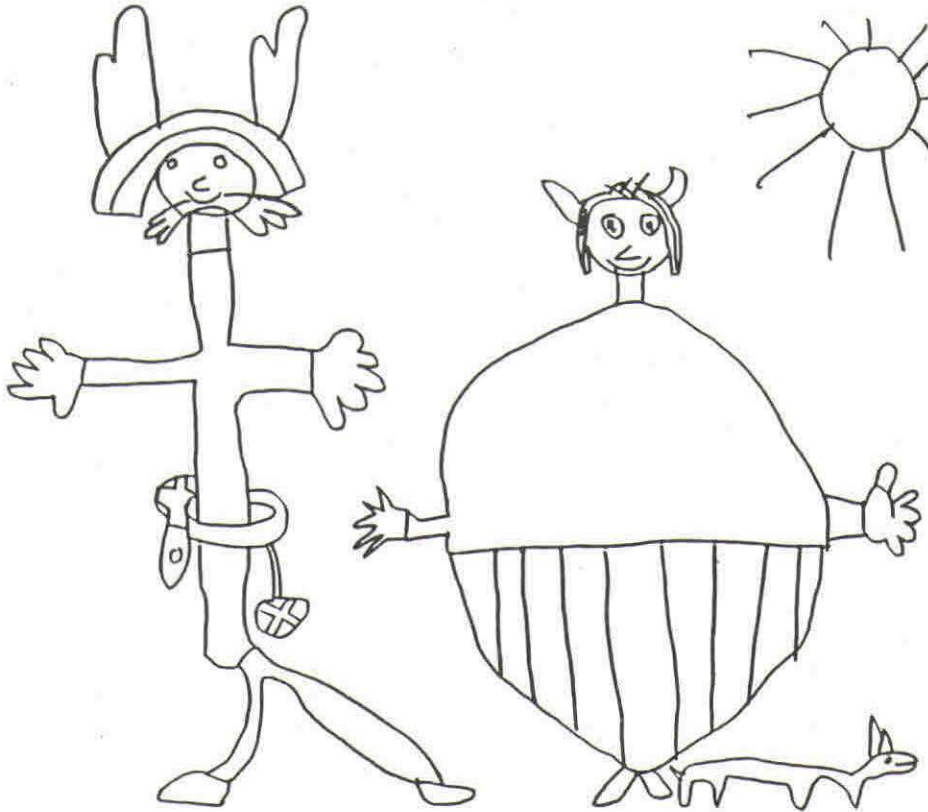


Newsletter
Issue 91
April & May
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Education Otherwise →



NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Send your contribution (clearly marked "For publication") as soon as possible to the appropriate editor, and please include your name, address and telephone number.

Note that any item published in the newsletter may be reprinted by other home education magazines at home or abroad. If you do not want your piece reproduced without your consent, please state clearly that you wish to retain the copyright.

If you refer to a previous article or letter, please indicate the reference by newsletter number and date.

If you have a computer, why not phone the editor to find out whether he or she would like to receive your contribution on disk?

Typed contributions should be double spaced. Sometimes it is easier to read hand-written material, particularly if your writing is large and well spaced, so don't be put off if you do not have a typewriter.

If there is something very important you want to say, try to do so *concisely*. Articles of 450 words (one EO page) are much more likely to be included than 10,000 word epistles.

Unless you state that no changes may be made, editors may make corrections (punctuation and grammar, etc.) and minor changes to fit the page. If you do demand no changes, *make sure your contribution contains no errors*, otherwise it may not be included.

This issue edited by the de Selincourt family. Artwork by Claire Reynolds

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* * * * * DEADLINE FIRST OF MAY! * * * * *

CONTACT LIST REMINDER

If you want to be in the 1993 contact list, write to Alan Balfe.
If you want a copy of the 1992 issue, send 7" x 10" sae (34p) to
B & C Wallace, 25 Diabaig, Acnasheen, Ross-shire, IV22 2HE

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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Members' Meeting held at Beaumanor Hall on 6th February 1993

This was a very difficult meeting to chair. It was emotionally charged and tempers were running high. I found it difficult to keep my attention fully on what was happening and to think well about where we needed to go. This report is based on brief notes and memory, both mine and other people's. General Enquiries

Rob Wade reported that there are still problems with the Helpline and that those running it feel unsupported. It seems that some of the equipment is inefficient. Miryam Bush has taken on the job of seeing that things work well. Steering Committee

Eleanor Stapleton told the meeting of two decisions. The first was to make a loan to Renata Leuffen, a German home educator, after she had allegedly been robbed on her way to England. The second was to go ahead with this meeting (legally called an Extraordinary General Meeting), to give formal notice and the agenda to all signed-up members, in spite of the fact that notice had not appeared in the newsletter. Newsletter

It was decided that we should use a lighter cover and increase the number of pages if this does not augment the cost. A group has been established to look into ways of supporting editors and improving the newsletter. Hannah Bush reported that several volunteers have come forward to edit the Children's Pages.

VACANCIES

Minutes Secretary: Julie Lyons offered to act as Minutes Secretary for one year.

Regional Enquiries Secretary: vacancies exist for this job in Scotland and in the North of England.

STRUCTURE OF E.O.

This was the difficult part of the meeting. No consensus was reached on any proposal. Some adults felt very strongly that any restructuring of E.O. should allow for young people to be fully members with full voting rights; others that the only safe way forward is to keep our present legal structure. There were well considered efforts to move things forward, but the atmosphere grew increasingly angry and people were shouting their opinions.

I decided to adjourn the meeting and to stand down from the chair. I felt that the meeting would go better with a less addled head in the chair. Paul Hodgkin took the chair when the meeting reconvened.

The discussion on the structure of E.O. was abandoned when it was clear that no progress could be made.

FUTURE VENUES

Eleanor Stapleton reported that she has located two possible venues for national gatherings in the south of England. Featherstone Castle has been booked for May/June and it was agreed that the next members' meeting be held there.

High Close Youth Hostel will be provisionally booked for September while investigations continue into a venue further south.

CONTACT LIST

There was a proposal that the Contact List be reproduced from scratch since many families listed are no longer members or have inaccurate information published. The meeting accepted Alan Balfe's offer to set up a new data-base and produce a new contact list from this. It was also agreed that the Contact List return to its original alphabetical format.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

i) Grampian Region

Brenda Holliday reported that families are still experiencing difficulties with the L.E.A. here. The meeting agreed that we take legal advice.

ii) Subscriptions/Membership

Bob Emmett had announced that he'd like to hand over this work. Alan Balfe's offer to take it on, using his own computer system, was accepted.

iii) Central Address

The family living at central address had reported harassment and invasion of their privacy by people turning up unannounced at the door. The meeting agreed that Central Address now be listed as a P.O. Box Number. (for new address see back cover)

There was a vote of thanks to Bob Emmett for his many years of work for E.O. Thanks were also expressed to Alan and Pat Balfe for organising the gathering, to the group who have put so much thought and work into looking at the structure of E.O., to myself and Paul Hodgkin for chairing a particularly difficult meeting, and to Julie Lyons for taking the Minutes.

By the time this report goes to press I will have resigned as chairperson and as a Director of E.O. This decision is taken with no ill feeling. It is just that there are other things in my life that I'm deciding to devote time to. I will continue to take an active part in meetings and gatherings. I have enjoyed my time as chairperson, especially the opportunity to get to know and work closely with some of the people who do the work of running E.O.

Keith Charlton

P
O Katherine Savage, editing the next Supplement, on POETRY O
E would like to have your contributions, such as book reviews, E
T other resources, your own work and so on. Send them to: T
R White House, Main Street, Frankton nr. RUGBY CV23 9PB R
Y Y

Dear EO folk,

We, the Reid family, returned from the spring EO national gathering at Beaumanor, Loughborough yesterday and I thought I'd put pen to paper PDQ so my thoughts would be clear and more succinct.

Firstly, thank you to the Balfe family for arranging the gathering and supplying endless provisions daily. Secondly, thank you to all the folks there for the chat and discussions (into the wee small hours), percussion and knitting all-in-one socks and treasure hunting and abseiling and canoeing and bonfires and circle dancing and millions of cups of tea. And thank you also for the very stimulating and lively meeting.

If there had to be a 'theme' to the weekend for us, it was the principle that everyone should have a greater say in the running of EO. This includes young people as well as adults. There should be no lower age limit, once a young person is old enough to have his/her own definite opinions, what makes the views of adult members any more valid? A fellow EOer and friend of mine commented on the fact that young children can easily be manipulated by adults. Well so be it. Adults can be equally manipulated, eg. by the media, politicians, religion etc., so we figure it is a chance worth taking.

Many of those present at the meetings approached us afterwards to say that they agreed with the above sentiment. But many could not bring themselves to agree to the 'drastic' change in the current EO structure. They have wanted EO to take this direction years ago, but have hitherto been persuaded/voted out of it. What's stopping us apart from fear? The running of EO must be business like and can, without being a business itself.

It is now inevitable that the limited company status of EO inhibits us from taking the idea of children having an equal say in the organisation and from reaching its full potential. Forget membership v subscribers v directors nonsense. We are all theoretically equal in that our children do not go to school, but with the present structure some are a lot more equal than others! Surely our aim should be equality in terms of equal rights for all members/subscribers, big and small, and still to remain within a legal framework.

While we're on the subject of change, many of us support the alterations to the aims and objectives of EO laid out in the constitution and at the back of the EO newsletter. The focus of this change is to

NATIONAL MEETINGS

Instead of making decisions on the basis of "This is the proposal; who agrees / disagrees?" shouldn't the WHOLE meeting focus on the results of a yes decision - the positive, the negative, the neutral but interesting results? Then, similarly, all focus on a no decision. A summary on a large sheet of paper for all to see (especially those who come in for only part of the discussion) should help to prevent the need to make the same

include wording stating that young people should have as much say (if not more) as their parents as to which direction their education is going. Even with these new aims we need not exclude families who prefer the more structured/formal approach of learning from being members of EO. We appreciate that many of them will still need support, help, legal advice etc. EO should be there for all non-schoolers but the emphasis should be on non-coercive learning and respecting childrens' rights within their educational life.

A positive step forward in the organisation and running of EO took the form of the way in which agreements are reached, now in the form of consensus. Briefly, consensus means that proposals are only passed if all present agree with the motion put forward. If anyone opposes the motion, it is not carried, but hopefully further discussion results in agreement. This may mean some people 'watering down' their strong opinions, but at least everyone leaves the meeting 90% happy. Due to the fact that voting by consensus, by definition, can only be effected by those present at the meetings it is now probably more important than ever that future gatherings are more widely geographically spread than the present apparent concentration in the North and Midlands. We think Eleanor Stapleton is, as they say, 'on the case'. While enjoying our visits to other parts of the country, us Southerners would sometimes like to have our voices heard without travelling hundreds of miles to do so.

One concern of ours was the apparent apathy of the older children/younger adults to attend the meetings/workshops, as we felt sure some of them could make a very valuable and important contribution to the discussions. When they were approached on this subject the general reaction was... a) their views are not considered on an equal par to the older (certainly not wiser) adults, b) there is too much petty in-fighting over relatively unimportant matters this results in very dull meetings, and c) it's difficult to find subjects more stimulating than chatting and drinking by the bonfire.

Maybe the meetings should take on a different format so all participants can feel relaxed and able to air their views which at present we felt was not possible. New members can also feel confused and alienated.

Despite the trials and tribulations of attending meetings (Alan had the right idea, he played with the small folk instead), we have not been put off going to future gatherings. Hope to see you all, be you big or small, loud or soft, tall or short, North or South, at Featherstone in June.

THE REID FAMILY
3 Avondale Road, Finchley, LONDON N3 2EU

point repeatedly. If it is there for all to read you know you have been heard. All the main points are in front of everyone, to make a balanced decision unswayed by personalities of those present. Even though there may be strong disagreements between individuals, wouldn't this make the group feel more cohesive : working together to find an optimum solution. The spotlight would also shift from the personality of the person to their actual ideas. Isobel Bogucki.

DO YOU HAVE TO BE A FASCIST TO MAKE THE TRAINS RUN ON TIME?

MAKING EO MEETINGS WORK

Can we make decisions efficiently without compromising our essentially libertarian principles? Can we keep our business meetings reasonably short and productive without subscribing to an alien culture of rules, votes and procedures? Questions of this sort have troubled many groups. They have certainly been dogging EO for much of its history.

Part of the problem seems to lie in the issue of reaching decisions by consensus. Voting is rightly seen as a divisive practice, and we are committed to avoiding it if at all possible. We don't want to reach a decision until everyone is reasonably happy with it. But we also want to get to the end of the meeting before we are incapacitated by sheer exhaustion. And we want it to be fair. How?

We can't just dispense with rules altogether. In a sense, even conversations have them, but they are subtle and unwritten. They are about things like how you manage to get a turn to speak, how you let people know you haven't finished, and how you tell them that you have.

Conversations rarely involve more than half a dozen people, and their aims are often no more specific than those of establishing or maintaining social contact. But business meetings are generally bigger, and their aims are largely concerned with making decisions on behalf of the group. To achieve these aims fairly the meeting needs rules which are more formal and explicit than those of an ordinary conversation.

Some of these rules will be designed to make sure that only one person speaks at once, and that everyone knows who it's supposed to be. ("Raise your hand if you want to speak and don't interrupt.") Others will be about putting forward proposals, reaching agreement on them, and recording what has been decided. Such conventions need not be oppressive, but they must exist if the energy of the meeting is to be used effectively.

If we want to reach true consensus we need to make sure everyone is genuinely heard. One way of encouraging this is to use a "speaking object" such as a conch shell. The person holding it is clearly identified as the current speaker, and anyone else who wants to speak is not allowed to interrupt but must wait their turn. After each turn the object passes to the next speaker. This could be whoever wishes to speak next, or in some circumstances the object could simply be passed around in a circle.

