throughout the period as the parents send in every term a report on the child's progress as well as samples of the work done. This enables the tutor to make an assessment of the child's progress which is then passed on to the parent. We emphasize throughout that the parent is our correspondent and intermediary; to this extent we are very different from a correspondence college in which a child (or indeed an adult) corresponds directly with a tutor.

Quite a few families are able to offer teaching and guidance to their child from their own experience and knowledge and only subscribe to WES for some specific subjects (the most popular are English and maths). We are quite happy to help in any such variation.

Since the introduction of the GCSE and now the national curriculum we know that parents have become even more worried about the consequences of taking their child out of the educational system and having to face problems at a later stage of re-integration and of assessment. We are following the changes carefully and will be incorporating advice not only about curriculum content but also the new procedures for assessment.

I do realise that for a number of reasons, some EO parents do not feel they need the full WES service. We are, therefore, looking at the possibility of supplying packages of books which, when taken together, would cover the complete curriculum at a given age. If this is of interest to you, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

Families who wish to enquire about the services of WES are welcome to write to the Director, WES, 44/50 Osnaburgh Street, London NW1 3NN.

B Dembitzer, Development Adviser

## Other Resources

### Cuisenaire Rods

Available from:           The Cuisenaire Company  
                                  11 Crown Street  
                                  Reading RG1 2TQ

If you write, they will send you a catalogue of books, the rods themselves and workbooks. Lisa Hall Davey is right in thinking that you can do a lot with them, even school age work.

Sent in by:           Brenda Morley, Golf Cottage, COzens Lane West, Broxbourne, Herts

### For Sale

Ginn Maths           Teacher's Resource Books (good condition) Level 1 and Level 2  
                                  £3.50 each plus 90p postage each.

Coin Rubber Stamps (Set of 7)

New £3.00 a set plus 90p postage.

## FREE ADMISSION TO LONDON MUSEUMS

All the museums in South Kensington used to be free. This is no longer true. But don't forget you can still get in for nothing with an EO membership slip. Slips (the size of a quarter sheet of A4) are made out in the name of the member family and are valid for one year. (If you already have one, check to make sure it hasn't expired.)

### How to get one

If you are a current member and would like a slip, please send us an SAE with covering note at the address below. Please tape a 20p coin to your note.

### Why 20p?

Because the Science Museum is to start charging schools and other organisations an annual fee of £25 for unlimited "free" visits during the course of the year.

### What you do

#### Natural History Museum

As you go in, follow the crowd to the right, but then go to the desk on the left, and sign the book there.

#### Geological Museum

When you go in, show the slip and get a sticker.

#### Science Museum

Go through the pay desk, show the slip, and get an admission leaflet with "AT HOME" printed on it.

(The Victoria & Albert Museum is not included. At the time of writing, admission charges are optional.)

ROB & ANNE WADE  
19 PERKIN CLOSE  
WEMBLEY  
MDDX  
HA0 2LY  
01-904 7155

English Heritage / Scottish Development Department / Cadw

I have recently found out that free admission is usually available to the monuments and buildings run by the above groups for parties of children in 'full time' education.

As a trial I contacted the Tower of London who have happily accepted EO as a group, giving free admission for the children and a couple of adults. I was also able to obtain a free pass to plan my visit.

Some places also have 'education centres' that offer slide shows / talks etc to your group.

For more details write to:

English Heritage Education Service  
15/17 Gt Marlborough Street  
London W1V 1AF

from: Valerie ~~Gorman~~ Milton Keynes

## CORNERHOUSE

is a Film and Exhibition centre near Manchester's Oxford Road Station which offers free workshops and activities to interested groups, including E.O. groups. The programme of exhibitions and projects during 1988 included photography, design, needlework and dance. I attended several of the events with my son, Toby, and although my knowledge of art is nil and my interest fairly minimal (I went along from a sense of duty to provide Toby with a bit of artistic education) I found most of the workshops enjoyable and interesting and, more to the point, so did Toby. These events are not of the passive looking and listening kind and are not restricted to any particular age group, under five year olds have enjoyed recent workshops, so should appeal to many E.O. families.

