

education otherwise



Newsletter Autumn 2013

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Deadline for the Winter issue is 1st November 2013

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Co-ordinatorial

Dear Readers,

Welcome to Autumn 2013's EO newsletter, our last one as co-ordinators. Our theme in this issue is (loosely) Reflecting on a Life of Home Education, and we have several articles inside on that subject.

The decision to home educate has been the start of a life-changing series of events for many families. Given that the dominant mainstream view is that schooling and education are one and the same thing, it has been a daunting prospect to take that responsibility as a family. This in the face of society's having been brainwashed for a hundred years and more into believing that schools can educate children better than families. Hence the general institutionalisation of childhood. It is very funny that the first question asked by 99% of people on hearing of a family's decision to home educate is: what about socialisation?

This implies that nobody questions the validity of the decision on educational or academic grounds. And as for socialisation, in schools it is more akin to what one could call anti-socialisation. Children learn coping strategies to survive in school which when applied outside of the institution – and school is supposedly to prepare children for life outside, after all – are actually anti-social. The wonderful opportunity an inner-London school provides children with, to mix amongst others from all over the world, looks less so when one looks at all the research pointing to the fact that children tend to mix with people just like themselves. But down in our local park, home educated children mixed happily with all and sundry.

At this time of year, when parents are considering home education for their children, retrospective accounts of home education can be helpful and reassuring should they be concerned about any pitfalls. The interview with Kaya, a down to earth single parent of four, on page 9 will be inspiring to many prospective home educators in its honesty and optimism. You will also find a couple of articles from the archives that look back on home education as well as forward to what happens after it.

Turn to pages 27-29 for details of the upcoming EO AGM.

If you want to send in articles for the next issue, the deadline is 1st November.

Goodbye and good luck,

*Barry O'Donovan and
Alice Troy-Donovan
September 2013*

School stress to blame for student depression

KERRA MADDEN

Stress at school is the biggest contributor to depression, self-harm and attempted suicide among young people, according to research published today [5th July 2013].

Almost a third of children (32 per cent) have considered or attempted to end their own life by the age of 16, a YouGov survey of more than 2,000 young people across the UK suggests. And 29 per cent of respondents said that they had harmed themselves on purpose, according to the findings released by new UK-based charity MindFull.

Stress at school was found to be the main cause of depression among young people, cited by 54 per cent of those surveyed, followed by worrying about the future and low self-esteem.

The findings have prompted concern about the pressure placed on students. The charity, established by the people behind the BeatBullying campaign, is calling for mental health to be a "core theme" of the national curriculum and for all students to have access to counselling and support from a mentor.

Government statistics show that one in 10 children aged 5-16 in the UK has a clinically-diagnosed mental health problem. Half of people with lifelong mental health problems experience their first symptoms by the age of 14.

Depression has also been identified as a major concern in other developed countries. A report published in May by the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention in the US said that up to 20 per cent of children in the country experience a mental disorder each year and that "surveillance during 1994 to 2011 has shown the prevalence of these conditions to be increasing".

According to figures compiled by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, one in four Australians aged 16-24 had a mental disorder in 2007. Anxiety disorders, which affected 15 per cent of young adults, were the most common.

Participants in the MindFull survey, aged 16-25, were asked to reflect on their experiences when they were school-aged children. They said that they found discussing mental health problems difficult because of embarrassment and the fear of rejection or becoming a burden.



More than one in 10 participants (12 per cent) said that, when they were under the age of 16, they felt as if they were a failure nearly every day. Almost a quarter (24 per cent) of participants with mental health problems believed that this had affected their school or work life every day, and 61 per cent had skipped lessons when they felt depressed.

Francis Burrows, director of operations at MindFull, said that young people felt stressed and anxious because of exams and the pressure to achieve. Pressures on teachers – such as school inspections – are often “mirrored” by students, he said.

“Pressure is put on children by schools, families and other children. If a young person is not that confident, they will find these expectations difficult,” Mr Burrows said.

Learning about mental health issues should be a “really important” part of personal, social and health education, he added, to reduce the stigma attached to mental illness. Mental health problems are seen as a “weakness”, according to MindFull’s report.

Lucy Russell, director of campaigns for UK mental health charity YoungMinds, said that it is “really hard for a young person growing up today”.

“Being at school is hard; there is a lot of testing and focus on exams. Someone who gets below a C grade can feel a bit like a failure,” she said. “Job prospects for young people are also awful, and there is an online world where they can be victims of cyber-bullying and constantly have to think about how to present themselves. There is pressure to be the perfect person.”

The UK government has committed £22 million to improve children’s access to psychological therapies, but two-thirds of local authorities in England have reduced their child and adolescent mental health service budgets since 2010.

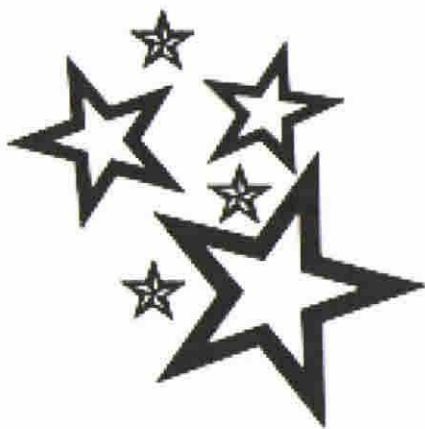
Brian Lightman, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, said that although the majority of children in school are “happy and well-balanced”, school leaders are aware of an increase in mental health problems. Students need help to develop “the emotional resilience to cope with the stresses that they encounter, he said.

Thanks to Times Education Supplement for permission to publish the above article.



Supply Demands

Star of the Week. I'm teaching a Year 5 class in a school in Deptford. That means the children are all between the ages of eight and nine years. A couple of cards had arrived in the classroom earlier in the morning, which I had planned to ignore. But now, as the children get ready for the Friday Achievement Assembly, several of them approach me to suggest that I should have chosen two children as Stars of the Week. You have to choose them, says one. No I don't, I reply. Supply teachers usually do choose a star of the week, another urges me. You could 'phone the class teacher and ask her, that's what usually happens, suggests a further child. I am unmoved.



The Assembly is led by two teachers, each with a handful of certificates, two for each class except mine. I hadn't realised what a meal would be made of the children receiving the certificates until now, as one by one they're handed out, and the recipients stand up as their praises are sung. Jason has really got down to work on his numbers this week; Sarika has done some beautiful joined-up handwriting; Leonardo has been very helpful and agreeable in class.

One by one the certificates are read out and handed over to the chosen children. I can't pretend now not to know what is going on, so I prepare a mini speech just in case I am asked which children I have chosen. Well, I would say, I find it impossible to single out a couple of children for special mention. But I would like to say that in the day-and-a-half that I have been here, lots of children in the class have been absolutely lovely. In the end I am not asked for my Star choices.

The children in my class look over at me with plaintive expressions on their faces as the assembly nears its conclusion. I respond with a smile. Applause is encouraged by the teachers for the Star children. As I sit on my hands I recall a recent Radio 4 programme in which some academic discussed his research into applause and its contagion. One can't help feeling that a disinclination to clap might be looked upon as a deliberate slight – an insult even – to the children and the staff, such is the pressure to join in. But better, I tell myself, to be true to what you believe: children do not need these pats on the back, and neither do all the other children in the school – and there are hundreds of them – who

have to sit and watch, and wait.

A recent article in the Times Education Supplement tells the tale of a secondary school where the children were bribed to behave well. The Vivo-Miles scheme they used involved awarding tokens that can be collected to buy prizes such as iPods, computer games or bicycles. Students were allowed to spend their credits on the high street.

However, school inspectors found that the level of exclusions was high, and low motivation was widespread. As Phil Beadle, educational consultant, says, the giving of prizes for good behaviour "trivialises the reason children are at school. Knowledge should be its own reward." He continues, "If your goal is to be good at something, then you will work hard.....If your goal is a reward, you will do only the minimum for the reward." You don't stop doing something if you want to do it for its own sake, but "If you're looking for extrinsic rewards, you become a wage slave."

The climax of the assembly, to judge from the reaction of the children, is the awarding of the trophy – a silver cup of about twelve inches in height – to the class with the highest attendance for the week. Yes, it is indeed hard to believe, but this school, like dozens of others where I've taught in London, hands out a trophy for the children who are best at simply getting to school on time and staying there, as a class. There is no allowance made for a class with a sickly child, or the child whose family has difficulty in keeping body and soul together let alone dragging their offspring to school, and on time, every day. And what about those children who are unlucky enough to have the most boring, humourless teacher and who could be forgiven for wanting to take a day off now and again, or more?

There is a form in most schools given to supply teachers for them to fill in at the end of the day in which they can say, as well as what has been covered in lessons that day, how well the class as a whole has behaved. In the form at one school there is a space in which to grade the class's behaviour from A – excellent, to E – dreadful. All you can write in that space truthfully is that some children have behaved very well and it has been a pleasure to teach them, whilst others have been challenging.

Back in the classroom I provide a much-needed explanation as to why I would not indulge in the doling out of certificates to children. I think they are a nonsense, I tell them, a waste of time. Better to just spend your time learning and playing rather than being manipulated by the adults. I don't suppose that many of them fully understood my rationale given that they are normally subjected to its direct opposite, but that is all the more reason to let them see a different way of treating them. The rest of the day, and the following one, pass off smoothly, with no requests for stickers from any of the children.

Home Education Around the World: Spain

Some estimates say there are around 2,000 families currently home educating in Spain. The movement used to be met with indifference, but in the last years the court cases between families and local authorities seem to be mushrooming, and the overall climate has become more difficult (HSDLA, the Christian legal help organisation for home educators, even talks of "hostility").

As a matter of fact, home educating in Spain exists in a legal vacuum: by law, the compulsory school age is from 6 to 16, and it has to be met by school attendance. On the other hand, the constitution grants parents certain rights to choose their children's education, and it states freedom of teaching. However, in December 2010, the Spanish Constitutional Court handed down a sentence that leaves home educators in an insecure position. A family was denied the right to home educate their children. While it is not unconstitutional as such to do so, the current education law cannot be used as a legal basis for the decision to home educate. This means that school attendance is now considered mandatory. So it remains to be seen if the legislative powers come up with the appropriate laws that make home education a legal and lawful alternative.

