

education otherwise



Newsletter Spring 2014

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## **SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE**

Please mark material 'for publication' and include your name, address, phone number and email as we may need to contact you to discuss your contribution (though details may be withheld from publication on request). Email contributions will be acknowledged within a few days. If you require a postal acknowledgement please enclose a stamped S.A.E.. If no acknowledgement is received, or in case of queries, please contact the NL co-ordinator (see below). *Please also ensure your EO membership is up to date before submission.*

***Deadline for the Summer issue is May 1<sup>st</sup>***

**Please send contributions via Section Editors or Newsletter Co-ordinator:**

**Edana Edwards (Acting)** <eonews@btinternet.com>

[postal contributions to: EONL Co-ord, PO Box 3761, Swindon, SN2 9GT]

~~~~~ **N.B. postal system subject to forwarding delays so allow extra time** ~~~~~

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**REVIEWS** *Tammy Dolling:* [bookreviews@educationotherwise.org](mailto:bookreviews@educationotherwise.org)  
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### Co-ordinatorial

Hello and Welcome to the Spring edition of the newsletter! I hope there is a spring in your step too, now the days are getting longer, although I'm not sure if I dare hope for blue skies....I guess we don't want a drought either? What a climate we have here in the UK – I'm very glad I live on a hilltop in Yorkshire at the moment! My commiserations to all of you who have had to deal with the worst of the Winter weather – I hope things improve for you soon.

This edition, I have tried to include ALL the clues for the crossword! My apologies for somehow omitting the clue for 13 across, in the last newsletter! Unlucky for some indeed – the clue is 'to sleep away the Winter'.....

As ever, please do contribute your opinions, thoughts, advice and experience to the newsletter. There is no 'one size fits all' regarding childrearing or education, so it's good and reassuring to read about the variety of experiences we all have. I am especially interested to hear stories from people whose home educated children are now post-16, as those new to home education can find it very daunting, wondering about their child's future

and if they are doing the right thing. Until a cheap and reliable crystal ball is invented, we will never know until after the event! We just have to do our best, follow our parenting instincts, and 'travel hopefully', having faith in our children. The article titled 'I Did It My Way' tells the story of home educators and their offspring who have 'survived' the uncertainty and completed their unconventional education. But if you don't send in your story, we will have nothing to print! Don't worry if you're not a writer – your work can be edited to your approval. Your story is as unique as your child, so please share it.

Hopefully the rest of the newsletter will be of interest to you too. Your contributions are also welcome for the Penny Pinchers and Makes & Bakes sections. Home education is often a financial struggle, with no subsidies from the government for books etc. - and of course the loss of potential salary from the home educating parent. So any money-saving tips you may have, please share them, as well as crafting and cooking activities which your family enjoy – the cheaper, the better! Also please share details of any resources, websites, activities etc. which you have found useful.

In addition, your book reviews are very welcome – Please send them to the Reviews section editor.

See inside front cover for details on how to submit articles etc. for inclusion in the next newsletter. Thanks for reading, and supporting Education Otherwise – I wish you a wonderful Springtime!

*Edana Edwards, acting newsletter co-ord.*



## VOLUNTEER VACANCIES

*If you can commit either regular 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 vacancies, please send your ideas to our Volunteer Co-ordinator, Wendy <[vol-coordinator@educationotherwise.org](mailto:vol-coordinator@educationotherwise.org)>*

### Helpline Telephone Volunteers

We are always in need of volunteers for the Helpline rota, which is a vital part of EO's charitable outreach services. Volunteers answer the telephone for a week at a time (from home) as often as they wish. The number of calls varies and we have 3 lines, so you don't need to stay near the phone constantly, and support is available if you need it. We need members who have experience of home education and who can tell prospective home educators about the resources and support available and about local authority procedure. Many enquirers will just need signposting to EO's SEND, GCSE/College, Flexischooling, Anti-bullying or Single Parent Contacts. The relief some parents feel upon hearing that HE isn't as difficult as they thought, clearly shows what a worthwhile service Helpline volunteers provide. For more information, contact Edwina (Enquiries Co-ordinator) [e.theunissen@educationotherwise.org](mailto: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](mailto:lcco-ordinator@educationotherwise.org)>