Such use of a physical object can have an important calming effect by enforcing the discipline of the meeting in a more

concrete way. But it's hard to appreciate this from just reading about it. Really it's essential to try the technique out with an open mind and to spend some time getting used to it before forming a judgement.

Conventional meetings have a chairperson and a secretary. The person in the chair guides the meeting through the agenda and tries to see that things are fair and that everyone who wants to speak gets a turn. The secretary makes a record of what has been decided. The chairperson and the secretary are the servants of the meeting and they need its support in order to do their jobs effectively.

Using a "speaking object" could render the turn-allocating role of the chair superfluous. Nevertheless some sort of neutral adjudicator may still be needed to carry out the chair's other functions. And at any decision-making meeting the secretary's role is vital. We need to be clear when a decision has been made and what it is, and we need to make a record of it.

Whatever the format of the meeting, it will be more effective if it has been prepared for carefully. The advance agenda should contain enough information to make it meaningful, and if possible people submitting items should circulate clear information beforehand. Preliminary discussion meetings could also be held, and alternative techniques such as the one described above might be most appropriate here. Discussions could either be general in nature or else they could relate to specific agenda items.

It's important for everyone present at a meeting to respect its conventions and be committed to making it work. The object is to cooperate in reaching clear and unambiguous decisions which can be recorded in the minutes. When conflict arises we should try to accept and respect strong differences of opinion without engaging personal feelings. Regardless of the detailed ground rules, bearing this in mind could itself make the difference between a bad meeting and a good one.

This article is based on a discussion which took place at Beaumanor Hall on Sunday 7 February 1993. For much of the session the "speaking object" technique was used. Although many more things remain to be considered, the debate seemed to be useful and constructive. If you would like a copy of a fuller (and possibly more objective) report, please send me a SAE at:

19 Perkin Close, WEMBLEY, Middx. HA0 2LY

or phone 081-904 7155.

Rob Wade

Computer Update

New Education Otherwise Computer Guide available!

We are putting the finishing touches to release 2 of the new Education Otherwise Computer Guide. We've corrected all the mistakes (we hope!) and up-dated the pricing information.

The Guide is intended to complement the information that is already available on the computer magazine shelf in your local newsagent. It includes full and up-to-date educational price lists, listings of educational dealers and details of resources for Acorn and Apple computers.

For those new to computing we have included a 'BASICS' section and advice on choosing a computer for use with your children. 'HyperCard Magic' will help existing owners of Macintosh computers to unlock the potential of the HyperCard program that was supplied with their computer.

The EO Computer Guide costs £2.50 (cheques payable to Paul Bentley) and is available from: Paul Bentley, 83 Manor Park, London SE13 5RA.

Apple are due to release 93 new products this year - which means plenty of work up-dating our Guide! We have already seen the release of some new printers in January, and February saw the release of some new colour Macintoshes as well as an announcement that the Ilvi, Ilci and Quadra 700 will be phased out by the end of this quarter. Look out for amazing price reductions on these models.

Full pricing and ordering details can be found in our guide but in brief the new computers are:

A colour version of the very popular Classic which is available with either a 40 or 80Mb Hard Disk. The 4/40 version costs £775.

An LC III in 40, 80 and 160Mb Hard Disk configurations starting at £996 for the 4/40 version.

Two completely new computers called 'Centris' have been added to the product range. The Centris 610 comes in 80 and 230Mb Hard Disk configurations and the 230Mb version is also available with CD-ROM. Prices start at £1396 for the 4/80 version. The Centris 650 is available in 80, 230 and 500 Mb Hard Disk configurations with the 230 version available with CD-ROM. Prices start at £2076 for the 4/80 version.

And lastly, there is now a colour version of the PowerBook available with either 80 or 120Mb Hard Disk. The price for the 80Mb version is £2196.

Please note that VAT @ 17.5% should be added to all the above prices and that the prices quoted for the LC III and Centris computers are for the CPU and mouse only. To these prices you have to add the cost of the keyboard and monitor of your choice.

The Education Otherwise Computer Guide

Includes a 'BASICS' section and advice on choosing a computer for use with your children as well as full and up-to-date educational price lists, listings of educational dealers and details of resources for Acorn and Apple computers.

The EO Computer Guide costs £2.50 (cheques payable to Paul Bentley) and is available from: Paul Bentley, 83 Manor Park, London SE13 5RA.

Museums Up-Date

We now have free access to the Museum of London if we book in advance. However, the Museum are aware that it will probably be individual families visiting the Museum rather than a group and are prepared to try and fit us in at short notice.

To book or for further information contact the Education Department on 071 600 3699 ext 200.

The Natural History Museum have a number of Field Study Tours coming up that may be of interest to you. The two that caught our attention are:

On the 6th March Mike Howgate is conducting a Dinosaur Museums Tour. The cost for this is £22.

The 'In Search of Dinosaurs' fossil hunt takes place in Hastings on the 4th of August. Mike Howgate is once again the leader and it costs £7 for children and £14 for adults.

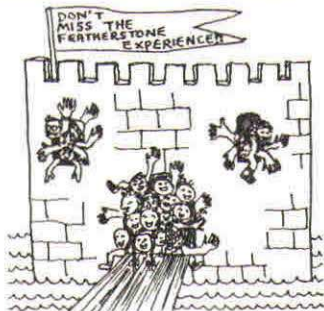
For full details of all the tours and for booking forms please write to Dr Alan Tims, Field Study Tours, The natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD.

There is a Camp-in at the Science Museum from 18.30 on the 23rd April to 9.30 on the 24th April. There will be a whole range of exciting activities, Spooky tours, amazing competitions and a chance to meet astronaut Helen Sharman.

The Camp-in is for children aged 8-11 years and costs £10 per child, £5 for an accompanying adult and £15 for an additional adult. These prices include breakfast. Bring a sleeping bag!

For further information please write to Science night, Science Museum, Exhibition Road, London SW7 2DD or telephone 071-938 9785.

DON'T MISS THE FEATHERSTONE EXPERIENCE!!
Spring Gathering at Featherstone Castle,
Northumberland 28 May to 4 June 1993
includes the Spring Bank Holiday weekend
Once again this rustic old heap is opening
its doors to welcome an assortment of
home-educating families. If you'd like to
join us, and possibly attend the National
Meeting, write to Bruce and Christine
Wallace, enclosing an sae for further
information and booking form.



n.b. Bob Emmett is no longer handling subscriptions, membership lists and membership cards. Alan Balfe (address back cover) is taking over.

Computer games: mind stretching or mind numbing?

I was so irritated by the feature on David Deutsch's interview in the last newsletter (Issue 90, Feb/Mar 1993) that I wish to take issue with the argument contained therein. First of all I do not 'hate' video games - on the contrary, the few times I have 'interacted' with them I have found them to be fun. However I consider that their disadvantages far outweigh any advantages they might have.

As for David Deutsch's argument, I consider it to be both seriously flawed and partisan, whilst masquerading as 'expert opinion'. He asserts, for example, that "the fact that children like playing video games is an indication that it is good for them": does he also support glue sniffing?

It is my opinion (I am not an academic) that video games are first and foremost created to make a profit for a few large companies and what they inculcate in our children are the values and culture of those companies. A report of a survey which appeared in our national press just before last Christmas reported that over 95% of an extensive range of video games studied were sexist, racist, and/or violent. This would suggest that these games are likely to desensitize our children to these issues. Furthermore, the skills that they equip your child with are the ability to play video games, which may well pay dividends - but in very rare cases and most likely in terms of a career with a video game company!

I am sure that, like so many other technologies, this one has the potential for great good but unfortunately, like interactive cable TV for example, the uses are virtually without exception banal.

Another worrying trend that has recently been noted is that there are now indications that children who have grown up with computer games are less fit than their allegedly 'deprived' counterparts whose parents cannot afford - or choose not to give in to peer pressure to provide - video games for their offspring. This has very serious implications for the future adult health of the nation.

Mike Barbour

Dear Editor,

The interview with Dr David Deutsch on computer games, included in the last EO Newsletter, raises a question of some concern to many parents at present, and does so in a breezy and iconoclastic style. It is certainly a question that needs to be addressed - but I found Dr Deutsch's way of tackling it unbalanced and misleading. I would like to point out what I see as the problems in his argument, which seems to me seriously flawed.

In trying to establish a starting point from which to make judgements about the benefits of computer games, Dr Deutsch rightly says that the only "experimental data" available is the simple fact

that "the child is playing the video game." The rest, as he says, "is controversial theory, based on [people's] own preconceptions". What Dr Deutsch doesn't make clear in the interview is that his own theories are just as controversial, and just as much the outcome of preconceptions, as the ones he attacks - so before enthusiastically embracing his radical conclusions, it is worth thinking about the preconceptions he brings to the question. And this is especially important, since he presents his ideas not as preconceptions but as truths: "video games...are, in the true sense, educational. Everything else is an excuse." This statement seems to me to be not only hugely reductive, but also surprisingly naive.

The heart of the problem is what many (most?) parents recognise: that not everything children do comes about because they "instinctively recognize...[the] educational value" of their activity. It is a cosy myth to believe that children always know what's "best", but the myth runs into trouble when social and economic factors are added to the idealistic "educational" drive which Dr Deutsch supposes to reside within every child. Dr Deutsch says nothing whatever in his interview about the vast sums of money which computer games can earn their inventors and manufacturers, and consequently the vested interests of these parties in exploitative advertising and high sales, nor about the massive peer pressure fostered by these interests, nor about the prime ambition for many young game-players of acquiring social acceptance and prestige via these high-technology status symbols. One reason that people - especially young people - zealously pursue and acquire objects is (as advertisers long ago discovered) because everyone else has them: objects become signs of status, of power, of glamour, of being "at the edge". If Dr Deutsch wants to argue that these social pressures are healthy and "educational" then so be it - but to ignore them as if they are irrelevant to the computer games question is not an adequate response. "The fact that children like playing video games" is not *prima facie* evidence that it is good for them.

Taking Children Seriously

Children's intellectual and emotional development is strongly affected by our assumptions and expectations about their needs and nature. Yet these assumptions are hardly ever questioned in an open and critical way. *Taking Children Seriously* is a non-profit-making newsletter that aims to fill this gap.

Forthcoming issues will address:

- the ways we justify our beliefs about our children's needs
- taking seriously the child's view of itself and the world
- one-to-one learning

Regular columns include:

- free and low-cost educational resources
- book reviews
- computer corner including software reviews

Subscription rates: £5 (for 3 issues), £9 (for 6 issues) or £11 (for 9 issues). To subscribe, please send a cheque payable to 'Taking Children Seriously' to 23 Whitley Road, London N17 6RJ. (Tel. 081 808 3200)

Not surprisingly, perhaps, the one point when Dr Deutsch does seem to notice social patterns is the one point when he temporarily abandons his "children know best" philosophy. He worries that girls don't play these games as much as boys, and suggests that this is the result of a larger oppressive social engineering that excludes girls from "doing anything creative or effective in the world." Dr Deutsch's introduction of a social ingredient here seems to me a fine example of him trying to have his cake and eat it too. If he were to apply his "children know best" philosophy consistently, he would be forced to ask whether perhaps girls know what they're doing in not embracing the video game culture with open arms. What if for girls the business of aggression, prestige-seeking and technoglamour which is the social face of video games for many people is simply unattractive, boring, "non-educational"? Why not give some value to these female instincts? Dr Deutsch's interview sidesteps such questions by a neat rhetorical shift which disguises the fundamental inconsistency of his argument.

Finally, I would like to comment on the term "interactive" used by Dr Deutsch to validate computer games. The term, as used in the interview, is compelling but in fact vaguely defined, an inadequate basis for constructing grandiose claims. Dr Deutsch denies books the label of "interactive" - why? Anyone who has ever read a book and contemplated the process of enjoying and interpreting it will recognize that there is a very obvious sense in which books are interactive. The sense of "interactive" which Dr Deutsch uses to praise computer games seems to me so loose as to be equally applicable to activities like driving a car (or riding a bike), using a fishing rod, playing a penny whistle, or finding a book in a library: "interacting with a complex entity". These are all legitimate and (sometimes) pleasurable activities of course - but "breakthroughs in human culture"? "Destined to be a fundamental means of learning for the rest of history"? The case is hardly self-evident, as Dr Deutsch would have it. In short, Dr Deutsch's use of the term "interactive" seems to me idiosyncratic and ill-defined. As with his argument in general, the reader ought to be aware that Dr Deutsch is conducting a polemic: the interview as printed has no claims to being a balanced and scientifically accurate introduction to the issues surrounding computer games and their value.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Alderson, lecturer at Oxford, Fellow at Cambridge
21 East Street, Oxford OX2 2AU

The editor acknowledges contributions on this subject from Paula Kovacs, Jackie Fearnley, and Rita de Selincourt, all of which followed similar lines of argument to those printed above.

A REPLY

As the editor of the EO Newsletter containing the interview with Dr David Deutsch, and as the interviewer in question, I wish to reply to Simon Alderson's and Mike Barbour's criticisms of the content of the article. I also wish to comment on other members'

concerns as to the wisdom of including such items in the EO Newsletter.