The region of Catalonia has in fact made this step in 2009, but since regional law cannot contradict national educational law, it cannot be applied to normal home education circumstances.

Apart from the legal framework, home educating parents are also demanding that their children are allowed to take their ESO (compulsory secondary education) diploma at 16, just like the school kids. At the moment home educated children have to wait till they are 18 to sit the exam, because of red tape problems.

There is also an official distance learning centre by the Ministry of Education, but only for children who are finding it difficult to be educated in one place (children that work as artists or are into elite sports, for example). The Spanish home education group ALE (La Asociación para la Libre Educación) is in fact the largest group of its kind in Europe.



Websites and sources (most of these are in Spanish, but Google Chrome is your friend):

- <http://www.ipsnews.net/2013/04/homeschoolers-want-legal-vacuum-filled-in-spain/> (most recent developments)
- <http://www.hslda.org/hs/international/Spain/default.asp> (Christian HE advocates)
- http://www.mumabroad.com/schools/Home_Schooling_in_Spain-12918 (also has general information about schools in various Spanish regions)
- http://www.mumabroad.com/schools/Inter-view_with_Home_Educator_Sharon_Gunning-12924 (interview with an expat mum in Spain; more general ideas on home ed)
- <http://www.christianpost.com/news/spanish-court-drops-charges-against-homeschooling-family-55771/> (an older article about a court case)
- <http://www.homeschoolingspain.com/> (fairs, press publications, book reviews, famous home educated people ...; Spanish)
- <http://www.crecersinescuela.org/> (There used to be a movement of home educators in Spain between 1991 and 2005. Its newsletters and publications can still be found here; also experiences from families; Spanish)

Groups:

- Yahoo group: <http://es.groups.yahoo.com/group/educacionlibre/> (Spanish)
- <http://www.crecersinescuela.org/> (for the Catalan region, Spanish)
- <http://www.educacionlibre.org/inicimarc.htm> (Spanish)
- <http://educarenfamilia.org/> (Catalan HE group, organises events)

Corinna Spellerberg

Home Education: A Retrospective

The following article is based on a recorded interview for EO newsletter with Kaya, from South East London, who is a single mother with four children, three of whom were home educated. Kaya runs a community resource centre and library.

EONL: Why did you decide to home educate?

When Naomi finished primary school (she's 21 now) and I couldn't find a suitable school for her – she needed somewhere small, a bit more contained – I found out we could home educate by chance. I was looking up what to do if I couldn't get her into a school that was reasonable for her when I found out about the possibility of home educating

and I thought 'oh, we could do that. If we don't find a school that's what we'll do.' And that's why I started coming to the group before Naomi had actually left school (down at Lochaber Hall – where Lewisham EO group met at the time), to see what was what. And when it came to September and Jordan, my son, was starting Year 1, he wasn't getting on, so by the half-term he was out as well! And Charlie, my other daughter, stayed another year and a half in school then decided that the others were having a lot more fun than she was! I totally left the decision with them.

With Jordan I took him out because he wasn't getting on – he was getting more and more distressed every day, hanging off my coat, hanging on to the doorframe, wetting himself. As soon as I took him out things went back to ordinary. And funny enough with Naomi that first year she was being home educated a lot of the medical things she'd been suffering from went away – it was obviously stress-related. After leaving she had one cold that whole year – having had viral infections after viral infections. She was like a different child altogether. I think home education probably was a good thing for Jordan because he was the sort of boy who couldn't sit still. He found school very distressing; he complained that there wasn't enough play-time. The home corner [where children can play imaginatively] was gone. He was fed up with sitting at the table. Year 1 was very different to the year before. He's quite a gentle lad. He couldn't understand why play fighting wasn't play fighting – children actually hurt each other! He didn't understand why children picked on each other as well.

If I'd have realised I would have home educated right from the beginning. I always found school an intrusion on our family. In the summer holidays I had my children and they were a certain way and then when they went back to school it was a different sort of thing. I found the restrictions on our lives [that school imposed] a bit annoying. We couldn't take advantage of things that were going on. And also my children were always back and forth out of hospital, which the school complained about bitterly (I think they thought I was just truanting them all the time!). Naomi has auditory processing difficulties which I had arguments with the school over. I didn't realise that she had a problem (well it was a problem as far as they were concerned – she was just my daughter and we got on with things naturally).

I had lots of arguments with the school over her needs. Finally the educational psychologist came in and she said exactly what I'd been saying all the time. I refused to have her statemented, I didn't want her labelled, because as soon as they did that they were treating her differently all the time. She didn't learn to read until she was nearly 9, with all



this school interference. She was very good at maths but they were always taking her out of her maths lesson to get her literacy up which made her fall back behind. She was always catching up because she hears but it takes her a little while to process what she's heard, so she'll always miss part of what's been said, so she'll have to go back to the beginning. She was also dyslexic. She seemed to manage much better when she was out of school. We could manage it in our own time, at our own pace.



EONL: Were there any drawbacks for you about home education?

Being a single parent and with no child-minders or anything coming in, we had to be very creative with how we did things. Which was no bad deal anyway, because you can. I say to people if you want to do it, do it. There are ways around the obstacles, and it doesn't always have to cost. You've got to like being around your children. If you don't like your children don't home educate. You've got to be a certain type of person to be able to take your children all day long, 24/7.

EONL: Do you think that once you have your children at home, and they're used to being with you, that you don't have the problems that you have when they're at school?

That was the biggest thing that I appreciated and that I tell everybody. The children don't have to succumb to the kind of peer pressure that they have at school. Ironing clothes? That went out the window! Having to dress them up in a certain way because everyone else is being dressed in a certain way – you didn't have all that. And all those mannerisms and ways of interacting with people that they have at school – I think it's that herd-jungle mentality that they go through. Children are allowed to be who they are [with home education]. That was the biggest thing – I always said 'don't be a sheep, don't follow everybody'. So it's a lot easier to be who they are and not worry about what other people are thinking all the time.

And also I think the interaction between the siblings themselves – they've got more time with each other so they can see each other's buttons more, whereas when they're at school they don't hardly mix with their siblings. They're all in their year groups most of the time. They come home, they don't have much time because they've got all their homework, and by the time they've done all that and had dinner it's bedtime. They don't really learn who they are. That natural, organic way of understanding who each

other are. Most children that I know who have been home educated, they seem to have a lot more empathy and caring about each other than other children. And they're much better interacting on the whole with adults as well because they don't have this demarcation of who they can talk to and who they can interact with.

EONL: And what about your relationship with your children? Did that improve after they came out of school?

Improve? Yes. There were times when I could kill them! But it's a lot easier because arguments didn't get left until after school – you could sort them out during the day. And you could catch things as they happen rather than getting the end story afterwards. It's much easier to pick up things, while it's fresh and not such a big deal. And also you get time to talk with your children without having to force a particular time to talk to them – the conversations that you have as you're doing things, you're not forcing yourself, it's just happening organically. And you pick up a lot more information about what's going on with your child rather than forcing things out of them: 'what's going on today? What have you been doing?' You're just generally chatting and picking up things without them feeling that they're being interrogated. Like when they were small before they went off to nursery, you just got on with it and you just learnt as it went along at everybody's pace and just talking and being quite natural.

I think the schools are far too big now, especially the senior schools. They've lost that family way of being. They say they know who the kids are but they don't know them. They can't know them. Home education allows you to know who your child is and it allows them to be the type of person they want to be without being pushed and forced into a certain way of being. I remember Naomi being at school and being very dyslexic and them saying 'she has to learn this spelling and that spelling' and I was saying 'I'd be happy if she can do 3 or 4 well rather than a whole lot badly.' And they said 'oh, we need her to do this' and I said 'actually, *you* may need to – she doesn't need to. You need it for your statistics, she doesn't need it for who she is.'

She's very good – if you give her time she'll learn anything and pick it up – you've just got to give her the time, which they never did, they were always running ahead of her. And when they were going on about her being able to write and her reading and I said 'well actually she can read very well' (because we used a lot of audio books etc etc). I said: 'it's not that she's



stupid, it might take her longer, it's like when they learn to walk – they're not all doing it at the same time. There's a lot of falling down before they get going properly. Just take a bit more time with her.' I don't think she's anymore stupid – she was very good at Science and Maths. She didn't need to read for those. I did the reading for her, and she learnt it herself. That's another thing – you can ask the questions [at home]. If you ask too many questions at school you get told to shut up. Which drove her bonkers because a lot of the time she was asking questions because she'd missed parts of what was being said.

I still maintain it – yes writing and reading are useful, but it doesn't mean they're the be all and end all, because they can find other ways of getting by until they can read and write. It doesn't mean that they're stupid. Charlie read early but Jordan read late. And Naomi's spelling is really good as long as she can type. She knows that she's spelt something wrong without even looking – but when it comes to hand-writing it she's awful. She doesn't even use spellcheck, except very rarely, as long as she's learnt it with her fingers. And she types over 70 words a minute. I can't even do that!

EONL: Do any of your children go, or want to go, to third-level education?

Naomi said that she's not ready to go to university – she's more interested in getting her business up and going, which is beauty therapy. But she's into community stuff as well. She's going to do taster sessions for the library – a feel good project. For people to come in and have facials and manicures and stuff, just to give them a boost, for people who are feeling low and depressed and stuff. She does want to go to university but she's not ready. She said 'and I'm not going to do it because I've got to do it, I'll do it because I'm interested' – she says 'I'll do it when I feel like it.'

I've got friends on both sides of the world – home ed and not home ed – and some of the children who have gone to university are now saying that they enjoyed what they did but they could have done it another way, and not been landed with debt and then come out not being able to find work (that's their biggest issue). And they wished they'd done it the other way round, maybe gone part-time. So many young people are desperate for work – it drives me mad when they say that young people don't want to work, that kids aren't wanting to do menial jobs. I've got kids begging me for jobs at the library – at the community hall. They've cleared the rubbish there. They're desperate to do anything.