### Webmaster Vacancy

E.O.'s Webmaster, is looking to retire as soon as possible! Detailed instructions can be provided to whoever takes over, and Louisa is willing to be available for support initially. The site is based on the Joomla! content management system. We need someone with appropriate knowledge and experience, (ideally with Joomla!) but in any case with content management systems in general. Also able to spend time getting to know the current setup, continue with regular maintenance etc.

Outline task list for Webmaster:

- Maintain and update website
- Install, test and upgrade website components when necessary
- Upload new concessions to member area
- Deal with link requests and add links where appropriate
- Deal with changes, broken links, etc., when notified or requested
- Implement regular site backups
- Provide support to users via email
- Deal with existing member registrations and renewals
- Receive correspondence regarding web site and respond as necessary
- Receive newsletters from co-ordinators in both pdf and jpg format
- Create new magazines and upload jpg pages to Flash magazine component
- Upload pdfs to website as attachments for download
- Receive queries sent by members and the public via the website, and pass on as appropriate.

Please contact Louisa [webmasteer@educationotherwise.net](mailto:webmasteer@educationotherwise.net) for further information.

## Roland Meighan

(29.5.1937- 20.1.2014)

It is with the greatest sadness that we record the death of Roland Meighan. Roland had been hospitalised since the New Year and finally succumbed to heart failure. What follows is just a short, inadequate tribute to this great man. We will do more in due course.

Dr Roland Meighan was an academic at *Birmingham and Nottingham Universities* (Special Professor of Education). He was a founding trustee and director of *Centre for Personalised Education – Personalised Education Now (CPE-PEN)* and a leading global thinker, researcher, publisher, and author of *Education Now, CPE-PEN and Educational Heretics Press*. In a distinguished and respected career Roland researched, wrote and presented extensively across the world on a range of topics including home-based education, personalised education and educational futures. His research included: 1. a ten year study of the perspectives of pupils and their judgements of teaching performance, 2. an ongoing study of over twenty years duration of the learning systems of parents who educate their children at home, 3. action research into democratic learning practices in teacher training over a fifteen year period, 4. theoretical research into the concepts of (a) the Hidden Curriculum, (b) Ideologies of Education, and (c) Flexischooling (d) Current and Future Learning Systems. His booklist is too numerous to list at this point but includes the standard text – 5th edition of *A Sociology of Educating* with Prof Clive Harber. ISBN 0-8264-6815-2. His last work was *Comparing Learning Systems: the good, the bad, the ugly and the counter-productive* Educational Heretics Press, ISBN 1-900219-28-X.

Roland liked to be known as an Educational Heretic and fundamentally a freethinker. He was hostage to no man, institution or ideology. His influence on educational ideas is incalculable. He never sought fame, would never compromise his values and principles but his ideas, concepts and his language range across the best educational thought. Many educational thinkers and writers will find Roland's thinking underpins their work. Such was the respect Roland engendered that countless people redirected their lives to try and put some of his educational work into practice. Roland loved to visit these educational settings and witness the proof of concept in practice. Over the last couple of years it is heartening to know Roland witnessed the rise and current growth in interest in flexischooling and the part CPE-PEN is taking in its development. Roland brought the concept of flexischooling to our attention following discussions held with John Holt. In 1988 Roland wrote the book '*Flexischooling. Education for tomorrow, starting yesterday*'.

CPE-PEN has had a torrid 18 months with the loss of three of our finest educators ... Chris Shute, Philip Toogood and now Roland. The clarity of Roland's thinking and the accessible nature of his writing will stand the test of time. It will be important to ensure his legacy and body of work continues to influence the development of our learning systems into the future.