According to Simon Alderson, David Deutsch describes the conventional view of video games as a "controversial theory, based on [people's] own preconceptions" without making it clear that his own theories are controversial too. But David Deutsch does make that clear. Three sentences further on, he says that in his "*judgement* [*italicised in the original*] ... these preconceptions are wrong". The word "controversial" which Simon Alderson objects to, means "subject to controversy", that is, disputed. Though David Deutsch expresses himself with the self-assurance of a person speaking from a deeply thought-out position, he cannot reasonably be accused of trying to create the impression that his own views are undisputed. Mike Barbour is entirely mistaken in saying that David Deutsch's argument was "masquerading as expert opinion". He may have interpreted David Deutsch's forthrightness as an implicit claim to having special expertise. But nowhere in the interview does David Deutsch appeal to his status as an expert on any subject whatsoever. At most, he suggests that his opinions are more deeply considered than those of people who hold the conventional view. I may have inadvertently encouraged the impression that he was posing as an "expert" by prefixing the interview with a description of his academic background. David Deutsch would be the last person to argue from authority.

Simon Alderson and Mike Barbour both argue that the popularity of video games is largely due to pressures from commercial interests and from children's peers. I agree that such pressures do have an effect. Nevertheless, I find this form of argument alarming. For it is only a short step from denying that another person's choices have an autonomous basis, to using this as a justification for depriving them of their rights. It is all too easy to ascribe anything we do not like in other people to their being in the grip of some malevolent outside influence. Once we admit this principle, there is no limit to what we may feel entitled to do to them against their wishes. In any case, I find Mike Barbour's argument about the role of profit illogical. Virtually every book we read was originally published for profit. Does this mean that the only reason we read books is because we have succumbed to the publishers' "vested interests ... in exploitative advertising and high sales"? The truth is that people only raise the bogey of profit in connection with activities they disapprove of anyway. Exactly the same point applies to Mike Barbour's criticism of video games on the grounds that they are "sexist, racist, and/or violent". Shakespeare and the bible are "sexist, racist, and/or violent", but we never hear this raised as an argument for limiting children's access to them.

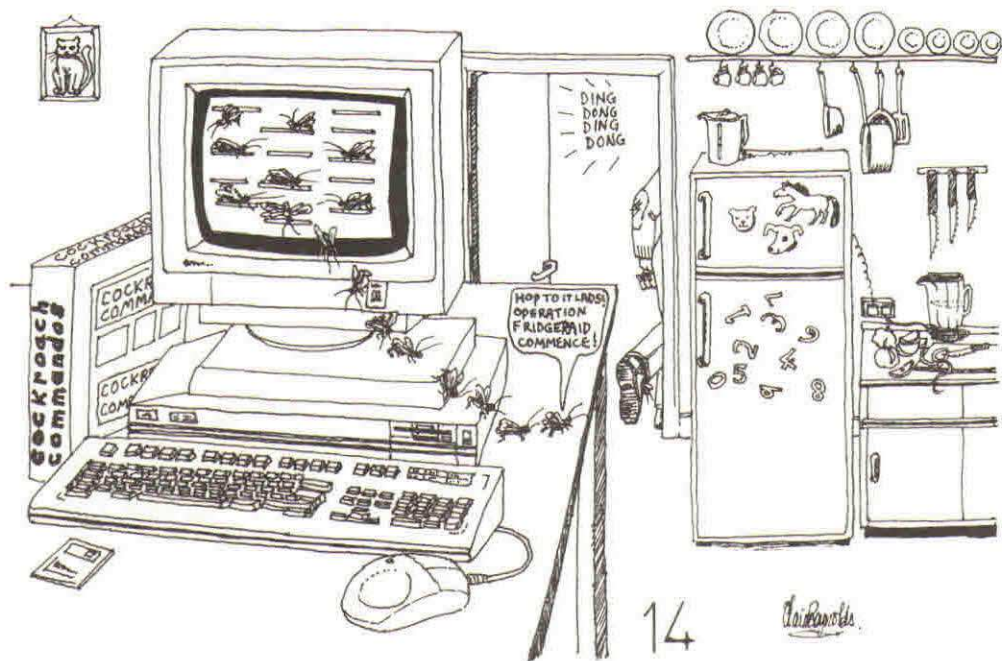
In calling David Deutsch's use of the word "interactive" idiosyncratic and ill-defined, Simon Alderson has himself failed to understand the term. There is a distinction between something whose content is complex but which is itself *passive*, such as a book or Compact Disc, and something that inter-acts in a complex way, such as a piano or a video game.

I would like to answer several of the other points raised, including why I think that children are good judges of their best interests, and why David Deutsch was not being inconsistent in his advocacy of this principle. But limitations of space prevent me from answering in as much detail as I would like.

This brings me to the wider question of the extent to which views such as those expressed by David Deutsch, and the ensuing correspondence, ought to be aired in the EO Newsletter. While I stand by my decision to publish the interview, I recognise that some EO members have found its inclusion objectionable. What are we to conclude from this fact? Should we avoid airing ideas that challenge conventional wisdom about how we treat our children, or should we encourage a more vigorous debate about such issues? Nobody can accuse the EO Newsletter of shying away from debate and controversy. But the subject matter in question is almost always EO politics and hardly ever education otherwise.

I find this lack of intellectual engagement with our real goals and purposes very frustrating. For this reason I have decided to widen the scope of the newsletter for London Out-Of-School Educators, which I have edited for the past ten months. In addition to strengthening our existing commitment to publicising free educational resources, we are now actively seeking to provide a forum for discussing ideas about the means and ends of living and learning with children. In keeping with this wider aim we have changed our title to *Taking Children Seriously*.

Although our newsletter is not directly tied to EO, I hope that this non-profit-making venture will be seen by EO members as complementing the EO Newsletter's traditional role of reporting and discussing EO business, and of sharing members' practical experiences of home education. Sarah Taylor 23 Whitley Road, London N17 6RJ



From Lucy and Keith Charlton.

We are all good parents

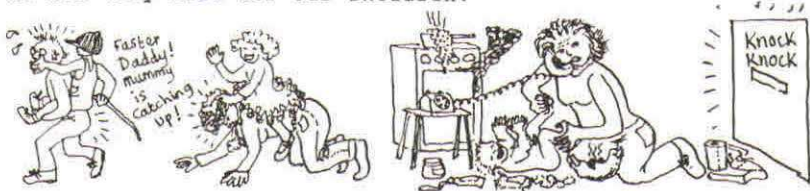
We were pleased to read Nick and Sammy Vidal-Hall's report on their day at the World Conference on Children's Rights. (newsletter 90) It was good to see some clear thinking about the oppression of young people. We'd like to add our own thinking about the role of parents in this oppression.

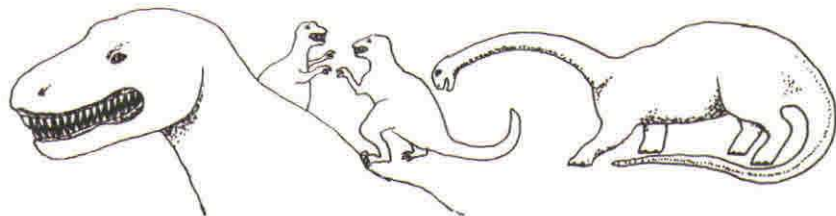
It is true, of course, that young people are oppressed. However, they are not oppressed by their parents but by society, with parents and other adults acting as unwilling agents of the oppression. Parents are also oppressed, but not by our children. The basis of our oppression is that our work as parents goes unpaid and unrecognised as work of legitimate value. Parenting is the most important job in the world. (The support of members of the next generation is vital to humankind) and one of the hardest. Yet in our society parenting holds the social and economic status of a hobby.

Our oppression causes us confusion and hurt as we find ourselves unable to support our children as fully as we intend. We then blame ourselves, or our co-parents, or our children, for the difficulties we face as parents. We assume that our failure to be consistent, loving allies to our children is a personal failure, rather than the result of long-standing incorrect policies towards the work of parents and towards young people. (It is precisely because of this internalisation of the oppression that most parents say that they are not oppressed!)

The oppression of parents engenders conditions that lead to the oppression of young people. All parents feel, to varying degrees, guilty and bad about our parenting. We are not given the support we need to do the important job of raising the next generation. Our isolation, exhaustion, feelings of guilt and lack of information often result in the unintentional mistreatment of young people. The reality is that we all love our children deeply and want the very best for them.

As parents we are continually faced with situations that remind us of our own childhood and of unhealed hurts that were inflicted on us. These hurts make us act irrationally because they cloud our thinking. (Fortunately there is a reliable way of healing these hurts; see Keith's letter in newsletter 70). Sometimes we repeat the hurt in an attempt (always futile) to make us feel better. To this extent Nick and Sammy's view that parents pass on their hurts to their children is true. But it is not our fault! We pass on as little of the hurt that we suffered as we possibly can. We parents have all decided that we will not make the same 'mistakes' as our parents - that we will do it differently! We always do our very best for our children.





I read M. R. Ellis' piece in the February-March newsletter with horror. As someone taught at home from five in a structured way, and a believer in structured teaching methods, I hope that Mr Ellis will not give EO members a false impression of the attitudes of the people who use these methods.

The stereotype of earnest formalist fanatics, pressurizing their children to achieve academically is not broken down by Mr Ellis' letter. In fact, it could strengthen the stereotype. To first support the formal approach, and then to attack anti-establishment ideas, reinforces the idea that structured equals right wing, and that reinforcement will only backlash against others following a formal teaching method, doing far more damage than the censorship and lack of democracy he implied is being used in EO.

Attacking anti-establishment sentiment is in any case an unwise and thoughtless thing to do. Were it not for people's going against the establishment, there would be no democracy. The suffragettes, the unions, the workers for freedom by ahisma, all over the world forged and are forging the foundations of democracy.

No good can come of cringing back from challenging authority. It was not "those with anti-establishment attitudes" who caused the clamp-down on social security benefits. It was the Government, and the Government alone. If we knuckle down to the whims, stupidities and bigotry of the authority, we are encouraging it to continue on its bombastic, didactic way.

I would like readers of the EO newsletter to realize that not all parents and children following formal methods believe in tacit support of an Education Act which has the audacity to allow us to home educate (our right) and at the same time offer us no financial support or guidance. Although I believe in structured methods, I am at one with Zak in restating that EO must not be dominated by the extremists on the right wing.

Joshua Mostafa (14)
4 Mandalay Court, London Road
Brighton, Sussex, BN1 8QU

The editors acknowledge letters on this topic from Kim Wark and Christopher Shute and from Alison Barnett.

FORMAL V INFORMAL EDUCATIONAL STYLES

It is a pity that in his letters in [recent] newsletters, Mr Ellis chose an insulting and scaremongering approach to those with whom he doesn't agree (but whose views are just as valid as his). It is always interesting to read of other members' methods and opinions on home education, but no one member has the right to suggest that only his methods constitute what is "proper responsibility" for the education of children. Individual parents need to decide on the approach they adopt in the light of their own family's beliefs and circumstances. Provided this decision is made with the interest of the child firmly in mind, nobody is right or wrong. It is entirely proper that EO does not seek to "give sound directive" or push any particular doctrine on members, and allows membership to all, irrespective of their style of education. Indeed, if this were not so, given the progressive and free-thinking approach of EO's founders, Mr Ellis and those of similar mind would not have been able to join in the first place. It is unfortunate if Mr Ellis did not understand EO's role before joining, but he cannot justifiably condemn the organisation for not being the way he assumed it would be. It is to everybody's benefit that EO maintains its diversity and that all members recognise and respect each other's rights to their own beliefs. It is not difficult to put one's views across in the Newsletter without being disparaging about others, and it serves no constructive purpose to do otherwise. I hope that this letter will help to draw this argument to a close, and that members can turn their energies to what I see as the biggest threat to home education - European bureaucracy (see p. 9 Oct/Nov 92 newsletter) The more letters we can write to British and Euro MPs, the Press and anyone else we can think of, the better. Every letter DOES make a difference. Mike Cole.

Ellen Borman wrote to her Euro MP and received the following reply:

"Thank you for your letter of 18 October regarding the organisation "Education Otherwise" and your concerns that the EC may pass laws which will adversely affect the right now held by British parents, under the 1944 Education Act, to educate their children at home. Please be assured that the EC has no jurisdiction where education is concerned. It is clearly seen to be the concern of each individual Member State and there are no proposals to change that. The case you quoted of Renata Leuffen from Dusseldorf, was rejected because of National Law in Germany and not EC Law. I hope this has reassured you. Thank you once again for taking the time to write to me ...

Carole Tongue MEP (London East)

24 Nov 92"

Dear Children of E.O.

CHILDREN'S CO-ORDINATOR

Seeing that Hampshire co-ordinator, Sophie Harrington-Elsmore, wishes to hand over the job and none of the Hampshire adults wishes to take full responsibility for the job, I tried to think of a way to assist the co-ordinator. I presented Hampshire with my idea of a children's co-ordinator and offered myself for the job. It was agreed, by consensus, that I, Lloyd Day, aged 14, was to be the Children's Co-ordinator.

I am writing this letter to the young people of E.O. and asking them to consider appointing their own children's co-ordinator for their districts.

I think the job entails helping children and adults into our E.O. society. Being a contact for other young people in my district who may want to say something to the adults through the children's co-ordinator and for adults who want to say something to the children in the same way. These may be good or bad things like ideas or concerns. I go to our district co-ordinating meeting, once every two months, to keep up to date. If you are interested in being a children's co-ordinator then phone me on 0705 328036. I would like to hear your ideas about the job.

Lloyd Day.

CO-ORDINATORS' DOs and DON'Ts

I have put together the work of meetings held at various times to discuss what co-ordinators should and shouldn't do. Copies of these DO's and DON'Ts are available from Lucy Charlton. (Leics.) Following recent anxieties I also feel a need to remind everyone that co-ordinators are there to help everyone who needs them. Many people in E.O. have strong personal convictions about education and other issues. These may be at odds with the opinions of other members living nearby. Everyone needs to feel that their views will be respected, especially by their local co-ordinator who should try to be fair and tactful.