Jane Woolf, Merseyside co-ordinator, is now arranging workshops for this year and the next one is on April 4th at 1.p.m. and is based on the 'Tree of Life' exhibition which looks at the image of the tree and how we use and abuse trees. There will be an opportunity to use wooden percussion instruments and compose rhythms and songs.

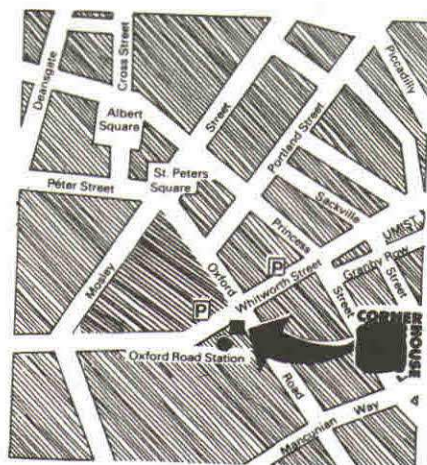
Cornerhouse is well worth the effort of getting there if you live outside Manchester and the workshops provide an opportunity for meeting other E.O. families. The centre has its own cafe and facilities for eating packed lunches and there is a fish and chip cafe nearby with other types of eateries not far away.

For further information:

E.O. events - Jane Woolf Tel: 051 427 3212

General information - Sue Clive or Anandi Ramamurthy 061 228 7621  
from Cornerhouse

How to get there -



Julie Lyon,  
56, Newton Ave  
Royston,  
Barnsley,  
S71 4HB

# The debate continues... a bit..

Dear Editor

May I leap into the fray about the creation question? I believe that people on both sides of the argument are too limited in their mind to argue soundly. The creationists seem to insist on the literal truth of the biblical creation story, that it took place in one earthly week in 404 BC. This obviously conflicts with a view that it was formed 4550 million years ago, and that life as we know it has taken 600 million years to develop.

Most scientists are motivated not by a desire for pure knowledge, but by a need for money which is provided by Government or industry, their aims and vision are extremely limited and are often used for what many people see as evil ends. The fundamentalists want a readily understandable teaching which will give people a moral framework to live in. Both miss a great deal, through failing to ask questions which will expand their consciousness.

Some scientists are now beginning to seek and find consciousness in many forms other than human, not only in sentient creatures, but in what were previously regarded as inanimate forms. At the same time, people who do not accept the literal meanings of the bible stories are beginning to find in them a moral teaching which extends far beyond personal relationships, and has to do with our use of animals, plants and minerals, the area at present occupied and controlled by the scientist, for most of whom ethics are irrelevant.

It is our job to help children to grow beyond ourselves in their understandings of sacred writings and science. If they ask "Why is the moon?", "Who is the sun?" "Where did I come from?" we would not say, "That's a silly question," "That's not a scientific question" or "You must not ask that question" rather, we might say, "I don't understand that yet," "Perhaps you'll find out one day if you keep on asking till you get the answer." We adults are still struggling to bring ethics into science and science into ethics. The Institute for Social Interventions has drawn up an oath or vow which it hopes scientists will one day take on their graduation day,

"I vow to practice my profession with conscience and with dignity. I will strive to apply my skills only with the utmost respect for the well being of humanity, the earth and all its species. I will not permit considerations of nationality, politics, prejudice or material advancement to intervene between my work and this duty to present and future generations."

I would welcome further correspondence on this question.

Francis Howard, 38, Hampden Road Hitchin, Herts SG4 0LD  
Telephone 0462 56294

Dear EO



Not having received my October copy of the newsletter I was most intrigued to observe the apparent furor over Edwin Theunissen's article. I cannot give an opinion of it, not having read it, but would simply like to state that I have an honours degree in zoology, and I am a creationist. Why? I'll tell anyone who is interested enough to write to me, (instead of prolonging the evolution/creation issue in the newsletter).

Yours sincerely,

Emily Matthews, 98 Crofthill Road, Glasgow G44 5QQ

Dear EO

### Science, Education or Creation

Fortunately I was not here at the origin of the universe and I suspect that each member of EO is in the same boat. Anyone who dogmatically maintains that either "Education" or "Biblical Creation" are proven facts deceives himself.