Why do we choose to take the lion's share of the responsibility for our children's education?

"I vowed", I once overheard my father saying to a visitor to my family home when I was in my early twenties, "not to send any child of mine to the Christian Brothers, following what I witnessed in their schools." I never pressed him for details of what he experienced; we didn't feel free to quiz our fathers in those days. But my mother often told us about the emotional abuse she suffered at the hands of some of the nuns that taught her. Tears rolled down her cheeks as she recalled events in her youth more than a generation previously.

So my parents sent all seven of their children to private schools from the age of four to eighteen. As a consequence, we did not see much of our father when we were growing up. In the evenings after work, after the hero's welcome home we gave him which lasted all of five minutes, we had to keep well out of his way so that he could unwind from the stresses of his executive job, and at the weekends he took therapeutic time in the garden, always with a project on the go. Sometimes I helped him.

My parents, like many in those days and many others still today, did not see themselves as significant players in their children's education. The best they could do, as far as they could see, was to pay for the best schools they could find. But we grew up somehow disconnected from our fathers. We knew little about their work, and there was nothing whatsoever we could do to help alleviate the stress they brought home. I am sure that is one reason why so many went straight to the pub after work. So when my children were very young and I met a woman who told me about the people who taught their own children rather than sending them to school, it was immediately attractive. Having seen the effect on my father of too much hard work away from home, I was determined not to do the same. We learn from our parents both what to do and what not to do.

There are as many reasons for home educating, I found out, as there are people doing it. But what most have in common is a belief that we can do better ourselves than a school. Mass schooling coincided with industrialisation. Boys could no longer accompany their fathers to work as factories were dangerous places for children. So rather than have boys roaming the streets from Monday to Saturday without male role models, it was thought better to put them into schools where they would be safe and learn. At least in the early days of schools, children mostly walked to and from them, thus taking exercise as well as having an opportunity to socialise freely with other children along the way. This has become more and more difficult, with increasing numbers of children being ferried to school and back home in their parents' cars, and also because there are more and more children for whom there is no adult at home when they return from school.

The economic factor is a significant player in the decisions parents and other carers make regarding the care of their children. We often feel – and advertisers are keen for us

to feel – that we need all kinds of things that we did without in years gone by. Therefore we work hard and longer, often two parents in a family, so that we can bring home the luxuries that we think we need so badly.

All the debate with regard to education seems to centre on exam success. The target is university at all costs. Parents trip over each other to attain places at the best schools, private if they can afford them. If they can't, many move house to be in the catchment area of the most sought-after state schools. Others lie, using addresses of relatives or friends to trick their way in. Why? So that their children will join, or remain in, the upper echelons of society. It's dog-eat-dog to become a member of polite society.

But surely it is more our responsibility to bring up children who are considerate of their fellow humans, as well as the impact they have on the earth that sustains us all, including nature and all other creatures. Surely we should rather be helping our child to grow up with an awareness of the rights of other people and how we should consider others' needs in all that we do. It is my belief that we should also help our children to see how their actions impinge on the rights and welfare of those who we do not see but who are nevertheless affected by our actions. On an immediately visible scale, a young child can understand why it is not right to throw stones where there is a possibility of them hitting others. Though not immediately visible in its effects, a child of ten can understand why it is better to pay more for a football that has not been stitched in a factory where children are used. He or she can also understand that there is only so much rubbish that we can put into landfill before causing major environmental problems. And a bit later they can grow to understand the need to curtail consumption so as to limit their impact on climate change as this affects everybody in the world.

With this in mind, I have encouraged my children to find their own paths but having these principles in mind in making all major decisions. It does not matter to me what they do as long as they are principled in their actions. I have often wondered what they would end up doing. I accepted that trusting them to find their own paths, while I firmly believe it is best for the world in general, might well end with them doing the most mundane jobs. But somebody has to do those jobs, so why not them if that is where life takes them? Not for me the parenting style that forces five-year-olds to sit for hours in front of the piano (for their own future good) when they'd rather be outside playing. Childhood should largely be spent playing, as well as helping with the housework now and again.

So where does this lead them? Or more specifically, where have my children gone? One of my sons has no GCSEs or A levels and has been away travelling and teaching English for most of the past two years. The other is at university and my daughter is about to start at university as well. How would I feel if any of them turned around and said they'd be happy doing carpentry? I'd recommend it.

Barry O'Donovan, London SE

POETS' CORNER

Allan Ahlberg (from the collection 'Heard it in the Playground', Puffin 1991)

Parents' Evening

We're waiting in the corridor,
My dad, my mum and me.
They're sitting there and talking;
I'm nervous as can be.
I wonder what she'll tell 'em.
I'll say I've got a pain!
I wish I'd got my spellings right.
I wish I had a brain.

We're waiting in the corridor,
My husband, son and me.
My son just stands there smiling;
I'm smiling, nervously.
I wonder what she'll tell us.
I hope it's not all bad.
He's such a good boy, really;
But dozy—like his dad.

We're waiting in the corridor,
My wife, my boy and me.
My wife's as cool as cucumber;
I'm nervous as can be.
I hate these parents' evenings.
The waiting makes me sick.
I feel just like a kid again
Who's gonna get the stick.

I'm waiting in the classroom.
It's nearly time to start.
I wish there was a way to stop
The pounding of my heart.
The parents in the corridor
Are chatting cheerfully;
And now I've got to face them,
And I'm as nervous as can be.

The Boy Without a Name

I remember him clearly
And it was thirty years ago or more:
A boy without a name.

A friendless, silent boy,
His face blotched red and flaking raw,
His expression, infinitely sad.

Some kind of eczema
It was, I now suppose,
The rusty iron mask he wore.

But in those days we confidently swore
It was from playing near dustbins
And handling broken eggshells.

His hands, of course, and knees
Were similarly scabbed and cracked and dry.
The rest of him we never saw.

They said it wasn't catching; still, we knew
And strained away from him along the corridor,
Sharing a ruler only under protest.

I remember the others: Brian Evans,
Trevor Darby, Dorothy Cutler.
And the teachers: Mrs Palmer, Mr Waugh.

I remember Albert, who collected buttons,
And Amos, frothing his milk up with a straw.
But *his* name, no, for it was never used.

I need a time-machine.
I must get back to nineteen fifty-four
And play with him, or talk, at least.

For now I often wake to see
His ordinary, haunting face, his flaw.
I hope his mother loved him.

Oh, children, don't be crueller than you need.
The faces that you spit on or ignore
Will get you in the end.

Why Must We Go to School?

Why must we go to school, dad?
Tell us, dear daddy, do.
Give us your thoughts on this problem, please;
No one knows better than you.

To prepare for life, my darling child,
Or so it seems to me;
And stop you all from running wild—
Now, shut up and eat your tea!

Why must we go to school, dad?
Settle the question, do.
Tell us, dear daddy, as much as you can;
We're really relying on you.

To learn about fractions and Francis Drake,
I feel inclined to say,
And give your poor mother a bit of a break—
Now, push off and go out to play!

Why must we go to school, daddy?
Tell us, dear desperate dad.
One little hint, that's all we ask—
It's a puzzle that's driving us mad.

To find all the teachers something to do,
Or so I've heard it said,
And swot up the questions your kids'll ask you,
My darlings—now, buzz off to bed!



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Memories

[from EONL no. 155, Dec. 2003]

I am 27 years old, and have never been to school. I was home educated, as were my brother and sister, 5 and 7 years younger than me. Some memories:-

We lived on a farm in Italy and I think the best thing was not being tied down to strict timetables: we used to sit down together in the mornings and have a set amount of work that needed to be got through that day, and if we wanted to be involved in something else like the grape harvest, or mushroom hunting in the woods, or shearing sheep, we could go and do that, and return to the schoolwork later on in the day.

I remember writing stories, painting pictures, copying out lines of a poem to make my writing neater (this famously stopped when someone pointed out that my handwriting looked just like my mother's!) and keeping a list of all the books I read every year (a lot!!).

Learning maths was awful! I appeared to have no natural aptitude. My stepfather, who had been an accountant, was good at maths and did the teaching on this subject. It must have been torture for him. My main memory is first of all trying to learn the two times table. The session went something like this:

“Once Two is Two, Two Twos are Four, Three Twos are.....” Long pause.....

(Dissolving into tears) “I can't remember what three twos are!”

There was a lot of dissolving into tears with maths. Fractions were just dreadful, and once I had vaguely grasped the concept (I think with a lot of examples of slices of cakes, etc), M-- tried to introduce the concept of the Decimal Point. I remember being utterly appalled that there was another thing to learn in maths, yet **another** way of dividing things up. Where would it end?! M-- would frequently explain a problem, do it with me, do another one with me just to be on the safe side, ask if I understood, receive a firm positive, leave me to do the next one, come back and discover me in tears, with no comprehension of how to do it all. The other great thing was that occasionally I would actually arrive at the right answer but would be entirely unable to explain how I got there. M-- would be desperately trying to explain that in maths it was quite important, on the whole, to be able to explain **how** you got there as well as the actual answer. I'm not sure how he remained calm or indeed how he didn't end up dissolving into tears himself. I think I would have done in his position. The thing is though, I can actually do everyday, “useful” maths just fine now, so it must have seeped in somewhere along the line!

One of the funniest things that I still tease my mother about is that without fail, come the start of a new school year, she would enthusiastically unveil a new educational tool that she had read about over the summer. Right at the beginning of teaching my brother to read she had a set of flash cards which worked on the principle that every day

you asked the child what word they would like to have and they then had it written down for them on a card and went through them all together each day. The idea was that if the child themselves had chosen the word they would be more likely to want to learn it. My brother promptly asked for the word "poo". My mother didn't bat an eyelid.