Stephanie Fitcher
Co-ordinators' Secretary

0246 239048



EARTHWISE - Environmental Crafts and Activities with young children, by Carol Petrash. Floris Books, £7.99

"We do our children a service whenever we draw their attention to natural things..." This American book has been re-published. It is a beautifully illustrated review of activities suitable to each season ... as well as useful descriptions of simple knitting, sewing and weaving projects, things to eat, presents and simple playthings to make. The author's emphasis is on reverence for nature... She encourages environmental awareness in a non-depressing manner.

(edited) review by Jackie Fearnley

PAUL

OR

LIFE WITH TAZ.

by Paul and Innys Sayers

The House has alarms everywhere, every cupboard has a lock on it, the doors all have locks and keys, we do not have any ornaments (in one piece), everyone keeps an ear (and eye) out on what little Paul is doing as silence could mean trouble.

We call him Browlie - because he Browns around. We also call him Tazzy after the Tazmanian devil cartoon on T.V. He is almost six now and is educated at home with his two brothers, William (9), Keith (8) and Eleanor who is three. His elder sister who is fourteen is at school. Paul is Autistic, for those of you who do not know what that means; I will attempt to explain.

Autism is a communication problem but it goes a lot deeper than just language, it is an understanding problem as well, it would seem as if the child has been born into a world that he or she is not equipped to understand. Some Autistic children have difficulty coping with change and cannot tolerate things being moved or they will only eat certain foods. This does not sound very severe when written like that but to the Autistic child it must seem as if the world they know (I do not say "understand" deliberately) has completely changed and become totally confusing and distressing. Frequently the option of turning to their parent (or anyone else) for security or solace is denied them - it is almost as if the Autistic child views people as objects, in the same group or category as tables, chairs or walls. They can have a fascination with visual things, like examining things at VERY close range. In Paul's case this included the paving stones in the street which happened to be in a nice herringbone pattern - this meant that we walked the length of Biggin Hill High street with Paul crawling with his eyes about an inch from the pavement and then we were not allowed to go beyond this interesting patterned area. Autistic children often line things up and are fascinated by things THEY find unusual or interesting, this could be washing up liquid bottles, washing powder boxes. I always think that "Spock" in Star Trek is an example of a most able Autist, although functioning at a very superior level. If an Autistic child has any language it is often in the form of certain phrases for certain situations and a lot of it is echolalic, which means that it is repeated exactly as heard and if the child is beginning to understand then it will also be at the appropriate time. For instance Paul always says when HE wants a drink "Do you want a drink?" with a very clear question mark.

When Paul was diagnosed it was not a shock as we had already diagnosed him ourselves after undergoing the usual merry go round of appointments with Paediatricians, hearing tests etc. I can remember well the feeling that these people were not really listening, when all around us they were inferring that he could not hear and we KNEW that he could hear a sweet paper rustle at fifty paces and what's more we had already told THEM. It seems almost like selective hearing. We banged saucepan lids behind him, we threw tins at the floor when he wasn't looking, all to no avail, not a response - not even a raised eyebrow or

an involuntary twitch, but rustle a sweetpaper or put his favourite video on and there he was. He could work the video like nothing else on earth, dancing round the room at high speed to his favourite video scene and then pouncing back, hitting the button and stopping the picture at exactly the same place every time, then off round the room again, back to the video and rewind on visual search until the start of the sequence and press play, all without breaking step or time with the music, it was uncanny. It also meant we saw the same video sequence for anything up to two hours at a time. At all times even then if we could possibly avoid it, we did not force him to stop these repetitive behaviours (which we now call -ISMS) and we applauded ANY attempt at communication with as much enthusiasm and encouragement we (and the other children) could muster.

We were getting disillusioned with the SYSTEM by this point, we had read everything we could lay our hands on, we had sent off for papers and books world-wide. Our faith in the powers that be was diminishing by the minute. Our frustration became overwhelming when we visited an eminent ear, nose and throat specialist, who took one look at Paul who was slinging himself backwards and forwards and wailing, and pronounced that "he presents as a profoundly deaf child" and proceeded to clamp a hearing aid to his ear. "PAUL" he shouted into a microphone. Paul sat up as if he'd been shot. "See", he said "that's the first time he's heard his name" (and probably the last through that ear.) He arranged for us to visit hospital for a Brain Stem Evoked Response test and off we went. Poor little Paul still wide eyed gob smacked and gazing at this man with stunned respect. "First time he's heard his name at 500 decibels" was our opinion. Needless to say, Paul has near perfect responses to sound - however we are not convinced that he actually hears the same sounds that you or I do.

We searched and we despaired, and they put pressure on us for Paul to be stated, so that he could get what he needed. We found this interesting, as so far as we could tell, from what we had read and been told, they didn't seem to know what he needed, and quite how this miraculous statement was going to change this we did not know. One thing we did have and which had been confirmed by these experiences was an intense dislike of bureaucracy. We also resented the fact that because Paul had another aspect to his personality which THEY could label in a certain way, all of a sudden, all the world and his wife had a say in our life and actually thought that, as far as Paul was concerned, they knew best.

We sat down and decided that we would teach him ourselves, Paul was our son and we love him, he was not an interesting case to us, but a wonderful little human being doing the very best he could with the circumstances that he had been given. Nobody looked at him the way we did, we went to several different "Professionals" (the quotes are deliberate, as we believe that we are the professionals and experts as far as our children and ourselves are concerned) who looked only for what he could not do, especially when we said "Look isn't he wonderful, he can do this" the only response seemed to be "Oh yes, well they do" "but he can't do this, can he?". "No" we said "but so what, look he can do this and better than many other three year olds", more negative responses, no one ever looked at our son for what he could do and the achievements he had made, they were only interested in what he couldn't do. We decided to opt for a follow the child approach to Paul and try not to judge his behaviour as good or bad but just his best shot at

E.O. Restructuring Supplement

THE FACTS, THE ISSUES, THE QUESTIONS AND THE WAY FORWARD

The structure of an organisation describes the type of organisation it is, what it is for, and how it works. It also defines whether it can be treated in law as a corporate body which is like a single individual, or as an unincorporated organisation or group of individuals.

We would like you to read and digest this supplement and discuss it in your local groups if possible. Send your comments, suggestions and constructive criticism as soon as possible to Lucy Charlton, Church Lane, Newton Harcourt, Leicestershire, LE8 0FT.

We need your comments back before May 21st in order to include them into the next stage of discussions. The Members Meeting at Featherstone Castle in May will consider the draft proposals that result with a view to preparing Special Resolutions to be presented at the AGM in September.

The Present Structure of EO is that of a company limited by guarantee. Its aims are laid out in its Memorandum of Association, its rules of conduct in its Articles of Association; these form the Constitution. It is registered at Company House and must abide by Company Law.

Being a Limited Company means that its members cannot be personally sued for any of the company's debts except for a limited amount. In EO only the 100 signed-up Members are members of the Company, liable for the sum of £10 each, but they are only required to pay this if the company winds up in debt. Limited liability protects the Members from losing their worldly possessions should EO be sued or run into debt for any other reason.

The Restructuring Team was set up because some people felt that parts of our present constitution were at odds with our ethos and practice.

- 1 Not everyone who joins EO and pays their subscription is a Member of the Company. We feel all EO families should have equal status and the freedom to participate as fully as they wish in the running of EO. At the moment we bend the rules to make this possible.
- 2 Under the present Articles the Members only elect directors, approve accounts and appoint auditors, unless they are called on to vote on Special Business at an Extraordinary General Meeting. Otherwise the company is run by the Council of Management (directors). We try to introduce more democracy by calling everything Extraordinary and Special.
- 3 The aims of EO as stated in the Memorandum are not the same as those on our membership forms and newsletter. This looks clumsy and dishonest. It is the aims as expressed on the newsletter that guide EO's policy.

What we are looking for is an elegant simple framework consistent with the qualities and practice of EO. We do not want to change EO and we did not see it as part of our remit to question the aims as expressed on the newsletter, but worked mainly on the rules of conduct. We value EO as democratic, people-centred, flexible and open.

EO is a single issue organisation set up to make the most of the freedom given to parents by the 1944 Education Act. It is a libertarian organisation because it is about freedom; the freedom of families to educate their children according to their wishes. There are of course limits to this freedom which safeguard the rights of children to a suitable education and protect them from exploitation and abuse. Largely it falls to EO to enable people to enjoy the freedom offered by the Education Act, and it falls to the LEAs to operate the safeguards.

We did consider alternatives to the Company structure but we found there was sufficient flexibility within Company Law to achieve our main purposes. We felt that we should respect the living, growing organism and its 15 year history, and avoid the traumas of winding up one organisation and setting up another.

Our proposals

We came up with a 13 point document. Each point consists of a suggestion and below each point we have put things we felt needed taking into consideration. We deal with three broad areas; Membership, Directorship, Conduct of Meetings.

1. There should be clarification of our aims and objectives within the Memorandum to bring them into line with the statement and principal aims of EO as they appear on the back of the newsletter.
2. Full Membership of EO should be open to all persons over 18.
Minors cannot be financially liable. Corporate bodies, e.g. LEA's, could still subscribe but could not be full members.
There would not be a subscriber category for individuals families.
3. As now, Members would be liable for a nominal sum (to be agreed) in the event of liquidation.
4. Any Member could choose to become a director. They would need (a) a proposer, (b) a seconder, and (c) ratification at the AGM.
A company can have as many directors as it sees fit.
In law, a company must have a Company Secretary, who is responsible for notification of meetings, agendas and minutes, and at least one director. It is possible that the treasurer will be a director.
The work of the Chairperson at present demands great commitment and many skills; these may be better spread more widely amongst the general membership.
It may be preferable for all directors to stand down annually and be eligible for renomination.

5. The executive powers of the directors will be minimal and as determined by the general membership.
Directors can be held responsible for all actions taken in the name of the company. The Limited Company structure only protects us if we act responsibly and sensibly. It is up to the directors to set the corporate standards.
6. As now, any member can volunteer to take on an area of responsibility.
This would usually be proposed and discussed at the meeting of the general membership.
7. As now, there will be three meetings of the general membership annually, held at Gatherings.
Where meetings of the membership are held at Gatherings, discussion before and after the meeting can help to clarify and heal.
8. As now, there will be an AGM preceding one of the three meetings of the general membership to approve accounts, ratify decisions and to hear reports from members in their chosen areas of responsibility.
9. The notification of meetings, agenda and minutes will be made available to all via the newsletter.
Such notifications and agenda need to appear in the newsletter issue before the meeting takes place. Minutes need to appear in the issue immediately after the meeting. The timing of meetings would need to coincide with newsletters.
10. The agenda does not contain Any Other Business.
Only those items which have been submitted in the agenda as published in the newsletter will be debated and acted upon, where appropriate. In this way all members will know precisely which issues will be discussed. Any urgent items, arising after the newsletter copydate, to be discussed under Any Other Business must be displayed on the Gathering notice board for at least 24 hours before the meeting.
11. As now, the quorum for meetings will be 20.
12. As now, any number of meetings may be arranged and organised by any member throughout the year at any venue.
For any meetings where it is intended that proposals for the meeting of the general membership are to be formulated and debated, proper notice must be given via the newsletter. Such proposals could then be submitted for inclusion in the agenda of the next meeting of the general membership.
13. As now, meetings will strive to reach consensus on all decisions.
Consensus means taking account of everyone's feelings. Workshops, debates and more information could enable EO members to become skilled in using consensus as a way of making decisions. This process was begun at Beaumanor, for a report of this workshop see Anne Wade. Steph Fletcher, Lynne Greenhough and Lucy Charlton.

Other proposals have been put forward:

- a) Andy Newton suggested an interim measure.
- b) Alan Balfe proposed a new Constitution.
- c) Nick and Sammy Vidal-Hall offered 'A Proposal for the Future'.

It was decided at the Beaumanor meeting to put all these options into this supplement for your consideration.

Andy Newton's Proposal

It is proposed that the following amendments are made to the constitution of Education Otherwise Associates Ltd:

- 1 There is no limit to the number of signed up members;
- 2 Signed up membership is available to all adult subscribers to Education Otherwise upon receipt of a completed application form;
- 3 A notice to this effect shall be displayed prominently in the Newsletter at least annually;
- 4 New subscribers to Education Otherwise shall be informed of their right to become a signed up member, and the obligations pertaining to signed up membership, and be provided with an application form.

Proposed Constitution for E.O.

What follows has been assembled and amalgamated from a number of draft documents and suggestions prepared by members of Education Otherwise. It is not perfect (and is never likely to be) as it still requires polishing, tightening up and some areas require slight rewording. However, we believe that it does encompass and set out all the aims, objects and purposes of Education Otherwise.

Draft Constitution.

The right of parents to educate their children outside the school system, including educating them at home, is embodied in the 1944 Education Act and has been subsequently confirmed by the courts, and a succession of Secretaries of State for Education, up to the present.

Education Otherwise is a membership organisation, supported entirely by the subscription income and donations from members, that exists to:

- a. Provide support and information for all member families whose young people are being educated outside school.

- b. Uphold the rights of families to have the primary responsibility for the education of their young people.
- c. Establish and maintain the right of young people to receive full consideration of their desires and feelings, aptitudes and interests in all matters pertinent to their education without compulsion or coercion.

We believe that:

- a. Young people have the right to receive education in accordance with their needs, desires and capabilities.
- b. Everyone, including young people, has the right to voice their opinions, desires, wishes and requests about things that affect their lives without fear or hesitation and have full consideration paid to them by others.

We will:

- a. Disseminate knowledge and information about home education.
- b. Negotiate with Central and Local government in the interests of home education.
- c. Act as a pressure group where necessary to ensure that the rights of people, both adults and young people, within Education Otherwise are not eroded by legislation within the U.K or the European Community.
- d. Provide, as far as possible, legal advice and moral support for member families involved in conflict with the authorities.
- e. Be involved in the instigation and furtherance of legislation to prevent the verbal, mental and physical abuse of young people from whatever source, including their parents and other guardians.