Unfortunately evolution is taught to most children with such fervour that most people are deceived into "believing" that the theory is proven. People are prone to deduce from evidence whatever suits the theory dear to their hearts, and most people in this country desperately hope that the Biblical God is not real.

An experiment reported on "Science Now" on Radio 4 was set to test the objectivity of respective groups of scientists and christian ministers. The objective tests, intended to prove that ministers were bound to be biased, in fact showed that scientists have a tendency to prejudge evidence in favour of their own theory. The ministers were more open minded, more critical and thought more logically than the scientists. The evidence, when looked at objectively, leads to acceptance of the fact of a very active and very loving God, whether you believe it or not.

Children have a right to examine the evidence for the Lord's involvement with his creation, and the crime is that they are too often denied this right. All those who think that they are intellectually and spiritually healthy should stop being selective in the evidence that they examine and should reject their prejudices, however, they may arise. The children in their care might then have a chance to choose.

Peter C Lambert, 15 Burnham Avenue, Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO21 2LB  
Telephone =243 825664



## A GCSE Maths Resource

### "The Sound Way of Learning Mathematics"

"The Sound Way of Learning Mathematics"

by Laurie Buxton, Pamela Buxton and Basil Norbury

Published by S.E.A.L. (Sound Educational Audio Learning)

Full course £49.99 (6 parts). Each part £9.99

for further information please contact:

Basil Norbury on (0306) 730922 or Edward Cox on 01 995 1331

### Summary of Info on the Pamphlet someone sent in:

A unique house study education package, involving over 85 workbook lessons, accompanied by an audio commentary.

Suitable for ages 11-16

Covers 13 major sections from arithmetic to calculus, incorporates GCSE requirements.

Complete solutions, not just answers to all examples.

Address: S.E.A.L.

Swan Centre, Fishers Lane, Chiswick, London W4 1RX

# School Phobic Contact

## From the Editor's Desk:

This news sheet came about after a publicity tour by Patricia Knox, author of 'Troubled Children - A Fresh Look at School Phobia'. Pat was interviewed on Radios Merseyside, Manchester, and Lancashire and in response to these interviews several families got in touch. It was decided to try and do something to alleviate the plight of families who have a child suffering from 'School Phobia'.

The first aim of the news sheet is to spread information and break down the feeling of isolation for these families. It is unfortunately common to be told that your child is the only one suffering from SP. Pat Knox states in her book that between 70,000 and 140,000 children are affected.

The second aim is to set up support groups throughout Lancashire. Aiming at the ideal of one support family to each town and two or three to each city. It would be the responsibility of these families to befriend interested families and offer advice and support.

Aim three is to get the group working together so that we can bring pressure to bear on the relevant authorities to change their attitude to SP's and their families.

Number four will be to bring pressure on the government to establish special schools for Phobic children only. Very often a child becomes anxious when entering secondary school just because of the sheer number of pupils, often up to 2,000 children in one school. If we can have smaller buildings with limited numbers of pupils, smaller classes etc. school phobia may eventually become a thing of the past!

Dot Bolan would like it known that the above News sheet is published bi-monthly in Lancashire only. If anyone would like to publish it in their own County, she would be happy to pass on any information.

AN excerpt from the News sheet is shown opposite.

Year's Subscription £3  
Cheques/ postal Orders to be made out to:  
"School Phobic Contact"  
89, Manor Road,  
Darwen,  
Lancs.,  
BB3 2SN.

### A WEEK FOR TEENAGERS AT MONKTON WYLDE COURT .... April 9th.-14th.

This is another week we are holding for young people aged 11plus, who are being educated out of school. The focus will be on the 'visual arts'- mask-making, painting, pottery etc. The cost will be £45. Contact Anne or Phillip-  
Monkton Whyld Court, Charmouth, Bridport, Dorset, DT6 6DQ

GRUESOME FACTS REQUIRED

I have recently completed my second book "Official Kidnap and other Horrors", which describes the abuse of power by professionals in their treatment of children. It has grown out of the response to my school phobia book, and I will publish it later this year, in conjunction with the Self Publishers Association.