One year it was drawing upside down (I don't mean hanging from the ceiling – it had something to do with left/right brain stimulation), one year Cuisenaire rods for learning maths in a more concrete and visible (rather than abstract) way, and another year it was listening to Baroque music (something about how it got brain waves going in the right kind of patterns). The Baroque music fad is very memorable. We listened to it every day, whilst doing schoolwork, rather than the radio we usually listened to. I suspect we moaned about it a lot. The really funny thing about these theories was the immense enthusiasm that they were started with, and the way in which, a couple of months into the school year, when we were playing up and being awkward, my mother would have a morning where she would explode, threaten to send us all to school because we were impossible to teach and driving her crazy, and that would be the end of that year's theory. It was very funny but I have to say it does encourage you to try new things as you go through life.

Both my brother and I took GCSEs and then A Levels, sitting as Private Candidates. A lot of people who home educate seem to put their children back into school when the time comes for exams, which is a shame I think, because although the exams were hard work doing them at home was fine. On some subjects at A Level we used the NEC (National Extension College), who have very good materials and supportive tutors. My main memory of A Levels is my mother washing clothes in a big tub, with me leaning against a wall reciting facts to her whilst she occasionally looked at the folder propped up in front of her and asked questions. I remember I was let off all housework for the last few months in the run-up to the exams and that when I'd finished I was temporarily myopic from staring at books and the first time I swept the courtyard of our house I got blisters on my extra-soft hands.

I did love university when I got there. I mystified my tutors at university by spending a lot of time with them, talking to them for hours, and mystified my fellow students even more by actually studying! I do remember my first lecture though and being stunned by the idea that 300 people were all learning the same things at the same time as me. Not only that, but we were all sitting in rows facing one person - what a novel experience!

Perhaps the most telling thing about being home educated is that I can't actually remember any "ordinary" days. I don't remember just getting up, doing X hours of schoolwork and then stopping to go off and do something else once it was finished. Presumably this must have happened on lots of days – not all days can be wildly exciting, but I don't remember them.

I'm very grateful to my mother for her unending enthusiasm, her new theories (even if

we giggled or moaned about them at the time), her flexibility, and for the sheer determination to do things her way and our way rather than the “right” way. I don’t actually know how she did it because although I can only remember the highlights, there must have been a lot of days when it was boring and slow for her, but I don’t remember her ever letting on. I am also grateful to M--, who was stupendously patient, persevered with what I can only describe as a pretty hopeless case and managed not to take my appalling lack of ability in maths personally!

I wish everyone could be educated the way I was.

Melissa, London

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Home Education and social skills

[from EONL no. 148, October 2002]

Mindful of the commonly-held view that home educated children do not have the opportunity to develop ‘social skills’, I thought readers might be interested to hear of my 16 year old daughter’s experience of her first job interview.

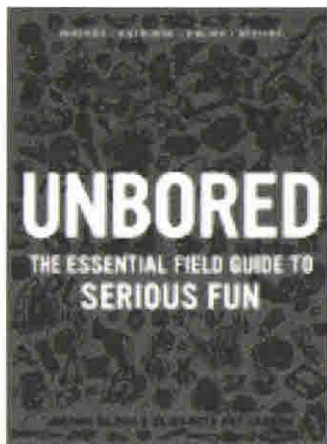
Two Saturday posts were advertised in our local branch of Boots. These jobs would involve handling the main till on the busiest day of the week, and later being trained to serve on the pharmacy counter. No special qualifications were needed, though clearly the ability to deal with other people was a major requirement. My daughter, who has been home educated from the age of eight, applied along with eleven others, including one other home educated teenager. Both posts were offered to the home educated applicants. The manager of Boots, who had conducted the interviews, gave us some interesting feedback. She said that the home educated candidates had stood out way above all the other applicants; in particular they had been far more outgoing and confident.

This has certainly reinforced our view that the practice of putting children in groups of 30 or more, of exactly the same age, is not the ideal way for them to develop socially.

Heather, Warminster

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BOOK REVIEWS—by Tammy



Unbored: The Essential Field Guide to Serious Fun

Authors: Joshua Glenn, Elizabeth Foy Larsen, Tony Leone

List Price: £18.99

ISBN: 978-1408830253

A book with a bit of a difference this month - instead of a novel or picture book, I'm reviewing a sort of activity book: *Unbored: The Essential Field Guide to Serious Fun* by Joshua Glenn and Elizabeth Foy Larsen.

I've gone through loads of these over the years. One of the drawbacks of being a home educator (yes, there are some) is that you don't get to (easily) outsource your children for others to entertain. Meaning that you are forever seeking new ways to shoehorn a bit of education in, while being fun. Or at least I am. So I've got lots of books titled 101 activities to do without television, or things to do when you've nothing to do. That sort of thing. They're usually fairly predictable and, to be honest, a bit pointless.

Unbored is different. Very different. Instead of opening it and going yeah, yeah, I opened it and went Ooh! To begin with, the introduction is subtitled "Use the world or the world will use you." It goes on to say: "Unbored... the first kids' book to truly encourage a hands-on approach to creating a personally meaningful life." To live any other way is to swallow whatever pap the world doles out to you "on the end of that long newspaper spoon", in the words of William S Burroughs. This book is a powerful antidote to those forces that constantly try to shape us into passive consumers of pre-made reality.

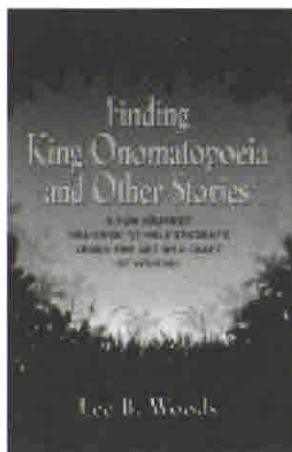
Does it live up to the introduction though? So far I haven't read it cover to cover (there are over 350 pages!) but it certainly seems to. There are book excerpts (e.g. *Anne of Green Gables* and *South*). There are comics, lots of suggestions on training your grownup (the grownups might want to check these out first!), games, experiments, sections on exploring, saving the planet and expanding your horizons.

Your child, following these suggestions, might become a yarn bomber, or start reading banned books. (Given some of the books that have been banned around the world for the most ridiculous of reasons, this seems like an excellent start to a reading list.) They might save the planet—you could discover they've started taking stuff apart and fixing it. (Good luck. I suggest you hide anything you're particularly fond of in its current state.)

There's a fantastic article on un-schooling and how it worked out for one girl in the Do it Yourself section of Chapter 1 - You. And a well argued article on why and how to train your grownup (that's probably you) to stop saying you're brilliant. (If you aren't sure why this is a good idea, may I recommend the writings of Alfie Kohn and some self education on the terms intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.)

You may be getting the idea that this really isn't just another activity book. It's subversive, entertaining, thought-provoking and generally a bit brilliant. I'd like to recommend a copy for every family in the country, and if you can't spring for that, I'd definitely recommend that you head over to the website, "<http://unbored.net>".

(Review originally appeared at <http://liveotherwise.co.uk/makingitup/2013/07/19/read-52-unbored-review-and-giveaway/>)



Finding King Onomatopoeia and Other Stories—A Fun Journey Designed to Help Students Learn the Art and Craft of Writing

Author: Lee B. Woods

Price: Kindle Edition £3.28

Paperback: £13.97

ISBN:978-1-61434-302-8

Website: <http://www.homeschoolwriter1.com>

My son is 12 and, like a lot of children, really does not enjoy creative writing or indeed any writing. Getting him to put his thoughts on paper can be harder than herding the chickens – that is why I was so excited to be sent Finding King

Onomatopoeia to review. Written by Lee B. Woods, a seasoned journalist and writer, the book is designed to help children between the ages of about 8 and 12 to improve their writing skills. It centers on a brother and sister – James and Jessica Davis – who are themselves grappling with perfecting their writing skills. Rather than dry and dull lessons Woods uses storytelling to help children learn the essential skills of writing. James and Jessica embark on a series of adventures, each of which features some aspect of writing. At the end of each adventure there is either a short writing exercise or a series of thought-provoking questions for the reader to complete. These help to consolidate the learning in the chapter. The book concludes by giving a short recap of each of the grammatical subjects covered, along with an exercise and recommendations for improving the exercise. Mr. Woods has put a lot of thought and effort into making learning the art of writing fun and accessible. My son is really enjoying the book and is finding that it is helping him with his writing. Writing is still not his favourite part of our learning but at least now it doesn't fill him with as much dread as it did before!

EO SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) News

A big welcome to Alisa, who has recently joined us.

Some key points on the ongoing SEN reforms (seems to only apply to England):

Impressions are that the changes will be introduced gradually, leaving the most difficult challenges until last.

Timpson has stated that implementing the new reforms will be 'challenging,' because of the results from the pathfinders: "Experience from the pathfinders tells us it is a long, hard journey to get the culture change needed to make these reforms work on the ground."

£9m has been recently added to help Local Authorities with the changes.

Next September has been mentioned for the 'new laws' to take effect. By then, the different choices to be offered to 'children and young people' should be ready. Also at this time, SEN statements are to be stopped and the new 'single education, health and care plans' will be phased in.

Although not stated by the minister, 'sources' hint that the reforms will not be fully introduced until 2015.

Because of the communication needed between the 'local services,' those who already have a statement, may be delayed with entering the new system for some time.

References:

<http://www.flse.org.uk/index.php/blog/perm-read/uq0l9Q874tTNKY3z/JqfcAM0pTc2iicxi>

<http://www.cypnow.co.uk/cyp/news/1077668/adcs-conference-minister-extra-cash-sen-support>

Free computers for carers:

To help carers have access to the web, Computers 4 carers are giving away recycled computers and laptops to those who are on eligible benefits and have had a carer's assessment in the last twelve months. Ironically, you will need to be online to be able to enquire: www.computers4carers.co.uk.

There is also the option of purchasing a computer or laptop for a much reduced price from www.getonlineathome.org or call 03719 100 100.

Your local carers centre may be able to give you information on getting a grant for a new computer or laptop. Or, if you are having a carer's assessment, you could state the need to be online to help with your carers duties and if successful, you would receive a direct payment to pay for it.