Membership of Education Otherwise is open to everyone regardless of sex, race, colour, creed or political persuasion. Education Otherwise does not endorse any one view of desirable education or any one model of family life.

The organisation of Education Otherwise shall be open and democratic, and the mechanisms of the organisation shall not be used by any group to infringe the rights or inhibit the freedom of any other group. Policy decisions shall be arrived at consensually in Members Meetings, held in conjunction with National Gatherings.

A steering group, the members of which shall be elected annually at the main Members Meeting, will be responsible for implementing policy decisions and performing administrative functions as formulated by the members at Members Meetings. The make-up and size of the steering group shall be determined by those members present at the Members Meeting.

E.O. - A Proposal for the Future

A proposal presented at the meeting held at the Beaumanor Gathering set out ways to give all members equal say in the decision making process of EO. We were unable to support this proposal for two principal reasons:

- a. That any person under eighteen years would remain excluded from having any legal rights to be involved or to hold office. This is company law. More than half our members are under eighteen years old.
Young people who want to be part of the national meeting are encouraged and their views respected, but within the legal structure of the limited company they have only the rights granted to them by the adult members. This is institutionalised oppression of young people. By dissolving the limited company in order to create an alternative structure which encompasses members regardless of age, EO is making an important step towards young people's equality. Within EO this is equivalent to women gaining the right to vote, an issue that appeared unimportant to many at the time.
- b. That the proposal would not require members involved in EO national policy making to have any commitment to the aims and objectives of EO, as set out in the draft constitution elsewhere in this supplement.

We agreed we would investigate the possibilities open to EO at this time. We propose the following:

1. That EO dissolve the limited company to be replaced by an unincorporated association with additional financial and legal indemnity.

The limited company was set up about 9 years ago amidst much scepticism. During this time members have been wrangling with its legal constraints, lack of democracy and administrative confusions. Misgivings have surfaced again and again and much thought and debate has been expended at the detriment of other issues. We feel that the limited company has sapped EO's energy.

An unincorporated association allows us to write our own rules and constitution to create the organisation that we want. With the additional financial and legal indemnity, the benefits of the current structure can be carried forward to the association, whilst providing the democracy, flexibility and protection that EO requires. Many large organisations are unincorporated associations, e.g. Relate, which has some important characteristics in common with EO.

The principal issues of concern are:

- a) *Take over by people with aims incompatible with EO.*
The limited company gives only minimal protection against this as compared to drawing up a clear constitution and commitment to the use of consensus in all decision making.
- b) *Legal action taken against EO for wrongful advice, either verbal or written.*
The limited company does give personal protection to the directors and officers in the event of EO being sued for wrongful or negligent advice. If any claim made against the claim were to exceed its assets, the company would have to be liquidated and would cease to exist. Currently we have no insurance against this.

Within the unincorporated association, our foremost protection, as always, is simply giving good advice. There are various additional protections:

- 1) Disclaimers, both on the publictains and membership forms explaining that EO is a self help support group and that all advice given is strictly non-professional.
- 2) A statement in the rules of the association that advice is given to the best of members' ability and shall not be the basis of legal action by any other member.
- 3) Processes for the referral of complex legal questions to those with greater experience. Not only is this good practise, but would also reduce the expense of professional indemnity.
- 4) Clear disclaimers made before giving advice to non-members.
- 5) Errors and omissions indemnity covering publications and all officers giving advice. This insures against court costs and sums claimed should a case come to court. The cost of this is likely to be around £900 per year.

- c) Financial liability should EO become bankrupt through error, neglect or fraud. Directors of the limited company have no liability should EO go bankrupt, except if they are found to be negligent, in which case their liability is unlimited. Signed up members have a maximum liability of £10 in all cases. With a non-profit making organisation like our own, it is nigh on impossible to go bankrupt without officers having been negligent. Insurance can be provided against this eventuality. We do not have this insurance at the present time.

In an unincorporated association, every member can have unlimited liability in the event of the association becoming bankrupt, see above. We can protect against this in the following ways:

- 1) Run the association with care giving due regard to our income and outgoings.
- 2) Run the association with surplus income over and above our basic needs. This surplus could be used to support all manner of projects but would also provide a buffer should EO encounter financial difficulties. Proposals to raise the membership fees in line with this are detailed below.
- 3) Form the rules of the association such that the management committee are responsible for the financial actions of the organisation. This creates a situation much like the limited company where directors rather than all members are responsible for any negligence.
- 4) Indemnify EO association as a whole against bankruptcy due to negligence and thereby protect members against liability for EO's debts. The cost of this is likely to be around £300 per annum.
- 5) Deduct £1 from each family's membership fee and place this in a contingency fund. This should be added to and then maintained at 25% of EO Association's annual turnover, thereby protecting against financial difficulty or uninsured bankruptcy.

We realise that there are additional costs involved in taking out the indemnities mentioned but our investigations have found that these are as necessary with our current situation as with an unincorporated association.

Having the limited company seems to have focused our thoughts on the possibility of being sued and going bankrupt and ways to protect ourselves should this happen. Perhaps we need to consider how unlikely this is, given the nature of EO, and trust that our honest attempts to help non-schooling families will be valuable and helpful.

2. That EO adopt the draft constitution as set out elsewhere in this supplement.

We feel that there should be the following amendments to the draft constitution:

- a) Membership should be open to everyone regardless of age.*
- b) There are cases where families are taking their young people out of the school system in order to severely infringe their civil liberties. There should be a provision, within the constitution, to withdraw EO's support in these extreme cases.*

3. That EO creates a new membership structure.

The goals of this proposed membership structure are:

- a) To extend the right to be involved in EO's national decision making to all those who support the organisations aims and ideals as set out in the constitution.*
- b) To both protect EO's ideals whilst maintaining its commitment to supporting all those practising EO. (Except in those cases where the goals of removing young people from the school system are in contravention of basic human civil liberties.)*

Full membership shall be available to those families who wish to subscribe to the EO constitution and they shall have full rights to take part in EO's national decision making. Associate membership shall be available to those families who, for whatever reason, do not currently wish to subscribe to the EO constitution. This form of membership will not confer a right to be involved in the national decision making or to hold office but in all other regards will be identical to full membership.

We suggest that Full members pay a somewhat higher membership fee than Associate members, reflecting a greater commitment to the support of the central organisation.

4. That EO increases and modifies its membership rates.

At the present time all members, who have not negotiated a reduction, pay £12.50 for their annual membership. This works out at approximately 25 pence per week. We feel that this rate undervalues and limits EO as an organisation. We feel that membership fees should be modified as follows:

- a) Full Family Membership - £25 per annum or £15 for those receiving benefits.*
- b) Associate Membership - £20 per annum or £12.50 for those receiving benefits.*

We feel that it is important that these rates remain negotiable in cases of extreme hardship but that it is understood that any member family cannot pay less than the basic cost of providing publications. (This is currently £7.50 per year.) Paying in two instalments would also be an option.

It might appear that these rates are high but even the highest rate still represents less than the cost of a Sunday newspaper per week.

With the additional funds we could re-instate the rolling fund and undertake other projects to support local structures. It seems that this is likely to be an effective way to both increase membership of EO and make non-schooling an easier option to undertake.

It is important that we value ourselves sufficiently to be able to function effectively and further our goals without fear of financial difficulties.

In compiling this proposal we have talked to many people both outside and within EO and we would like to thank them for their time and patience. We have endeavoured to double check all legal information but welcome any corrections and additions.

Sammy and Nick Vidal-Hall.

dealing with something at the time. We felt that we could offer Paul something that nobody else or any institution could offer him and that was the opportunity to develop in his own way. We would do it with a loving attitude after all it wasn't a job to us it was something we wanted to do.

We heard of "Options" (regular readers will remember an article by Alan Philips) and followed that up and we went out to America with the idea in mind that if they did anything we didn't like (being by this time a little cynical) we would walk out as we had walked out of various situations by then much to the surprise of the so called "Professionals" involved who could not believe that mere "parents" could question their judgement. We had a great time and I don't think that there could be anywhere else in the world where people are so accepting and non-judgemental of another persons needs, "Options" maximised everything we had decided for ourselves and we set about doing what we had been doing but more so and with a much stronger sense that what we were doing was right, the Option philosophy gave us the confidence to believe in our instincts and feelings.

Paul is hilarious, he would be hard work if we didn't have a good sense of humour, when Sooty dug his way through Mathews sitting room wall, Paul decided to do the same, after all if Sooty does it has to be good. He has attempted to dig through a couple of other walls since. He fed the fish, with five pounds of potatoes!. Paul is quite good at escaping and usually when you least expect it, on one of escape bids I raced after him and could hear a car coming up behind us, now I knew that Paul might possibly swerve into the road, just for the sheer hell of it or maybe because the wheels on the car looked fascinating, but of course the driver didn't!. Anyway I rugby tackled him and missed, I leapt up and raced after him only to find on catching him that I had completely skinned large areas of my body and was dripping blood everywhere. Paul my husband rushed around the corner white faced, to be confronted by this. Little Paul of course was oblivious to all this and still intent on trying to get away. I swear, I didn't even feel the pain until I'd caught him, Paul was fine, I ended up bandaged like a michelin man after 2 hours at the Doctors. Fortunately, at the moment Paul has decided that cars kill you and leaps into your arms the minute one passes him.

He has a lot of language now, which he uses to great effect, one favourite is to wait until we are returning to the car and to kick up a real stink when he is put into his car seat - he screeches at the top of his lungs "HEEELLP, 'eeeee got meeee, heeeelp, heeelp, put me down, you let goo meee, leet gooo. This has a great effect on passers by, who stand open mouthed staring in abject horror as this man seemingly kidnaps this completely "normal" looking little boy in broad daylight, its only when they realise that in fact all is o.k that they move on. Paul and I are united in feeling that at least they bother to hang around to see if all is o.k. and we hope that if ever he did escape, one of these people would help. We would rather end up convincing the police that we were OK than Paul being abducted. Over the last year his use of language has increased enormously, the use of words such as I, You, Me, Yes, No in the right place and at the right time, in sentences made up by himself. Parents of Autistic children will know the significance of that sentence, for these are some of the words that seem to cause most the difficulty to the Autistic child. (Dads proud note

here - Only today he turned to me and LOOKED into my eyes and said "O.K. come on Dad, lets go.")

Paul loves drawing, we have Thomas the Tank Engines decorating our stairway courtesy of Paul and a picture of the sun, grass and Brawl on the wall at the top of the stairs. He has a lot of imaginative play, for instance, did you know that if you throw a bag of flour around the Kitchen "looks just like snow?". "SNOW, Snow" he beamed at me through the mist, he is funny and whilst it might seem naughty to someone else I was so thrilled because he used spontaneous language and that it involved imaginary play, anyway the kitchen cleaned easily enough. He manages to drop it on someone - this is GREAT it is interactive play. Even the fact that he prefers channel three (well actually it was all we watched for eleven months) we used to elicit language. He can read, Sooty, Soo, Sweep, Thomas, Percy, etc. He is busy teaching himself what all these other squiggles mean at the moment as he insists that you place your finger under words and read them out to him. He can count up to twenty five and has the most amazing memory for places, routes and the contents of the shopping bags. The children have been thrown into the car at top speed before now because Brawl has looked into Mummy's eyes and said "Put me in the car. We going to Safeways. To get the shopping." The other children think that he is wonderful, he can get anything (that isn't dangerous), all he has to do is ASK. They are not above feeding him the odd line or two and if he likes the idea he will go along with it. What they don't realize is that they are (as far as the professionals are concerned) achieving the almost impossible, they are interacting with an Autistic child. They love him dearly and find him as amusing as he finds them. Paul is an incredibly affectionate and loving little boy, he showers hugs and kisses on us all. The Special Needs Educational Adviser and the lady from the local Health authority were surprised at how loving and affectionate Paul is, you could see that he did not meet their perception of Autistic children. After all their books say that Autistic children are withdrawn, cold and difficult to cuddle or show affection to. The Option Institute staff did say to us that their experience was exactly the opposite and that the Autistic children they had seen were almost without exception warm and loving.

There are of course people in the professions that have not closed their minds to other areas and we found that Dr Gillian Baird and Auriel Drew at Guys hospital were the most receptive and open minded professionals we met, they were very supportive of what we were doing and gave us nothing but encouragement. As we now live in Gwynedd we no longer see her but we do write.

We are currently working(?) at home with our Autistic child (whilst he educates himself) together with our other children apart from Claire. Claire wanted to continue in school to be with her friends, she is fourteen and felt that this was the best way for her, it was her choice. This is working brilliantly and we have had a visit from the Special Needs Adviser and the Education Adviser for the others and both of them were completely accepting to our beliefs and offered us nothing but encouragement. We try to help all of our children to educate themselves at home although sometimes it can get hectic - to say the least.

We like having all of our children at home for the same reason - they all have special needs.

Editor; Sylvia Jeffs 16 St. Bernards Rd. Solihull. (021) 706 6460

PLAY FOR LIFE

an organisation recommended to e.o. by Pien Maltz-Klaar Play-for-life's concerns, in a nutshell, are: 1. The harmful influence of the pseudo-culture of violence and horror to which children are constantly exposed today through pervasive games, toys and entertainment; and 2. Children's need for varied and creative play and activities for healthy personal development. Play for Life holds workshops, produces a quarterly magazine, produces resource materials and undertakes research. It has launched a nationwide awareness campaign called "Rescuing Real Play". It aims to help families rediscover the joys and benefits of more varied play activities. With the North London E.O. group I have started a co-operative games afternoon every other week in my local community centre. For information write to: Play For Life, 31B Ipswich Road, Norwich Norfolk NR2 2LN

Review of "LET'S CO-OPERATE" an education pack compiled by Mildred Masheder.