Children have been kidnapped from caring families by the police, by social services, etc. and placed in care, in psychiatric units, in some units and other institutions, for reasons as diverse as school phobia, suspected sexual abuse and home education!

Children have been "driven mad" by the treatment they have received for school phobia and at the hands of child psychiatrists and other professionals.

The book investigates negative aspects, such as bullying within the schooling system and the child care system, which tend towards delinquency, mental illness, suicide, etc.

I will continue researching these troubling aspects of our society and would be glad if you would send me newspaper cuttings (marked with the date and name of newspaper) concerning children who have been taken from caring families and placed in care, child suicides, cases of children being maimed by school bullies, etc, etc.

Patricia Knox



" A Set of Tapes on 'Biblical Christian Education' by Paul Hawkins of Youth With A Mission"

A set of 9 tapes available individually or as a set. Includes tapes on Philosophy as well as a Statement on Curriculum about £18 the set.

Available from: Mannafest Media, 13 Highfield Oval, Ambrose Lane, Harpenden, Herts AL54BX

Sent in by: Judy Allan, Paisley

# From the Press

Winston Churchill to Rab Butler on the 1944 Education Act.

Dear Rab

You are taking your task on education altogether too seriously. Schools have not necessarily must to do with education: I know you will say my Harrovian experience has caused me to generalise but I can assure you that they are mainly institutions of control where certain basic habits must be inculcated in the young. Education is quite different and has little place in the school.

I am impressed in this not only by my own life but that of those on the Labour benches. Observe them well. Where the schools failed to do their job the sons of the poor fastened themselves to the Workers Educational Associations and the Night Institutes and educated themselves.

It is little wonder that they should mistake schools with education. I suggest Rab you give less attention to schools and more to the Institutes in your Bill when it is ready.

Yours ever,  
Winston

The present Secretary of State, Kenneth Baker, might have improved the Act of '88 if he'd received the occasional wisdom of a Winston Churchill.

From WEA News (of the Workers Educational Association).

Incidentally, WEA have branches throughout the country and run day and evening adult education classes catering for a wide range of subjects. Information on local classes from Local Library.

Sent in by: Anat Karnenka



## Women's History

Ms Hilary Claire of Ealing education authority is appealing for old photographs of women at work for a teaching pack for schools on women's history. They should be sent to the Gender Advisory Team, Elthorne Site, Boston Road, Harwell, Ealing.  
TES 14/10/88

Sent in by: Brenda Morley, Brosbourne



# A Report...

THE LIB. ED. CONFERENCE 1988

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Last year I felt an outsider at the Lib. Ed. Conference, but on Saturday, October 1 I felt at home among welcoming familiar faces. They are still mostly teachers and still very young, but they all really care about education and want to change the system.

Vaughn College in the centre of Leicester was easy to get to, and pleasantly set adjacent to an amazing Roman Wall. Like last year the weather was beautiful, but the atmosphere at this year's conference was generally more positive and optimistic. There was talk of several small, free or Alternative Schools.

The E.O. Bookstall was a real focus of positive interest. I was amazed by the number of requests for membership application forms and by the amount of books and other literature we sold. We could have sold more of Pat Knox's book on School Phobia (N.B. for next year), and Jean Blendell's 'School's Out' went well too.

We were busy all day, and had many interesting conversations, and felt that we had been able to give helpful advice and encouragement.

Unfortunately, our E.O. Workshop entitled "Let's get away from Schooling", did not feel as good as last years'. Partly because prospective E.O.ers interested in the practicalities of educating their children out of school were somewhat inhibited by the presence of several childless teachers - some of whom took a very defensive stance. One particular "Iconoclast" was quite distracting with colourful anecdotes and ideas about schools, with which we all sympathised, but which bore little relation to the day to day problems and anxieties faced by families embarking on E.O. The workshop was also larger this year, Perhaps I should have initiated smaller groups. (I certainly learned from it as recently, I've led a workshop including three elderly retired teachers who all wanted to bring back caning, and yet who ended the discussion nodding and smiling.)