If you would like to contribute to EO SEND, please contact Edwina:
e.theunissen@educationotherwise.org

VOLUNTEER VACANCIES

education otherwise
needs you!

*The main areas where we currently need more help are below. If you can commit either regular (e.g. weekly) or one-off chunks of time, and are willing to check emails frequently and liaise with appropriate trustee, please contact the trustee named for more information. If you feel you could contribute but don't fancy any of these, please send your ideas to our Volunteer Co-ordinator:
Wendy <vol-coordinator@educationotherwise.org>*

Helpline Telephone Volunteers

We are always in need of further volunteers for the Helpline rota, which is a vital part of EO's charitable outreach remit. We need members who have experience of home education and can tell prospective home edders of the scope and variety of home education, give general information on law and LA procedures, and support with concerns. Volunteers do a week at a time (from home) as frequently or infrequently as they wish. Knowledge of the basic legal aspects of home education is necessary, but backup is always available. Please contact Edwina (Enquiries Co-ordinator) e.theunissen@educationotherwise.org Tel: 01978 661882

Local Contact Volunteers

The primary role of the LC is to welcome new HE families to EO and to provide contact with their local HE community, information about local activities and who organises them, encouragement to be confident in their ability to home educate in whatever way seems right for them, and non-judgemental listening. It's also valuable if the LC can offer information about deregistration and the usual procedures and policies of their Local Authority, with support in the family's interactions with the LA. If there is no LC in your area, and you have some experience of home education, please consider volunteering to provide this valuable connection. For more information, please contact the LC Co-ordinator, Lei Ashe <lcco-ordinator@educationotherwise.org>

Updating website information

It's like the Forth Bridge, this one – no sooner has our information been revised, than something changes and it needs doing again. So we need volunteers to keep an eye on each of the downloadable leaflets, check out that links and other contact details still work, keep up with new developments/defunct areas, etc. Have a look at the website [www.educationotherwise.net] and choose your interest – or if you notice a topic that isn't there but would be useful to other home educators, compile the information and send it in. Please contact EO Publications Secretary Anne Rix <arix@educationotherwise.org> Tel: 01760 441810

EO Amazon Store

We need someone to run the Amazon shop on the EO website. The job involves choosing which products should be available there, keeping an eye on what sells and what doesn't, removing products that are no longer available and looking out for new products on Amazon that would interest our members. EO makes a small commission from each sale. All of the shop management is done online, so you need to have Internet access and be reasonably web-savvy. Contact trustees@educationotherwise.org

Concessions Co-ordinator/Team

We already have a Concessions Contact, but need one or more people to seek additional Concessions for EO members; receive and action requests from organisations (or referrals from members) to join the list. Also a Co-ordinator: one super-efficient person to impose some order – check existing Concessions and set up Microsoft Access database (or XL spreadsheet); provide the complete Concessions List annually and quarterly updates to the Newsletter Co-ordinator, both in a format suitable for printing; to update Concessions listing and codes on EO website whenever necessary, via its online content management system (no HTML skills required). Good IT skills are essential, but instructions on updating website can be provided. Contact trustees@educationotherwise.org

Newsletter Co-ordinator

This is primarily a co-ordination role, with the object of encouraging and collating contributions from members (including trustees) and ensuring timely production and distribution of the quarterly newsletter (which is despatched by the printing firm). You will liaise with the various section editors, Publications Secretary, Membership Secretary, printer and EO Webmaster. You need good IT skills, and there is a limited amount of editorial oversight of letters and articles. Technical support with final production is available. Further details from Publications Secretary, Anne Rix <arix@educationotherwise.org> (Tel: 01760 441810)

ADVANCE NOTICE of AGM

The **Annual General Meeting** of Education Otherwise Association Ltd will be held at on **Saturday 16th November 2013** at Snibston Museum, Ashby Road, Coalville, LE67 3LN

The ordinary business of the AGM is to consider the accounts for year ended 30th June 2013, to elect members (trustees/directors) to the Council of Management and to appoint auditors/independent examiners.

At the 2012 AGM our Memorandum and Articles of Association (M&As) were amended by Special Resolutions, to reduce the number of Council Members (Trustees) to between 8 and 15 (previously 14-19) and to reduce the number of Signed-up Members (SUMs) for a quorum at General Meetings to 16 (previously 20).

At the time of writing there are 12 Council members in post, and our M&As require that one-third (i.e. 4) must stand down but may seek re-election. However, as notified at the previous AGM, trustees intend that, since the Special Resolution was passed, all should stand down and elections be held for all candidates. At the time of writing we are unsure how many trustees are willing to stand for re-election. The Council may recommend other candidates for election.

Signed-Up Members (i.e. guarantors) of EO may also propose candidates. In this case, written notice from the proposer and signed consent from the candidate (who must also be a SUM / guarantor) must both reach the

EO Trustees, P.O. Box 3761, Swindon, SN2 9GT

no earlier than Thursday 1st November and no later than Thursday 14th November 2013 if by post, or be brought to the meeting venue by noon on Saturday 16th November

In the event of a vote at the AGM, guarantors (SUMs) present at the AGM are entitled to take part, provided that they have paid their EO subscription fee for family membership.

If you cannot attend, you may appoint a proxy to vote on your behalf.

SUM forms and proxy forms are available on the 'member home' area of the EO website.

Agenda for AGM:

1. Minutes of the previous AGM
2. Consideration of the accounts.
3. Auditor/Independent Examiner's Remuneration
4. Appointment of Auditor/Independent Examiner
5. Election of new Council Members

More details will be circulated to Guarantors (SUMs) three weeks prior to the AGM

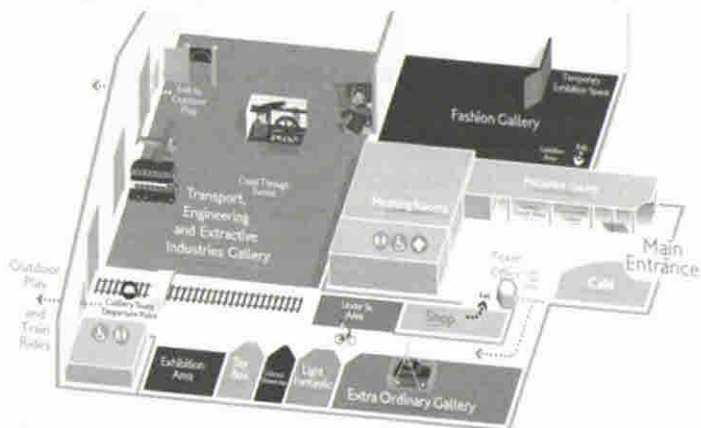
Please arrive by 1.30 pm as the AGM will start promptly at 2.00 pm.

Forms of proxy MUST be registered by 1.30 pm.

EO Trustees <trustees@educationotherwise.org>

EO BUSINESS – AGM 16th November

EO Annual General Meeting 2013 + Science Education/Play – A Grand Day Out! Mark it in your diary: Saturday 16th Nov. at Snibston Museum, Ashby Road, Coalville, LE67 3LN



There is an onsite café, and the venue is wheelchair accessible. The fantastic science-based educational/play exhibitions and galleries surround the meeting room. Some examples are:



The Light Fantastic Gallery - with exhibits focusing on the everyday effects of light and the behaviour of light. Try out hands-on exhibits with ultra-violet light, prisms, lenses and shadows and travel through our giant periscope.



The cutting-edge **Extra Ordinary Gallery** explores the technologies and inventions that have shaped our everyday lives. There are over 20 interactive exhibits for visitors to get their hands on including lifting a mini and making fire!



The Fashion Gallery - The largest fashion gallery outside London - houses designs from some of the most celebrated fashion designers of our time as well as historical exhibits.

Toy Box Gallery - Coalville is home to the world-famous Action Man! Learn about local company Palitoy and take a nostalgic journey through the world of toys.

And more ...

The normal entry price to galleries is £24.25 for a family of 4, but
EO members (SUMs) attending the AGM will be entitled to
FREE entry to the galleries and exhibitions
(once registered to attend AGM)

There will be an informal open Council meeting from 12 noon, giving members a chance to meet current trustees and register for exhibition entry.

The AGM is scheduled to start at 2pm, after lunch (the café looks pretty good!), and should last only about 45 minutes – so you'll have plenty of time to explore the exhibitions. After the AGM there will be a further open Council meeting. Please attend the AGM if you possibly can.

N.B. Local Contacts and other volunteers holding named EO posts may claim reasonable travel expenses for attending the AGM.

How to get to Snibston Museum

By Car - Snibston is located on the edge of Coalville town centre on the A511, just 4 miles from J22 of the M1 and J13 of the A42/M42. It is clearly signed on all major approach routes.

By Public Transport - To plan your journey by public transport visit <http://www.travelineeastmidlands.co.uk>

By Walking / Cycling - Snibston is served by the Sustrans National Cycle route Number 52

Telephone: 01530 287444 Email: snibston@leics.gov.uk
More details from the museum website: <http://www.snibston.org.uk/>

TRUSTEE NOMINATIONS

At the time of writing (August) there are 12 Trustees in post. We do not have final confirmation of which trustees are willing to stand for re-election, but there are at least 3 who wish to resign. Although the number of trustees has been reduced to 8-15, following the Special Resolution passed at the last AGM, the volume of work has not diminished! We still need more active, experienced and committed members to step forward and help keep EO running.

As notified in the Bulletin prior to the last AGM, Trustees intended that if the Special Resolution to reduce trustee numbers was passed, then all should stand down and elections be held for all candidates. This means that there are potentially 15 vacancies, and we need new volunteers to carry on responsibility for running the Charity and organising the services to members (either directly or with other volunteers) – perhaps also to move EO into the realms of Facebook etc. as younger members are suggesting ... So please, if you know someone who would be prepared to take this on, let us know!

education otherwise
needs you!

trustees@educationotherwise.org

LOCAL HOME EDUCATION GROUPS

HERs – Please contact the group organiser for full details and to check that activities are ongoing. Note also that groups are not always run by EO members. Further information on the groups listed below is available via the Local HE Groups area of the EO website. If you know of a group that's not listed, please ask the organiser to enter it at www.educationotherwise.net

Group organisers – please remember when giving details of events, that this list (both in Newsletter and on main area of website) may be seen by people who are not members of Education Otherwise, and adjust your information accordingly. Please also notify us promptly of contact & other changes via the Local Groups Co-ordinator: eoip@educationotherwise.org

England

Bedfordshire

Christian Home Ed – Scott and Rachel, scottandrachel@ntlworld.com

Busy B-Hes – Weekly drop-in offering chats and support; activities. Pauline 01234 720819 / 07976 026167 p.curl28@btinternet.com.