The pack contains two books, "Let's Play Together" and "Let's Co-operate" plus a 20 minute video intended as an introduction for anyone concerned with children (or other age groups for that matter) to the playing of co-operative games. The books provide detailed information about how to play 400 games as well as activities and ideas for peaceful conflict resolution. The pleasure of co-operative games comes from working and playing together rather than winning. The pack is very useful, especially the books. The video is somewhat vague. Available from The Gandhi Foundation (who funded it) 75 Belsize Lane, London NW3 5AU Cost: £18.50 + £2.50 p&p. The Gandhi Foundation can also supply colourful parachutes for co-operative games.

Meg Hughes.

ALICE MILLER

by Sammy Vidal-Hall

"It is a tragic fact that parents beat their children in order to escape the emotions stemming from how they were treated by their own parents". - Alice Miller. I have found no greater truth than that written by Alice Miller. Her extensive writing has deep implications for every child born and for the child still small within each adult, without exception. Our bodies and psyches are saturated with the trauma of repressive childhood experiences inflicted by parents and society, but we still remain blind to these painful truths. Unable to confront them, we must inevitably condemn our children to powerlessness and abuse. Alice Miller has uncovered our past with clarity and wisdom. She has seen the darkness in our personal and collective history, and has given us perhaps, the only real hope for the future: the possibility of going back and facing our own deeply suppressed tragedies so that we can be free to explore our full potential and creativity. And then, at last, our children will be free. Alice Miller has written numerous books including "For Your Own Good" and most recently "Breaking Down the Wall of Silence" and "Banished Knowledge".

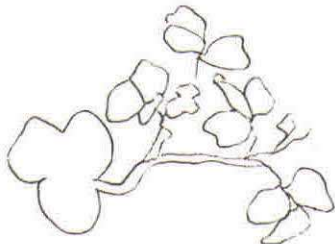
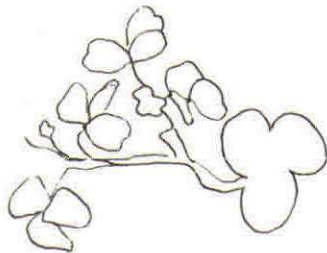
Sammy Vidal-Hall.

I have been following the correspondence and articles about the nature of EO with some anxiety. I was one of the founder members and it is true that we didn't wish to exclude anyone who thought differently from the way we did. The original families, whilst being full of a pioneering spirit and a sense that anything was possible - many of us living an "alternative" life - included people who wanted to stick to a fairly strict timetable, people who believed in "early learning", and people who would not be seen as "alternative". I hope this problem can be resolved in a mature way. I know how difficult it is when you feel you know you are right. It pains me for example when I read about people trying to teach babies to read and in other ways over-stimulating them and not allowing them to grow in a more rounded way. It is difficult to feel there is much ground for a meeting. It does feel so much of a threat when someone has different opinions than one's own in an area (the education of the child) so close to one's heart. We really have to try to stand back and accept that we have different paths to tread. In the end I can respect people for doing something positively that they feel to be right. It is vital that in the organisation we have a full and free exchange of ideas with no one style taking over.

I know it is hard for some people to accept the support group idea but all along we have been very firm that we do not respond to the idea that we are there to do something for the other person - i.e. you don't pay your sub. and then receive a predictable package. What each member makes of it depends on the individual. As others have pointed out, information and expertise is available. The newsletter and contact list are vital in this process. By the way, I just discovered that at least one of my children wished I had not written about her when younger. It is a difficult problem when one wishes to share experiences. Does anyone else have views on this question?

Jackie Fearnley.

Having just moved over to Ireland from England we should like to make contact with any other E.O. families in the area. We being: Mick and Caroline with Roger (15) Gareth (13) Giles (6) Willow (4) and Daisy (9months) There is a possibility of Roger attending school and all the others are home educated. We would be pleased to hear from anyone and should also like some information on the legal situation with education in Ireland. Caroline Carey, Cloonareague, Enniskeane, Co. Cork



I joined EO 8 months ago. My son 9 years old loves it, he finds it far easier and is much happier. Also, for the first time in 4 years I know what he is learning, and have regained a close rapport which we had prior to him starting school. In a fairly short time I know he has gained greatly both academically and as a person. I found it incredibly difficult in the first few months, working hundreds of hours on what subjects to cover, the content and how to tackle it. I very nearly gave up, the copy of "The Early Years" was of limited value. Maybe I'm taking things too seriously. On the other hand, there could be many others who give up at the prospect of organising an "education". When I look through old copies of EO newsletter I see many contributions offering advice, relating experiences, book reviews etc. Very positive. Unfortunately these valuable contributions are gathering dust on shelves throughout the country, like yesterday's news. This means new members are missing out on valuable experiences. Why not formulate a curriculum, including advice/tips from past and present contributors. If this were available to new members, inexperienced in education, it could save them valuable time. Members could extract from it what they need. I based my curriculum on the N.C. which I found a nightmare to interpret but had nothing else to base my plans on. I believe it would have been much better for me to have more guidance from EO. The main message I would like to get across is this: In the early days is when the non experienced parent really needs practical help if they are going to start off similar to school methods. They can then gradually change with confidence and experience to suit both child and parent. If anyone within 40 miles of Newcastle is interested in occasional meetings for outings or trips, please phone me on 091 5366352 John Wilkinson, Jarrow [John enclosed a contribution of some of the learning methods and tips that he and Ian have found useful, to set the ball rolling. Would anyone like to open a file? Ed.]

Home education in Ireland - Sa Bhaile. Two years ago, a group of home-educators here decided to set up a network of families, which is now established. The name "Sa Bhaile" was chosen, which means "At Home", and there are now about 40 families belonging to the group. We have just held our third weekend gathering, which was as usual very well attended. We have our own contact list, and aim to put out 4 issues of the Newsletter. The feeling between the families is very strong; because we tend to live much more isolated from each other than most English EOers we really appreciate the contact and support we all have with each other, and over the short time we've been formed people's enthusiasm has grown rather than worn off. Long may it last! I've volunteered to be the contact person between Sa Bhaile and E O, so if anyone is interested in home-schooling in Ireland they can contact me Terri Shoosmith, Faha, Dromindoorra, Caher, Co. Clare
Tel: 061 925 139

NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

In response to Paul Hodgkin's article on NVQs in Newsletter Issue 90; Feb/Mar1993 I would like to comment in the light of my experience as an initiator of NVQs into a YT/AT Scheme. I am currently working with NVQs in the fields of Business Administration, Childcare, Retailing, Bench Joinery and General Construction Operatives. At first we thought that it would be much simpler to get a NVQ than the more traditional qualifications. It would simply be a matter of proving competence in the workplace - none of this dreadful written work and no courses to go on. In practice, nothing could be further from the truth. Yes, the candidate does have to prove competence in the workplace but the different methods of doing this mean that the candidate has to produce what one Verifier from one Awarding body called "A wheelbarrow". In other words, just being observed by an assessor is not enough. The written evidence of competence AND KNOWLEDGE has to be produced in what is called a Portfolio of Evidence. It is not strictly true to say that it does not matter when the candidate gained his competences because if the candidate wishes to claim APL - Accredited Prior Learning - he has to prove that his competence is still current, not something he did 10 years ago and has not done since. Additionally, it is not true to say that you can gain a NVQ by going on a course. The only way to gain a NVQ is to register at an Assessment Centre. It is certainly possible that the candidate may have to undergo some training in order to prove that he has the necessary underpinning knowledge to go with the skills he is acquiring or has acquired but this in itself will not gain a NVQ or any credit towards one. Once registered, the candidate will be guided as to what he actually needs in order to prove his competence and will be allocated an assessor. Each NVQ is divided up into Units of Competence. Each Unit is made up of smaller sections called Elements and each Element is made up of a number of Performance Criteria (PCs). The PCs are the standards by which each candidate is judged. Additionally, each element has its own range statements which specify in what situations the competence has to be demonstrated. The smallest part of a NVQ for which a candidate can be accredited with a certificate of competence by an Awarding Body is a Unit. In order to be accredited with a Unit the candidate has to be assessed by an Assessor, verified by an Internal Verifier and verified by an External Verifier - a representative of the Awarding Body. All of which should be arranged by the Assessment Centre when the candidate requests an assessment, assuming that the candidate is considered competent. (This is a shortened version of a longer letter. For "he" read also "she" throughout.)

Dorothy Ainsworth. 31 St Annes Road New Marske Redcar Cleveland

Kay Day has also written on the subject of NVQs. "Yes, I know something about NVQs. Until the birth of Oberon, 2 years ago, I worked for the (now) University of Portsmouth as a Diagnostic, Formative and Summative Assessor for a series of staff development NVQs." "I too believe NVQs are good news for EOGers, especially as they will encapsulate the autonomous learners who acquire knowledge, skills and competence through non-traditional routes." Kay offers to run a workshop as an introduction to NVQs and APL (Accreditation of Prior Learning) if there is sufficient interest. She would want to do this within the year, before she would feel a need to update her knowledge in this rapidly evolving field. Someone would need to organise the workshop and funding for Kay's actual expenses (she would not charge a fee). Kay asks that you contact her in the first instance ONLY if you would like to organise or help run the workshop.

Kay Day, Hampshire.

- JOBS - JOBS - JOBS - JOBS - JOBS - JOBS - JOBS - JOBS - JOBS

VACANCIES EXIST FOR THE FOLLOWING POSTS :-

Regional membership secretary, LONDON & HOME COUNTIES from 9/93 The work involves receiving completed membership forms and subscriptions, then dispatching parcels of publications with a standard welcoming letter to the new family. A set of parcel scales goes with the job to save time! The work needs about 1h/wk + trip to Post Office, and a small amount of storage space for stocks. Anyone living in the South-East who is interested should contact
PETER EDWARDS, VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Minutes Secretary from winter '94.

Regional Enquiries Secretary for North of England to answer telephone questions about e.o. and the services it offers and direct members with problems to the appropriate helper

Coordinators for :-

Northants	Cleveland	Manchester
Cumbria	Notts	Ireland

Contact Stephanie Fatcher 0246 239048
50 Springfield Ave Chesterfield S40 1HL



3rd EO Camp in KENT
10-14th June at Gloversbridge, Grigg Lane, Headcorn, near Maidstone
Sue and Keith Burchett 0732 870344

CWMRHAFFAU is holding another Spring Camp June 4-7th. Details:
Cwmrhaffau, Sarnau, Llandysul, Dyfed SA44 6QZ 0239 811118

EAST SUSSEX Adventure and Family Camp, Heathfield, 6th - 11th May in a field with two loos, washbasins (cold water). Cost is £2 per unit per night. The adventure course is for 10-14 year olds, from the Friday to Monday, by a professional trainer and the objectives are to promote mutual support, trust and respect among participants. Also to stimulate healthy and honest communication. We still have a few places left. Cost £15 - 20
Sue Petszaft 0892 661319

Redfield Community BUCKS
EO Camp 17-21 June. Small charge, limited numbers. 17 acres.
Send see for details to: Diana Keegan, Redfield, Winslow, Bucks

..from a Village School ...



This letter was written by a school teacher after reading some EO material:

Thanks a lot for the ... Newsletter. I have been teaching in state schools for 14 years now but am probably unprofessional as I still voice my reservations about the whole concept of education as organised in England and Wales at present. Even more hypocritically, I am very concerned about the state's apparent desire to institutionalise children from birth (with ever increasing propaganda to get all children in "nursery education", much of which leaves a lot to be desired) as I have worked and had my own children cared for by others virtually from birth. On both counts my personal experience has been of good infant care and of schools in pleasant rural settings for my own children. I was most interested to read of the idea of Small Schools: I teach in a state "small school" which now has just over 100 pupils in four classes. We have fought against taking children of an ever younger age and have managed to keep our first class down to only 20 4-6 year olds. We have also encouraged parent helpers ... which enables us to do lots of practical artwork etc. My class does a topic alongside ongoing development of basic literacy and numeracy skills and I even have to admit that within the extensive paperwork of the National Curriculum I have found guidance, ideas and maybe a hint of inspiration! As our school is in a small, old-fashioned village far from any modern town, we work in an apparently lackadaisical, somewhat disorganised manner. Like home educators, we are trying to find a balance that's best for the children. The atmosphere in school is relaxed and the relationship with parents open and friendly. It is a church school, and the church is still an important part of the community. Generations have come to the school: surnames come in clusters and cousins abound. Dinner ladies return at 3.30 as cleaners; most are Grans. All this goes towards keeping the teacher, me, in her place. The whole community is responsible for the children. So, what do I do with my own children? I want small schools, small classes, pleasant natured classmates, friends to work and play with in and out of school; but not me for their teacher. In school, I would want them to be perfect in every way to allow me to identify shortcomings in others. But more than this, I don't think I'm a good enough teacher for my own children. I want them to learn more than I know and have a better education than I had. I want to give them the best I remember from my childhood - the freedom, discovery, building, making, playing in fields and gardens; the other adults we went to for things not available at home. I don't want them to lack the things unidentifiable except with hindsight. To get all this I personally need to work to support my children, to provide a house where and of the type I want, outings of the type in your

newsletters. All of this is, of course, exhausting and often backfires in shortness of temper, patience and time for the children. Fitting in Cubs, swimming, riding, Sunday school, football etc can be a chore, but I don't want to deny the children the chance to try something they might love or for which they may turn out to have a talent. I am almost happy with my job now but when I first worked in a large urban school I was saddened, saying openly that I would not bring my own children to this school. I grieved for the tiny wide-eyed asthmatic babies dumped each morning into a wild playground. They were led into a room filled all day by nearly seventy rising fives, with two teachers and the recurrent cry of "You stupid boy!". When they were disgorged at 3.30 to impatient, cursing mothers the new reading book would be flung back with a rude complaint. I wonder if escape is really the answer; should we forget what we've left? Is there something we can do to improve their lot as well as our own?