However, at Leicester we discussed the usual bogeyman of 'social isolation', but more generally parents seemed more anxious about their ability to help their children learn Maths. Usually, I feel that we manage to dispel these doubts, but this time, I'm not so sure.

It was nice to discover that E.O.ers are esteemed by the Lib. Ed. Collective - they admire our efficiency (!) and the fact that we are actually doing, not just talking. Last year, I had felt, perhaps mistakenly that we were discounted as not being "revolutionary". So again, I recommend this event, and the worthwhile part we can play by showing them a true working alternative to schooling.

My final memory was of the Ramsays leaving with the optimistic words, "If only we can get the potatoes in and the car fixed before the baby's born, we'll be alright "

Jane Woolfe.



## ODD ADS.

Hello,

Any business people out there who would like to help an enterprising EOer.

My son is setting up a Courier Firm here in South Wales, known as CCS-Cymru Courier Services and he would be grateful for any advice and of course customers.

So if anyone would like to use his service, would you please contact.

Mr Steven W McDermott  
C.Y.T.S.  
Youth in Business  
Unit 3  
Taffshead Block  
Taffshead Road  
Treforest Industrial Estate

Telephone 0443 853467/8

May I take this opportunity to wish all members of EO a very happy and successful New Year from all of us, and also good luck to our new co-ordinator, Kate Powell.

Yvonne and Alex McDermott  
Tracie and Steven

1 Oaklands, Merthyrvale  
Mid Glamorgan, South Wales



Would any E.O. family like to set up home in a large caravan on our 5 acre small-holding?

We grow vegetables organically, and have a few cattle. Our children, Rosie (?), and Dan (3 1/2) meet a few local families once a week, but we would like more casual everyday contacts, as our neighbour's children all go to school.

If interested please contact us to discuss possibilities:

Ann and Marc Stace, Southbank Nursery, Cowden Hall Lane, Vines Cross,  
Heathfield, E. Sussex TN21 9HG 04353 - 3422



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## JOBS VACANT

### THE RESIGNATION OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

I am nearing the end of my two years as Gen. Sec. and so E.O. needs a new face to sort out the job. If you are interested please let the Steering Committee know by the end of April.

For me the role has had two parts:

First, the legal bit, filling in forms and administration of the limited company and charity, which at worst takes a long evening after meetings.

Secondly, a more social bit to do with organizing the Agenda for meetings and the accompanying discussion groups, and responding to a variety of contacts from members and the general public. This might be three in one day, or one in three months!

It is necessary to go to meetings for the 2 years of being General Secretary and travel expenses are allowed for this. If you want more information or a chat, please ring or write to me:

Jean Lovius, 21, Devonshire Road, Liverpool, L8 3TX. Tel: 051 - 727 - 1074

### PLAY PERSON NEEDED

Over the last 2 years I have also taken play equipment to E.O. meetings.

I had originally envisaged acting as an enabler and liaison, but becoming Gen. Sec. made this impossible.

Originally after discussion with children and teenagers some equipment was bought by EO, and I have bought expensive, bulky equipment on a loan basis from our local play council.

The job could be done by a teenager with a consenting adult to provide a hatchback/roofrack/ trailer / ? / to move the goodies to and from meetings.

I would envisage that the next person would arrange loans of equipment from an agency in their neighbourhood, but obviously there is much room for improvement, development / improvisation. If you want to know more, contact me, as I would like someone to take over for Unstone Grange:

Jean Lovius, address as above.



Note from Treasurer Don't forget the appeal for donations.

(See December Newsletter).

Note from Central Address Will all who hold stock of membership forms and information leaflet, get rid of old ones and send to Janet Everdell for new stock.



.....

Education Otherwise is a membership Organisation which provides support and information for families whose children are being educated outside school, and for those who wish to uphold the freedom of families to take proper responsibility for the education of their children.

Our principal aims are to:

encourage learning outside the school system

re-affirm that parents have the primary responsibility for their children's education and that they have the right to exercise this responsibility by educating them out of school

establish the primary right of children to have full consideration given to their wishes and feelings about their education

.....

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Send a 9" x 4" s.a.e. to:- 25 Common Lane  
Hemmingford Abbots  
Cambridgeshire  
PE18 9AN

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