BedHed – An informal group of home educating families in and around Bedford <http://bedhed.org.uk>

Berkshire

Berkshire Home Educators – for HE families in & adjoining Berkshire <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/groups/berkshirehomeeducators/>

Expanding Horizons: trips, activities, regular meet ups and information for other Local groups. www.expandinghorizonsuk.com : Rebecca 01494 882484, expandinghorizonsuk@gmail.com

Heroes-HE - weekly Home Education Club at animal farm, with workshops, etc. www.heroesberkshire.co.uk/homeeducators.html

Bristol

Bristol Home Education – A local support group Bristol area. <http://www.bristolhomeeducation.org.uk/>

Bristol Home Education Learn Place (HELP) Carla 01179 354389 carla-maria@blueyonder.co.uk

Bristol Home Education Co-op – central contact point for all HE activities in Bristol. E.g. music, Spanish, English and art classes, climbing sessions, special workshops, days out, and a FREE weekly Co-op meet up with crafts, activities & socialising. Yahoo group for event details, information & support: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BristolHEC/>

Contact: BristolHEC-owner@yahoo.com Or 0117 9553582

Home Education in Bristol and the South West – local website with information and links for groups, events and activities in Bristol and the surrounding areas + national info & resources. <http://alternative-education-bristol.moonfruit.com/>

Contact: Therese, alternativeeducation.bristol@gmail.com

Buckinghamshire

Free Range Education – range of educational events and activities in Milton Keynes & North Bucks Sarah: 07725 039981 www.freerangeeducation.org

High Wycombe Home Educators – for HErs in & around High Wycombe <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/highwycombehomeeducators/>

Home Education Milton Keynes – informal non-hierarchical group for HErs in Milton Keynes & surrounding areas. <http://www.he-mk.org.uk>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MadCows-MK/join>

Milton Keynes Home Educators Network (MKHEN) – Educational and social activities and events, online support groups, mentoring and an active relationship with the LA. <http://www.mkhen.org.uk>

Georgeanne 01908 662256 sienna-swift@powernet.co.uk

MK-CHEF – HE support group for Milton Keynes. Affiliated to Home Service but you do not need to be a Christian to join. <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/mk-chef/>

South Bucks Home Educators – (& surrounding areas) <http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/southbuckshomeed>

Expanding Horizons, (see Berkshire).

Cambridgeshire

Cambridgeshire Home Educators – A website all about home educating in Cambridgeshire including local groups and how to contact them. www.cambshomeed.co.uk Jane: cambshomeed@gmail.com

Cambridge Home Educating Families (CHEF) – for parents/carers who HE or considering HE. <http://www.cambridgehomeeducators.org.uk/>

www.cambridgehomeeducators.org.uk/

Morag: 01223 464918 morag2000@hotmail.com

Cambridge Home Educating Community Activity List – summary of sessions and regular groups in Cambridge

www.educationchoice.org.uk Karen: 01223 573220

karen@karenrogers.co.uk

Cheshire

Mid Cheshire Home Educators – Bi-monthly meetings and regular outings. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mche>

South Cheshire Home Educators – Jacqui, south-cheshirehe@gmail.com <http://www.southcheshirehe.btck.co.uk/>

Cornwall

Home Grown – S E Cornwall HE Group - Alternate Mondays in Liskeard: classes in drawing & draughtsmanship / drama For ages 8-15. £6 per session. : Kath 01579 340591

Lostwithiel area H.E. group – New group just starting up – come along and help! Contact: Craig, hyrax@hotmail.com

Cumbria

Cumbria Home Educators – Meets fortnightly near Kendal and in Penrith. Trips and interesting activities around Cumbria and further afield <http://www.communigate.co.uk/lakes/cumbriahomeed/>

West Cumbria Home Educators – (including Keswick). Mutual support for HErs in West Cumbria : WestCumbriaHomeEd@gmail.com

Derbyshire

Derby Home Education Group (DHEG) – Weekly. Gym Club at sports centre with instructor. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/derbyhe/>

Home Ed Buxton Area – Local meetings/activities for HErs and those considering HE <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/homeedbuxtonarea>

Devon

Buckfastleigh Wildspace – Nature study and gardening group based at Buckfastleigh Town hall. Welcomes HE families. <http://www.hogco-devonrcc.org.uk/index.asp?pageid=279900>

Dart Valley Home Ed Network – Out and about visits: natural history photography and more. Members-only internet group. Hannah and Gordon 01803 762788 linndnich@tesco.net

Exeter Home Education Community Wednesday drop-in; GCSE; green woodwork permaculture pottery & more. nbedford@btinternet.com

<http://exeterhomeeducationcommunity.co.uk> Neil 01363 82314

Freedom Fields EHE – Weekly social group, for HE children and young people with parents. Tuesdays 11am -2pm at Freedom Fields in Plympton http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/PlymouthUK_HomeEd/

Home Grown Kids – Website activities forum and newsletters HE/ flexischools (or interested) <http://homegrownkids.wetpaint.com/>

Stover HE Group – Longstanding HE community based around Stover/ Newton Abbot. Informal educational and social meets in local and surrounding areas. stoverhegroup@gmail.com

Teignbridge and Torbay Home Educators – Social events and educational visits. <http://www.teignbridgeandtorbayhe.co.uk>

Julia 07905 293223 Julia@classroomfree.co.uk

Dartmoor and SW Home Education Group. Based in S Dartmoor, HE events locally and in many parts of the SW. <http://dartmoor-sw-he-group.yolasite.com/>

Contact: dartmoor.sw.he.group@gmail.com

South Devon Home Education Group – <http://www.southdevonhomeeducation.co.uk/>

Helen 01803 390639 helenlloyd-hoare@blueyonder.co.uk

FLAGS Home Education Group – Exeter, every Friday - socialising, craft activities, free-play etc. A friendly welcoming group for families with children of all ages. Lisa 07969299543 or Susan.gold777@yahoo.co.uk

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Dorset

Home Educators of East Dorset – (covers all Dorset) Website with details of various groups meeting in Dorset. <http://www.he-ed.org.uk>

Bournemouth HEED – Weekly Monday meetings Carol 01202 677066 carolstone@yahoo.co.uk

HERA – friendly group based in Creekmoor Poole. Weekly workshops and activities + outings and events. www.heradorset.shutterfly.com Sarah 01202 600065 sarahandthpi@aol.co.uk

Bournemouth and Poole Home Educators – Bournemouth/Poole area for play dates and visits to places of interest/museums/etc.

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/BournemouthandPooleHomeEducators/?yqid=419936795>, Emma:

bmth.home.ed@gmail.com

Durham

Durham HE – Yahoo group. Get-togethers arranged between members in various areas of County

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/County-durham-homeed>

Essex

A Different Class Home Education Group – Southend-on-Sea. Non-profit weekly meetings regular outings. www.adifferentclass.org

Haverhill HE group – Covering South Suffolk/North Essex.

Eve 01440 788228 or 07768 763913 wixde@yahoo.co.uk

WIGWAM Epping Forest – A weekly informal drop-in group. Eleanor

Stapleton 07866 701442 elmajose2@yahoo.co.uk

Southend HE Group – Meets weekly. Lots of outings and activities.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/southendhomeeducation/southend-homeeducation@yahoo.co.uk>

Gloucestershire

GlosHE.org.uk – HE links and local resources in and around Gloucestershire. <http://www.gloshe.org.uk/>

Glos Otherwise Club Fiona 01684 290087 brookesfam@tiscali.co.uk

Forest of Dean HE group – Bridge and dam building river clearance fire building woodland walks etc. Roxy cdsnhf@googlemail.com

Stroud email list Nick 01453 840036 nick.weir@localfood.org.uk

Cirencester and Cotswold group – Meetings plus will answer HE queries. Pam 01285 721008 pamela.perryman@gmail.com

Hampshire

Hampshire FRHEEBES – Free Range & Home Educated Bees. West Hampshire area and borders to arrange meet ups and activities. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FRHEEBes/>

North Hampshire HE Group – Regular activities and meetings organised suitable for all ages <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/NH-HE/> Jaki 07731 805323 jakimpersons@gmail.com

Portsmouth Home Education Group – HE or interested in HE <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/portsmouthhomeed/>

SEEDS – Meets every term time afternoon for sports/play + weekly full day activity. Southampton. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/seeds1/>

Herefordshire

Hereford Home Education – Indoor and outdoor facilities ages 3-15. herefordhe@gmail.com

Manmouth and Herefordshire Home Educators – Local meets and events Yahoo! group. Roxy 07765 058 777 <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HerefordshireHE/>

Hertfordshire

Herts Home Educators – Yahoo! group for Hertfordshire home educators. newhomeeducators@gmail.com

Isle of Wight

Isle of Wight Learning Zone – A network of HE families <http://www.wightlearningzone.co.uk/>

IW Home Ed - Facebook group & yahoo group for any and all home educators on IoW. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/IWHomeEd/> <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/IWHomeEd/>

Karen: Karen@curvespace.com or 01983 568516

Kent

Bromley Home Education Hub – new (July 2013) meets weekly in large venue at Orpington. <http://www.he-hub.com>

Contact: Nicola nicola.sumpter@yahoo.com 07895312380,

Or Phoenix phoenix.debola@yahoo.co.uk 07803704496.

Dragonfly Kidz HE Group – (Canterbury & Thanet) meets socially for learning activities swimming bowling days out etc. in a wide range of locations around Canterbury Thanet Whitstable etc. All Welcome! Steph for more info: stephquater@rocketmail.com 01304 814362.