Dorothy Kirkham.



NOTES AND QUERIES

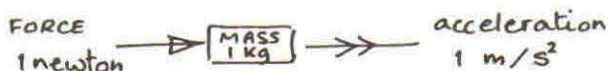
J.W. of Jarrow writes "... can you clarify kilograms and newtons, and how they relate? I seem to have missed this at school ..."

If you have a question that has arisen in your education programme, why not send it to the newsletter? An editor could include it in the newsletter and someone might have a go at answering it. This might provide a way of sharing expertise more widely. So, our "science correspondent" (!!) writes :

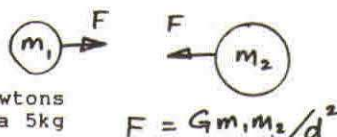
The kilogramme, symbol kg, is the SI* unit of MASS, usually defined as 'quantity of matter' in a body. It is considered to be a fundamental, constant, property of the body although the theory of relativity forces us to modify that view when speeds close to the speed of light are involved. ($E=mc^2$ and all that!)

The standard kilogramme is simply a lump of metal kept at Sèvres; other masses are found by comparison. In the Imperial system, the unit is the pound.

The newton, symbol N, is the SI unit of FORCE. Force is what changes the motion of a body, i.e. accelerates it. The newton is defined as the force needed to accelerate one kilogramme at one metre per second per second, (1 m/s^2 OR 1 ms^{-2}).



The Law of Universal Gravitation suggests that "all masses attract one another with a force that depends on the masses and the distance between them".+ The earth and your newly acquired bag of potatoes is no exception. Near the earth's surface the gravitational pull, or field strength, is approximately 9.8 newtons per kilogramme (9.8 N/kg). This means that a 5kg bag of spuds WEIGHS 49N.

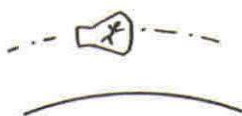


Try this with a spring balance calibrated in newtons. It ALSO means that, should the bag burst, the individual potatoes will accelerate downwards, towards the earth's centre, at 9.8 m/s^2 .

To say that they 'weigh' 5kg, as we do in common speech, is not scientific, because weight is a force; what we mean is "this bag of potatoes weighs the same as 5 standard kilogrammes would, so we deduce that the mass is 5 kg."

On the moon, the same bag would weigh about 8 N because the moon's gravity is less. An earth-calibrated spring balance would read 833 grammes, BUT an old fashioned beam or lever balance would still need 5kg on the other pan. Why? Because BOTH weigh 8.33N. Spring balances marked in kg (or lb for that matter) are assumed to carry the rider "This machine is only valid for use on planet earth at sea level, latitude 45° , or such other locations as may be specified in the Conditions of Use" They don't because (a) there aren't any supermarkets on the moon or Mars . . . YET (b) the variation over the surface of the earth is only half of 1% which is insignificant for trade (though it is important in precision measurements.)

In a close earth orbit, an astronaut's weight is reduced by about 4%. She is NOT weightless but in FREE FALL, like being in a lift when the rope has broken. The capsule is falling to earth at the same rate as the astronaut, so she APPEARS weightless.



+ "The mutual force between two masses is proportional to the product of the masses and inversely proportional to the square of the distance between their centres (of mass).

*SI stands for Système Internationale d'Unités, the present system of weights and measures based on the metre, the kilogram(me) and the second.

wanted!
volunteers
to edit
the Newsletter
and Supplement
please contact
Lyne Greenhaugh

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14 Alison Rd, Church Stretton
Shropshire SY6 7AT

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Patchway, Bristol, BS12 5NG
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010 353 75 21996

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Alder Bridge School
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offering places, initially to
children aged 6 - 7 years
Contact Dave & Debbie Pike
Reading Steiner School Project
5 Christchurch Gardens
READING, Berks 0734 265935.
Established kindergarten and
toddler session at above ad-
dress: Joanna Ferguson 268299

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Otherwise".



HITTING - TAPPING - SMACKING - BEATING - SPANKING

Physical punishment of children was referred to at the last legal workshop, 25 October 1992. I mentioned the work of EPOCH - End The Physical Punishment of Children - and it was suggested I write a piece for the Newsletter.

I am mainly concerned here to outline the aims of EPOCH, and where further information may be obtained. I would be interested to hear other people's views and/or experiences.

EPOCH was set up in 1989 to campaign to end all physical punishment of children. It aims to create a no smacking society because physical punishment:

- violates children's fundamental rights as people;
- is dangerous, linked to child abuse and can cause serious "accidental" injuries;
- teaches children nothing positive;
- encourages the development of violent attitudes and actions, in childhood and later life.

EPOCH works to achieve its aims through education, research, and legal reform. A number of booklets and leaflets have been published including: The No Smacking Guide to Good Behaviour; Hitting People is Wrong and Children are People Too; and, Smacking - A Short-Cut to Nowhere. These include practical suggestions, alternatives to smacking babies, toddlers, pre-school age, and school-age children. Parents and carers may receive a free copy by writing to EPOCH, 77 Holloway Road, London N7 8JZ.

When EPOCH was launched no organisation had a public policy of ending parental physical punishment. Two years later, more than 30 child welfare and professional groups throughout the UK support the campaign to end physical punishment by education and legal reform. "Generally, the law provides more protection for children than for adults, because of their immaturity and vulnerability. The one exception to this is over physical punishment. Here, treating children as a special case has resulted in them being denied the protection the rest of us take for granted." (Hitting People is Wrong).

Outside the home the UK is doing better. In 1987 legislation banned corporal punishment in state-supported education (not all private school pupils are protected). The Children Act 1991 outlawed physical punishment in children's homes, in foster-care, in nurseries, playgroups, and childminding. In 1992 the Scottish Law Commission on Family Law proposed substantial changes to existing law on parental rights to use physical punishment. It proposed that it should be a criminal offence to hit children, with implements or in any way which causes or risks causing injury, or pain or discomfort lasting more than a very short time. There is still a long way to go before Civil Law makes it clear that no physical punishment is permitted.

EPOCH are not seeking prosecution of parents or intervention in family life. Infact experience of other countries (Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Norway, and Austria) is that banning physical punishment does not have these effects. The reform EPOCH seeks "provides the essential confirmation that it is no more acceptable to hit a child than to hit anyone else". More than seven million children in Europe live under legal protection from all forms of physical punishment and humiliating treatment. The purpose in each country (see above) has been to change attitudes to children. In Sweden legal reform was accompanied by an extensive education programme. Assessment of the Swedish reform found "The law has dramatically reduced physical punishment and commitment to it."

Susan Long, 154 Long Brandocks, Writtle, Chelmsford CM1 3JR
(EPOCH - Co-ordinator - Peter Newell, Parent Education

Co-ordinator, Penelope Lench) 77 Holloway Road, London N7 8JZ
tel: 071-700-0627.

LATE NEWS!!!

LATE NEWS!!!

LATE NEWS!!!

WEST SUSSEX

I am in the process of seeing the four areas of the LEA to try to improve communication and change the frequency and nature of visits where needed. Please contact me soon with any suggestions; also for details of our At Home days and What's On in the area.
Isobel Bogucki

0403 261178

Dear e.o. . . .

dear e.o.

Suzy Griffith's idea of joining a W.I. market (Feb/March newsletter, p.17) is a good one but I was surprised to see that her market is open only to girls/women. Here in Norfolk, W.I. market membership is available to both sexes and I have been given to understand this is the case for most parts of the country. So if you are male and keen to take up Suzy's suggestion don't be put off, go to your local W.I. market and enquire! Rosemary Charles, Norfolk

dear e.o.

First, I beg you pardon about writing you in such a bad english, but I learned it at school a long time ago! I've two daughters (8 yrs and 20months old) growing without schooling. And I would like to find an english girl penfriend for my daughter and for myself. Preferently, in the same case (growing without schooling). ... We twice like animals, art, painting, reading, writing (novels, poems) sport, walk in the country where we live. I'm 30 and married since 10 years ago. I thank you in advance, hoping an answer. Serrano, Laurie. La Shanella, Le Grand Bord, 18360 Saulzais-le-Potier, France

dear e.o.

Please be warned that if you join the Young Archaeologists Club as a family for £7.50 a year it is only the children who get into places for free. I phoned the central bookings clerk for Yorvik and the ARC and was told we in YAC could go in free. When we arrived having travelled all the way from Stockport to York we were told this was not so. Because I had been told on two separate occasions on the phone that we would ALL be let in free we were allowed in for free but were asked to let everyone know as there seems to be a lot of confusion. Only children go free, unfortunately. Gil Wilson, Stockport
[YAC was recently recommended in the Children's Pages. Ed.]

dear e.o.

I am a Morris Dancer (female) and I will be heading north at the end of June to take part in the Scarborough Fayre Morris Festival. I shall be bringing my two children, Rebecca and Natasha, and also my partner Dave. Does anyone know of any reasonably priced self-catering accommodation, up to one hour's drive away from Scarborough? (Pref. S or W) I would be very pleased to hear from you. Thank you,
Klm Woodward
10 Bedford Crescent, Horfield, Bristol BS7 9PP 0272 401566

dear e.o.

My daughter Angelique (aged 16) is now a competent player of the Highland Bagpipes and is a member of the City of Canterbury Pipe Band. If there are any other families in the north of England or Scotland who play and wish to make contact with us we would be pleased to hear from you, with a view to a short visit. We expect to be travelling to the E.O. gatherings in May and September in our caravanette with our two small dogs and would be willing to extend the travelling. We are vegetarians at home but will fit in with whatever is going. I also have a son Richard (14) who is keen on computers and beefburgers.
David Bettle,
56 Goodwin Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 0JJ 0843 583260

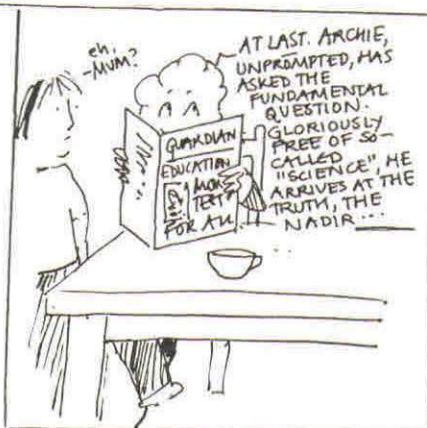
dear e.o.

I think that children who go to school pretend to be grown up. E.O. children don't do that. You are going to be grown up for ages. I think pretending to be grown up is a waste of your childhood.

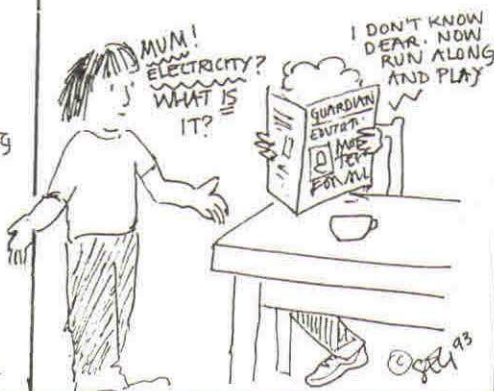
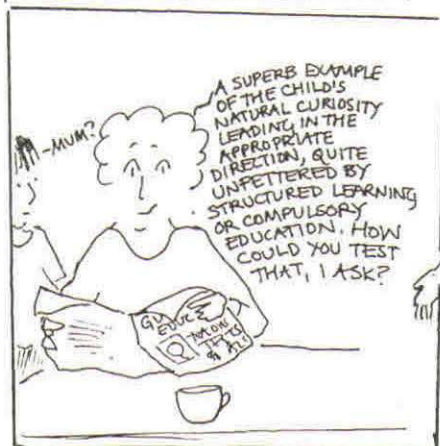
Charlotte Newton, 11. Dorset.

EDUCATING ARCHIE

By SEG



Reprinted from 1981



Dear e.o.

Hello, my name's Andrew, I'm 14 and live in the country. I'm very deep into electronics, stationary engines, all mechanical things, and keyboards. I have a pet cockerel and a goat. I'd like to correspond with anyone of similar interests. I'm learning French and Russian but would like a pen pal from anywhere in the world. The kind of projects on which I'd like to compare notes are: restoring old valve TVs and radios, repairing video recorders, constructing transistor circuits - amplifiers, opto-electronic devices, infra-red gadgets, everything electronic and all interesting mechanical things. Yours sincerely, Andrew Bancroft, "Ard-La-Bor", Bracken Lane, Whatstandwell, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 5HF

Some EOers think it is good to read about the activities of other home educators in different parts of the country. They find it stimulates them to plan outings, too. Others feel the national newsletter is not the place for detailed listing of local events. The editors hope they have achieved a satisfactory compromise.

REGIONAL DIARY

BEDS AND BUCKS

Val Gommon for details of local activities 0908 511247
7 April Easter workshop at Bedford with June McDonald

BIRMINGHAM

Carol & Paul Willis 021 455 9742
Sat 24 April Cannon Hill Nature Centre 2.15 pm
Sat 22 May Cannon Hill Nature Centre 2.15 pm
Phone for further details

BRISTOL

Sandra Rowlands is the new coordinator for Bristol, Avon.
Thanks, Poppy, for all your help. 0272 799974
"Seed Circle" Home Education Group Trudie 0275 333251
Flexi-School Hussein 0272 738433
OSMA Science and Maths activity Sandra 0272 799974
days for 7 - 14 yr olds

DERBYSHIRE

Kerry Meek 0332 754793
has details of meetings in addition to these:
April 7 Water Meadows
April 16 Music workshop, the Fleet, Belper, 1pm with Sheffield EO
Special guest leader, approx £5 per family. Please book.
April 21 Kite making at the Greenhoughs', 11am, share lunch.
May 5 Water Meadows
May 12 Planning at Shirley's, 11am onwards, share lunch.
May 26 Swimming at Alfretton open air pool, 11am onwards.
July 5 - 11 Peak Camp. Ring Shirley Kelk for details.