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

Kent ASD Home Ed – For parents/carers of ASD/Aspergers children who are educating them 'otherwise'. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/asd-home-ed-medway>

Medway and Maidstone HE activity group - HE OMEGA – A group of home educating families in Medway and Kent. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HE-omega/>

Tracey 07947 301327 chaggasbug@gmail.com

SATHE Supporting Autism Through Home Education – West Kent group open to all parents/carers HE/flexi-schooling or considering EO for children with autism/ sensitivities or learning difficulties. Denise 07554 386844 S-A-T-H-E@yahoogroups.co.uk

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/S-A-T-H-E/>

South East Home Educators – (Kent/Sussex) Meet regularly for trips, hall meets, swimming etc. To join Yahoo! group email: southeast-homeeducators-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Or contact: Lesley Herriot lesley294@aol.com 07828193668

<http://www.southeast-home-educators.co.uk>

Wealden Home Educators' Network – active network of home educating families in SE England. We offer help and support, information, activities, events and camps for home educators. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wealdenhomeeducatorsnetwork/>

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

Lancashire

LEAD Home Education – swap ideas, share stories and arrange local social gatherings. http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lead_he/

Boneheds – Help support advice and friendship to all families who are home educating (or considering HE) in Bolton Lancashire and surrounding districts. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/boneheds/>

Home Ed Leyland – Friendship help support and advice for all families who are home-educating (or considering HE) in Leyland and surrounding districts <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/he-l-l/>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/he-l-l/>

Leicestershire

Leicestershire Christian Home Educators – monthly meet up every 3rd Tuesday 10am-3pm at Oak Farm Park CV13 0JD. Free play opportunity in a safe and fun place. Home Ed Off-Peak Pass available: £1.50 per child £5 per family free drinks. All welcome! Anne-Marie Marshall: mrsamarsall@googlemail.com

Charnwood & Melton Yahoo! Group – many home ed groups, gatherings and Events. Vikki, vikkiandmartin@googlemail.com

HE-AL message board – details of HE Events in Leicestershire. Site run by local HE groups, but open to all HErs in the Leicestershire area <http://he-al.weebly.com/index.html>

<http://he-al.weebly.com/index.html>

Lincolnshire

Lincolnshire HE – <http://www.home-ed.ukf.net/index.htm>

Home Ed Lincs – Yahoo! newsgroup coordinating HE activities in Lincolnshire. http://groups.yahoo.com/group/home_ed_lincs/

North Hykeham HE Group – Thurs 10-11.30ish. Primarily for toddlers. 07870 787328 debi-crow@googlemail.com

Homeschool Lincolnshire – active and supportive group, 40+ families incl. plenty of teenagers. Monthly events and activities list: Elaine 01507 328688, homeschool.lincolnshire@outlook.com

homeschool.lincolnshire@outlook.com

London

The Otherwise Club (NW) – A community centre for HE families. Leslie 0208 969 0893

Brandram Roaders – Weekly meetings in term time. rubyradburn@hotmail.com

Adventures with Education (Hackney) – A home education group based in Hackney London. <http://awe.gn.apc.org/>

Haringey Home Education Club – meetings and other events <http://www.hhec.org.uk/> @hhec.org.uk

<http://www.hhec.org.uk/> @hhec.org.uk

Maggie Home Educators (East London) – Phil 0208 500 1053
Home Study Groups – small group of HE families pooling resources for tutored home study groups. Ingie 0203 566 8706 iberritt@gmail.com
WIGWAM Jubilee Park N9 . Informal drop-in group for families with children of any age. Eleanor Stapleton 07866 701442 elma-jose2@yahoo.co.uk

Norfolk

Home Education in Norfolk (HENS) – A group for HE families in Norfolk. Those on the borders also welcome. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/homeeducatorsnorfolk/>

West Norfolk Home Educators – A meeting place for home educators and families interested in home educating. <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/WestNorfolkHomeEducators/>

The Barefoot Learners – Games and activities for all ages. Be Coffin 07814 592 290 or 01263 73 99 83

Northamptonshire

Northants HE – Informal group meets regularly for various activities <http://www.northantshe.org.uk/>

iFlow – weekly HE community group in NW Northants. Aiming to provide continuity of support and friendships parent and professionally led educational activities. A wide range of resources in a large community space with sports facilities and outdoor play www.iflow-he.org Email: welcometoflow@gmail.com

Nottinghamshire

Notts Sheep Special – Online support group for HE parents of special needs/differently-abled children in Nottinghamshire & bordering counties. http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/Notts_Sheep_Special/

Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire Home Educators – A group for all home educators living in Oxfordshire but those in neighbouring counties also welcome to join. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/OxonHE/>

OHED – Website with information about HE in Oxfordshire www.ohed.org.uk Louisa: louisa.southey@gmail.com or 01865 735705

Expanding Horizons (See Berkshire).

Shropshire

Rushbury/Stretton HE Group – Parent and child-led activities as well as people from the wider community Beverley 01743 718429

Telford area HE – activities For times and dates of skating football and drama sessions. Denise 07866 888879

Shropshire Home Education – For HEs in Shropshire area to chat arrange meets etc. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/shed>

Otherwise Engaged – Online diary of group activities cultural events workshops resources and projects for Shrops and West Mids based HE families. <http://www.otherwise-engaged.org.uk/home-education.html>

Somerset

Taunton Home Education Group – Free play, arts & crafts, games, etc. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/tauntonhomeeducation/> <http://tauntonhomeeducation.blogspot.com>

Taunton Free Range home ed. friendly laid back group of HE families from Somerset, meeting every Monday for socialisation and optional craft/experiment/activity. Contact Natanya on 01823 257929 or email tauntonfreerangekids@yahoo.co.uk

HEY Yeovil – All HE families welcome. Lyn Crocker 01963 23669 heyevl@hotmail.com

Wells Swimming Group – Weekly swimming Wells Leisure Centre term time only. Lesley 01749 689241 mumfordturner@hotmail.com

Oake HE Group – Monthly meetings and regular outings. Maggie 01984 624651

North Somerset HE Group – Weekly children's gym walks outings etc. Yahoo! group for members. Vicky 01275 848425 victoria.preston@yahoo.co.uk

Bath HE Yahoo! Group – <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/BathHomeEducation/>

FAB Home Ed Group – Meets fortnightly at Shepton Mallet Scout Hut. Also FAB Times (local email newsletter) Mandy 01749 347799

Suffolk

Dennington HE Group – Wide range of activities all ages welcome. Janet 01728 638795 janetlomas@ymail.com

Haverhill HE group – Covering South Suffolk/North Essex. Eve 01440 788228 or 07768 763913 wixde@yahoo.co.uk

Ipswich HE Wednesdays Shared lunch and activities. Emma emma@nattyem.co.uk

Ipswich town centre group + Book Club – Lisa 07538 102322 llw_llg@yahoo.co.uk

Tostock HE Group – All families welcome to this very friendly group. Jan 01359 251184 angusto@btinternet.com

Surrey

SW Surrey Home Ed – Weekly gatherings Farnham or Godalming. <http://www.swsurrey-home-ed.co.uk/index.php>

Sutton/Epsom HE group – Meets weekly and also monthly for outings. Paul 07506 781796 pauldmsn@hotmail.com

<http://epsomandsuttonhomeed.blogspot.com/>

Leatherhead Home Education Group – Leatherhead and surrounding area regular day trips and activities. Chrissie Thorpe 07840285703 christabelthorpe@hotmail.com <http://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/313168112059023/>

Parents and Children Together (PACT) – Guildford & surrounding areas newsletter for one-off events and regular weekly activities. <http://www.pact-he.org.uk/>

Home Educators Learning Project – Aims to bring together Surrey based home educators for educational support social and educational outings. <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/HELearningProject/>

Godalming HE Group – A group for HE families based in South West Surrey and surrounding area. <http://www.swsurrey-home-ed.co.uk>

Surbiton Home Ed Group (SHed) – parent-led clubs, professionally led educational workshops (local flora & fauna; archaeology; ICT). children aged 0-16 regularly attending. Contact Ingrid: ingrid.meaker@mac.com

www.surreyhomeed.co.uk

Sussex

ActivEO HE Group W Sussex and Hants (see Hampshire)

HEDGE Home Ed Group – Hastings/St. Leonards weekly social meetings + trips etc. www.hedge-education.btck.co.uk Beshlie 01424 812870

South Eastern Home Educators – (Kent/Sussex) See Kent for details.

Forest Row HE Group – regular monthly meetings + many other fun & learning <http://www.facebook.com/groups/forestrrowhomeeducators>

Eastbourne EO Group – Regular gatherings & activities. <http://www.shinies.org.uk/>

Brighton and Hove Home Educators – Information on HE events and groups in the area. <http://bhhe.wordpress.com/> <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bhhe/>

Hastings & Rother Home Educators (HARHE) – small number of families; activities include Forest School, cycling, daytrips, bowling and swimming. Check out our website and us or come along to an activity www.harhe.btck.co.uk Catherine: 01424 812213

Wealden Home Educators' Network (WHEN) (SE England) see Kent.

Warwickshire

Creative Youth Adventure Club (Coventry) – For over 11s working towards Arts Awards. Sarah sarah@nellyb.co.uk

Worcestershire Home Educators Network – Meetings usually at least weekly throughout term time at various locations round the county. <http://www.worcestershire-home-educators.co.uk/>

Warwick District HE Primarily for children 0-11 though all welcome. Warwick and Leamington, Alison 07782 299181 <http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/warwickhe>

Wiltshire

The Outpost Education Centre – meet near Chippenham Tuesdays term time. <http://www.theoutpost.org.uk/>

info@theoutpost.org.uk

Salisbury Plain Home Education Circle – Parents who use the

National Curriculum as guidance, but believe that best education comes from experience. Dee: dee.dillaway@yahoo.com, 07753 260317

Worcestershire

Bewdley HE Group – Weekly meetings, social/activities etc. all welcome. Sophie 01299 405669, sophie@butcher29@yahoo.co.uk
Worcestershire Home Ed Yahoo Group Email list for Worcs HERS <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/worcestershirehome-ed/>

Yorkshire

DHE Doncaster home educators Yahoo group for families in the Doncaster and surrounding areas. Cheryl Moy on 07825 914340 cheryl0407@aol.com <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/DHE/>
HENNEY (Home Education Network North East Yorkshire) Regular meet ups around the Scarborough and East coast area. Lisa Riley lisa_riley@tiscali.co.uk henney-owner@yahoo.com
Huddersfield Art Workshops – Monthly Byrs plus. Jane 01484 645034
Huddersfield Book Group Monthly Marsden library. Jane 01484 645034
Huddersfield Home Educators – Monthly themed meetings. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wyhec/> Mandy 01484 460026 meandchi7@yahoo.co.uk
Yorkshire Home Edders Yahoo Group – A friendly & active group with visits & workshops for children 8-16. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/yorkshirehomeedders/>
NYHEC (group for HE parents) – for parents HEing in North Yorkshire. nyhecowner@yahoo.com
North + West HE Group – Meets Skipton monthly and Bradford Gym Club weekly. Regular meetings and outings. Judith 01756 791356
Rotherham Home Education – friendly informal group for HERS in & around S. Yorkshire. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RothHE/>
Pauline 077764 06409 collieanddog123@yahoo.co.uk
SYHEC – Yahoo! group for parents HEing in South Yorkshire. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/syhec/>
Wakefield District Home Education Group – New Group 2013. Currently regular Bowling & Ice skating. Will be organising more trips and visits as numbers increase. Contact Tracey: wakefieldHE-owner@yahoo.com

Regional – East of England

East Anglian Home Ed Network – <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/East-Anglian-Home-Ed-Network/>

Regional – East Midlands

East Midlands Home Ed – forum to help inform and support HE families in the East Midlands. <http://groups.yahoo.com/oup/emhe>

Regional – South East

FLAGS (Kent/Surrey/Sussex) – Active group (Kent/Surrey/Sussex) meeting weekly during term time <http://www.flags-education.org>
Karen 01732 864524 karenlow@uwclub.net
ActiveO HE Group based in West Sussex and Hampshire
Contact number 01243 552780 <http://www.activeo.co.uk/index.html>
South Hants Home Ed – A support group for home educators <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/southhantshomeed/>
FAREGOS Home Education Group – HE group/email list covering Fareham Gosport and South Hants. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FareGosHE/>
Home-EASE (Home Education for all South East) – Group of HE families in South-East England 0753 1677 083 homeeducating-mum@yahoo.co.uk
South East Home Educators – (Kent/Sussex) See Kent for details.
Wealden Home Educators' Network (WHEN) (SE England) see Kent.

Regional – South West

Home Education Centre (Devon/Dorset/Somerset) – Meets two days a week. Workshops sports activities and support. <http://www.homeeducationcentre.org.uk>
HERs and Events SW – network to support new HERS or those new to the area. New input welcomed. southdevonkc@gmail.com <http://hecontactssandeventssw.valasite.com>
HE in Bristol and SW – see Bristol

Regional – West Midlands

Birmingham Home Ed – and events for HE families. <http://www.homeeducationbirmingham.org.uk>

Isle of Man

Home Educating Network - Isle of Man – informal group of parents HEing on the Isle of Man. Yvonne, isleofmanlc@educationotherwise.org <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/hen-iom/>

Wales

Carmarthenshire

Carmarthen HE Group – Regular meetings in Johnstown Carmarthen caroline.milburn@yahoo.com
North Carmarthen HE Group – meetings for friendship & play. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ncarmarthenhomeed>

Denbighshire

Froncsyllte HE group – Fortnightly group meets 10-4pm. Social play and chat. vivodsam@gmail.com

Flintshire

Flintshire Home Education – Regular meet ups activities & support. flintshirehomeeducation@yahoo.co.uk

Glamorgan

New Foundations HE – Meets Cardiff Thursdays 10-4. All activities free. <http://www.newfoundationshe.com> 02920216502 newfoundationshe@virginmedia.com
Bridgend Home Educators. free play, GCSE classes, Arts Award, outside speakers, activities, etc. See www.bridgendhomeeducators.org or emailinfo@bridgendhomeeducators.org
Newport Home Education Group – Group Rogerstone 1-4pm E4/family. Fiona fionataylor910@btinternet.com

Gwynedd

Langower HE Group – Weekly meetings. rowenna73@hotmail.com
Creative Learning and Support – Now meet every Wed. pm in Bangor. Julie on 01286 678181 or Sarah on 01248 355182 <http://www.creativelearningandsupport.co.uk>

Monmouthshire

South Wales Home Educators Network – Email list for Home Educators in and around S Wales to arrange get-togethers /event, share ideas & news and offer support. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/swhen/>
Usk Home Education – Monthly (Thurs) meet other HERS in the area for fun and games and cups of tea. Roxy: cdsnhj@gmail.com or 01989 768 128 <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HerefordshireHE/>

Montgomeryshire

Shiny Happy Children – Regular meetings in Llanfyllin and surrounding areas. Katie llanfyllinHE@gmail.com

Neath Port Talbot

Wise Up Community HE Group (Port Talbot) – Support and information for home educating families and those considering home education. <http://www.zoneseven.co.uk>
ianna.violet@hotmail.com

Powys

New Leaf HE Group (Newtown) – Occasional meetings for varied activities all ages. siouxcatsy@yahoo.co.uk
Wrexham and Surrounds Home Education (WASHE) – Activities around Wrexham area. <http://washe.co.uk/>

Regional

Elective Home Education Wales – Linking HE families across Wales. <http://www.ehew.co.uk>
Monmouth/Hereford/Gloucester – for information about group

activities in the Monmouth/Hereford/Gloucester area local EO member
Roxy 01989 768128 cdsnhf@googlemail.com

New Foundations – HE group and charity offering social & educational activities and support in Cardiff and South Wales. Every Mon 10am – 3pm. All HE families welcome. www.newfoundationshe.com <https://www.facebook.com/groups/329840653796249/>
Jayne: newfoundationshe@virginmedia.com Or 02920216502

Channel Islands

Home Education Jersey – New home education group. Jess: homeeducationjersey@gmail.com

Guernsey Home Educators – Fledgling group of home educators and those sympathetic to home education in Guernsey. Yvonne Burford on 01481 264776 or Atplir@hotmail.com

International (UK based)

HE-DS (Home Educating a child with Down's syndrome) – Linking families who are home educating a child with Down's syndrome. <http://www.oakwellbarns.co.uk> Yahoo group (private, by invitation) Anita Kolaczynska 01686 413502 anitakolaczynska@yahoo.co.uk

PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE FOR LOCAL GROUPS

1st September 2013 – 31st August 2014

The insurance broker finally provided us with a proposal and quotation at the last moment before going to press for this newsletter. The Policy has been updated, but the terms are similar to the current policy. We are holding the cost to groups at £10 for the year (or part year) to 31st August 2014, but unless more groups take advantage of the deal it will mean that the cost to each group will need to increase thereafter.

Detailed guidance and an application form are available to download from the Member Home area of the EO website. To minimise work for volunteers, we would request members to obtain these from the website, but in case of difficulty you may request details by email from the Local Groups Insurance Co-ordinator <lgic@educationotherwise.org>



Who does What in EO

Current Trustees [Council Members]

Lei Ashe (Local Contacts Co-ord)

lashe@educationotherwise.org

Beverly Cameron-Young (Treasurer)

bcameron-young@educationotherwise.org

Shena Deuchars (Membership Sec.)

sdeuchars@educationotherwise.org

Bryony McDonagh

bmcdonagh@educationotherwise.org

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hnewton@educationotherwise.org

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arix@educationotherwise.org

Carol Stone

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a.theunissen@educationotherwise.org

Edwina Theunissen

e.theunissen@educationotherwise.org

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kthompson@educationotherwise.org

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mwells@educationotherwise.org

N.B. Email to

trustees@educationotherwise.org

goes to all trustees

Address for correspondence by letter:

Education Otherwise

P.O. Box 3761

SWINDON

SN2 9GT

AND NEW WEBSITE:

www.educationotherwise.net

N.B. THIS IS **SEPARATE** FROM THE EO EMAILS AND FORUMS, WHICH ARE STILL BASED ON THE OLD URL: educationotherwise.org

Membership

Membership enquiries, address changes, membership cards, new member admin: please contact the Membership Secretary:

membership@educationotherwise.org

or PO Box 3761, Swindon, SN2 9GT

Other Useful Contacts

Anti-Bullying Contact: **Kathleen Thompson**

01942 89 77 79

College/GCSE Contact: **Roger Scaife** 08445 003 708

GCSEs at Home: **Louise** 08445 003 688

OU GCSE equivalents: **Wendy** 08445 003 691

GCSE/EXAMS email list:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HE-Exams-GCSE-A_AS_Levels-OU-Others/

Concessions Contact: **Lynsey Scott**

concessions@educationotherwise.org

Concessions Co-ordinator: **Vacant**

Enquiries Secretary: **Edwina Theunissen**

01978 661 882 e.theunissen@educationotherwise.org

Flexi-schooling: **Alison Sauer** Alison@sauer.demon.co.uk
01282 85 47 19

Local Contacts Co-ordinator: **Lei Ashe**

lcco-ordinator@educationotherwise.org

Local Group Insurance: **Fe Mukwamba-Sendall**

lgic@educationotherwise.org

Local Groups Listings: **Kennell Family**

eolg@educationotherwise.org

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education otherwise

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

Our principal aims are to:

- encourage learning outside the school system;
- reaffirm that parents have primary responsibility for their children's education and that they have the right to exercise this responsibility by educating them out of school;
- establish the primary right of children to have full consideration given to their wishes and feelings about their education;
- promote knowledge, understanding and acceptance of education otherwise than at school in the world at large.

For further information send an A5 s.s.a.e. to:

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