DEVON NORTH

Mandy and Ron Skinner 0237 441780
At last we have managed to get a few trips going in North Devon!
Wed 5 May North Devon Museum, The Square, Barnstaple 10.30
Wed 19 May visit "The Big Sheep" near Bideford. Meet in car park
11am cost not yet negotiated
Wed 9 June visit to CLOVELLY. Meet at Visitor Centre 10.30
£1.50, under 7 free
'phone for further details and to let us know if you are coming.
We're still looking for premises for regular meetings. Ideas ?

DEVON, SOUTH

Sammy and Nick Vidal-Hall 0548 830716
Homecroft, Brownston St, Modbury, Devon PL21 0RQ
for information regarding meetings, visits, workshops in Totnes,
Exeter and Plymouth areas, send sae for news sheet or 'phone.

DORSET

Christine Adey and Rosemary Newton are now co-coordinators .
Christine, between 5pm & 7pm on 0258 880355
Rosemary, between 7pm & 9pm on 0747 53593
Wed 28 April Upton Country Park, Poole; Heritage Centre 10.15
Walk with the Warden. No charge. (Donations welcome)
picnic and informal walk in afternoon.
Wed 12 May Parents Only Evening (no children please) 7.30-9.30
Compton Abbas Village Hall (on A350 S of Shaftesbury)
Please bring educ mat'ls you have found useful, something
to share for supper or just call in for a chat.
Future events in Dorset inc Mon24 May Radipole Lake, Weymouth, :
please send 4 saes to Rosemary Newton, 6 Yeatmans Close,
Shaftesbury.

DYFED

Donna and Fred Coleman 0554 759090
meetings at Llanelli, 1st Sat of every month. Phone for info.

GREATER MANCHESTER and CHESHIRE

Anne Nesbit 0625 871718
Gill Wilson 061 4428723
Weds 7 & 14 April Parr's Wood centre for rural studies. £1 per
child per session. bring picnic.
Thurs 6 May Reddish Vale visitor centre; morning Earth
Education, afternoon pond-dip and minibeasts. Free, run by
Warden. Bring picnic.
Thurs 20 May Sale Water Park. All day activities with Warden.
Free Every Weds in summer hols, all day activities at Parr's Wood
including a bottle garden, a visit from Weliphant and a Fire
engine, parachute games, Earthbal, badge making, non-competitive
games, fun with optics, a Roman Day, Drama, painting, junk
modelling etc. (£1 per child per session, bring picnic.) Please
phone first to book and check that it is still on.

HERTS

Jane Lowe has taken over responsibility for the local events
list and newsletter.

LONDON, NORTH

Sarah Taylor 23 Whitley St N17 6RJ 081 808 3200
Send £1 + A4 sae (36p) for your copy of the next comprehensive
'LOOSE network' newsletter, or 'phone for subscription details.

LONDON, SOUTH

Susan Wilson 081 858 8714
We meet once a fortnight at East Greenwich Community Centre SE 10
(Maze Hill BR, buses 177 180 286). Space for play and craft
activities; theme for each meeting -past ones include
storytelling, Chinese New Year, Drama, bookmaking, country &
peace dancing; If you have something to offer, let me know or
just come & do it.
APRIL 23 MAY 7,21 JUN 6,18 JULY 2,16 noon - 4pm

KENT

Sue & Keith Burchett 0732 870344
Our stall for the Blue Peter 'I Care Appeal' raised £40 - thanks
to everyone who helped and contributed.
Fri 2 April Rochester Castle/Cathedral - meet castle gdns 12 noon
for picnic . Free entry to castle to be arranged; worksheet
available Thur 15 April Open House at Cath Cooper's, 162 Bush
Road, Cuxton. noon onwards; bring lunch 0634 715389
Future events on MAY 7, 13, 21 JUNE 4, 14, 24 Phone Sue & Keith
or Amanda Mackenzie 0634 814680

NOTTS

!! COORDINATOR NEEDED !! Alex, Jessie, Anna & Paul Sains are
moving to Knockbeha, near CAHER, Co Clare, Eire. We hope many of
our e.o. friends will visit. Meanwhile, continue to swim at
Watermeadows, Mansfield- first Wed of month 11.00

OXFORDSHIRE

Alison Horridge 0865 513499
14 April Oxford Botanic Gardens, meet at gate 2pm
29 April Cogges Farm visit, llam with picnic
12 May Cotswold Wildlife Park. 10am at the gate with picnic
23 May Digging and damming, Shotover sandpit. llam with picnic

STRATHCLYDE

Laura Brown 0505 862122
who has full copies of Scottish Nat. Curric. Guidelines, 5-14yrs.
16 April Eglington Park nr. Kilwinning llam, free. Animals, music
30 April Haggs Castle, Glasgow 10am, free. Poss. crafts, dress up
28 May Glasgow Zoo Park, Uddingston G71. llam. £3.25/£2.10 3+yrs
Please phone Laura to check final arrangements.

SUSSEX

Sue Petszaft 0892 661319

EAST SUSSEX

Parents' evenings once a month; several activities each week for
families. Monthly local newsletter Sub: £8 a year, cheque
payable to E.S.E.O., Lyndon Pugh, The Barn, Mongers Farm,
Barcombe, Lewes BN8 5BQ or phone Ian Lawes 0273 559275
or Anne Rix 0435 862794

WEST MIDLANDS

We have been members of EO for about 18 months and like to attend
local meetings when we can. We have become very isolated and ...
I am writing to see if any other families in the West Midlands
feel the same and if so would you be interested in setting up a
local group? Please write to Mrs S. Powis, 7 Newland Grove, Holly
Hall, Dudley, West Midlands DY2 0TJ. Please enclose a s.a.e.
Let's hope we can meet soon!

NORTH YORKS.

Sue Clare says "Apologies for cancellation of Eureka trip. Try
again May/June. Possible change of address of co-ordinator during
March/April If unable to contact me try Gwen Baldock on York
421982 for information and/or my new number."

Community Centre, Club and Cafe for Home-Schooling Families **NOW OPEN**

at the Granville Centre, Granville Road, NW6 (nearest tube Queens Park or Kilburn Park)
Every Thursday and Friday 10 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. from 24th February to 2nd April, 22nd April to 28th May, 10th June to 23rd July 1993.

Membership £33 per term per family Phone Lesley Barson for details on 081-969 0893

OPENING PARTY Thursday 1st April 1993 **SUMMER FAIR** date to be arranged

Activities already started:

Thursdays: Pottery, Sewing, Chess and Draughts, Nature Club

Fridays: Croxley Club (for over 8's), Stained Glass (3 weeks only), Electronics (until Easter)

Also starting after Easter:

Thursdays: Woodwork, Beginning Aikido and Athletics, Philosophy for Children

Fridays: "Role-playing" games (replaces Electronics)

The project is run by members. There is a planning meeting each Thursday lunch time.

Donations of toys, books, materials and household equipment are much needed and would be very welcome.

Mike and Ruth Downham, plus Esther(12), Elsie(9), Joseph(7) and Amy (5) run an organic smallholding in North Cumbria. There is a self-catering cottage available during summer months (all inclusive, £150 per week) Involvement with farm / garden activities has been very popular with families. Home produce is for sale as available. We are well placed for visits to Roman wall, Eden valley, Lake District and Dumfries coast. Please contact: Allergarth, Roweltown, Carlisle CA6 6JU tel: 06978 214

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GREEN
FAIR**

SUNDAY
MAY 30TH 1993
11am - 7pm



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Charity, 13 Woodfield Crescent, KIDDERMINSTER,
Worcs, DY11 6TX by JUNE 21st 1993.

GRAMPIAN REGION

Jackie and Eric Foggitt are now the Co-ordinators. Many thanks to Petra Cortis for her steadfast work. We look forward to hearing from Grampian EOers and to meeting you too. Tel: 0542 32103

35

Where to get what

The following publications are available from Bruce and Christine Wallace, 25 Diabaig, Achnasheen, Ross-shire, Scotland, IV22 2NE. Prices quoted are for members only and include P&F to UK addresses. Please make cheques payable to 'Education Otherwise'.

School is not compulsory (new edition due soon) A guide to your rights. £2.50

Early years Learning suggestions for the under-twelves. £2.50

Later years Learning for older children, plus GCSE (new edition due soon). £2.50

Teach your own, by John Holt. The philosophy of home education. Staggeringly good value for money! £3.85

Learning all the time, by John Holt. A practical guide covering reading, writing, numbers, science and music, as well as the wider issues of the nature of learning and parental involvement. £4.50

School's out, by Jean Bendell. A good how and why book by an ex-EO member and long-term home educator. £5.95

Troubled Children, by Patricia Knox £6.50, and *Abuse of care and custody orders*, by Patricia Knox, £6.50, are both mainly about school phobia.

EO Computer Guide - includes a BASICS section and advice on choosing a computer for use with your children as well as full and up-to-date educational price lists, lists of educational dealers and details of resources for Acorn and Apple computers. £2.50 from, and cheques payable to, Paul Bentley, 83 Manor Park, London SE13 5RA

When ordering, please add 50p per item postage and packing.

Contact list Free. Send an A5 self-addressed envelope, marked 'Contact list', with 34p stamp, to Bruce and Christine, whose address is above.

Note: the information contained in the *Contact list* is confidential and is for the personal use of members only. Under no circumstances is it to be used for advertising, academic research, etc.

EO newsletter Single back copies of 1991 and 1992 issues £1.00

EO newsletter Bargain basement: any four copies (our choice) from 1987-1990 £1.50

Newsletter digest Ninety pages of the best from 1982-1986. Incredibly good value for money! Why not order a copy now? £1.50

Growing without schooling, the newsletter of EO's parallel organisation in the USA. Six issues per year, starting in March. £12.00 from Barbara Sheppard, 18 Queen Katherine Street, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 7OG.

Home education and the law, by David Deutsch and Kolya Wolf. Everything you need to know about the law relating to home education. To receive a copy, send a cheque for £5.00 (payable to David Deutsch) to David Deutsch, 19 New Cross Road, Headington, Oxford, OX3 8LP

EO stationery: re-use labels - £2.00 per 100; leaflets, handbills, posters, forms are freely available for publicity purposes. Headed notepaper for coordinators and office holders from: Lucy Charlton, Church Lane Cottages, Newton Harcourt, Leicestershire LE8 0FT

Alan Balfe,

Membership cards Issued to home educating families on request. Send an SAE to ~~Bob Emmett, 148 Canton Lane, Norwich, Norfolk NR5 0AQ.~~ Details of reduced admission charges to museums, and so on, are supplied with the card. address opposite

GENERAL ENQUIRIES

Send SAE for membership and other information to
Education Otherwise PO Box 120, Leamington Spa, Warks, CV32 7ER
Recorded telephone information 0926 886828

VICE - CHAIR Peter Edwards 031-229-6259
40 Leamington Terrace, Edingburgh, EH10 4JL
Publications Director Lynne Greenhough 0773-836662

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25 Wyndham Road Dover Kent CT17 0BH

TREASURER Michael Cook 0227 367059
34 Beacon Road Herne Bay Kent CT6 6DJ

PUBLICITY OFFICER Jane Lowe 0707 390070
5 Elm Gardens Welwyn Garden City Herts AL8 6RX

SINGLE PARENT FAMILY CONTACT Jenny Blower 0424 722720
15A Athelstan Road Hastings East Sussex TN35 5JB

SPECIAL NEEDS Sylvia Jeffs 021 706 6460
16 St Bernard's Road Solihull West Midlands B92 7BB

COORDINATORS' SECRETARY Stephanie Futchter 0246 239048
50 Springfield Avenue Chesterfield Derbys. S40 1HL

SCHOOL PHOBIA CONTACT COORDINATOR Angela White 0203 312461
(Young Person's support) 30A Field View Close
Exhall Coventry Warks. CV7 9BJ

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS Alan Balfe 0533 374948
+ Address Changes and Membership Lists
10 Highfields Rd Mountsorrel Loughborough Leics. LE12 7HH

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EAST ANGLIA Sandie Cottee 0268 733259
MIDLANDS Gillian Brown 0922 414286
THE NORTH
SCOTLAND Mike & Rose Barbour 0786 824210
WALES Miryam Bush 0269 861069
LONDON Jeffrey Bengé 081 441 7528 Sue Long 0245 421496
SOUTH EAST & SOUTH WEST Jude Ashley-Walker 0983 78680

REGIONAL MEMBERSHIP SECRETARIES:

SCOTLAND & THE NORTH Lorna Brown 130 Greenock Road
Bishopton, Renfrewshire, Scotland. PA7 5AS
WALES AND THE MIDLANDS Gillian Murely 0785 48753
LONDON & HOME COUNTIES David Bettie 0843 583260
SOUTH EAST Isobel Hewitt 66 Goldington Avenue
Bedford MK40 3DA
SOUTH WEST Maggie Swatridge 0503 72087

HELPLINES Childline 0800 1111 Kidscape 071 488 0488

education otherwise

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

Our principal aims are to:

- ◆ encourage learning outside the school system;
- ◆ reaffirm that parents have 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 an A5 s.a.e. to:

Education Otherwise
36 Kinross Road,
Leamington Spa,
Warwickshire,
CV32 7EF

Printed by: Argraffdy Arfon, Penygroes, Caernarfon. Tel (0286) 880322



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