On a personal note, I am devastated. Roland has been a key figure in my life, and professionally, singularly the most important person. I have been privileged to study with him, learn from him and work alongside him these last two decades. I learned more about education and learning from this one man than any other. Roland never wasted words, he thought deeply, and spoke pure wisdom and common sense... a rare characteristic. Roland has been taken far too early and it is a desperately sad time for his partner Janet and his family. Our love and best wishes go out to them all. Any messages of condolence can be sent to Janet via the CPE-PEN General Office: 113 Arundel Drive, Bramcote, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, NG9 3FQ

*Peter Humphreys, Chair/Trustee and Director CPE-PEN*

## *I Did it My Way*

A very long time ago, I was faced with the same dilemma as many parents: whether to home educate or not? I chose to home educate our daughter from the age of 6 through to 13yrs (until 1996).

I've never regretted doing so, as the alternative was to watch her fail at school. Although my story will seem ancient to those of you facing this dilemma today (our daughter is now in her 30's), I hope you will take heart from what I say, as I cannot imagine that anything vitally important has changed in the world of education, in spite of the rise of technology. Ours is a heart-warming story that ends well. I would not naturally have turned to home education; it's something I felt I had to do, given the dire situation which developed from taking my daughter to school. It's an unusual story that demonstrates how children who have been home educated through primary and early secondary years, can later succeed at secondary school. It's the type of story you might use to persuade your parents and in-laws who are probably my age, not to panic!

When we relocated from England to live in Hong Kong, in 1995, I had been home educating our daughter for 6 years. I wondered how on earth I could teach her in Hong Kong? It turned out that you aren't allowed to! So I went to work in a large, swanky and famous, former British expat. secondary school, in the special needs department, and took her with me. It was 'the' school to go to in Hong Kong; jaws drop at the mere mention of it. Our daughter later went on to work in Special Educational Needs in that same school, and is now a Kindergarten teacher with a specialism in SEN! During her schooling they understood her home educated background and medical history and took it into account. We were an inclusive school. We worked in the mainstream with children with special educational needs. Everyone, including our SEN children took 'O' Levels and passed. Most were bilingual. Some were tri-lingual. It was a wonderful seat of learning. For the first time I was being exposed to how a good school operates.

Yet it all started so differently. Home educating came about for us because I refused to be bullied by the system into lowering our expectations for our daughter, who as a baby had been in a coma for three weeks with Encephalitis. This left her with brain damage affecting speech and personality, and it's not that long from 16 months to 4 years old, especially if you limp and droop from the after effects of a life threatening illness with an 80% mortality rate. Knowing that we don't use much of our brains anyway and believing she was young enough to overcome it, I refused to let our daughter become a failure in the school system. She needed more time to recover. So laziness was not an option; basically I felt I would have to take control to ensure the best outcome for her. But that was quite a tall order given my own, messed up experience with education and current home situation. Plus I was still only in my early 20's, and a single parent.

Her first teacher listened while I explained her medical history, then after 10 weeks of mornings only, her teacher marched from the classroom, hands on her hips and announced in front of all the mothers gathered to collect their children at the village school gates, that she had "never met a more difficult child in all my teaching career!"

The reading scheme my daughter was given bored her, so we had a meeting with the teacher to ask for more interesting books. But the teachers made me feel unsupported and to blame for my daughter's condition. They weren't interested in what the hospital had to say either. Lesson One: teachers are not required to have a medical background!

There were several catalysts which encouraged me to home educate my daughter, but the main one was that she kept trying to leave school, aged 5, and walk home during class! At school there was a lack of compassion, understanding or provision for children who were left with a legacy of brain trauma. The hospital had no liaison with the schools either. One morning her teacher said anxiously, "You won't take her out of school will you?" Now aged 6, my daughter had been falling behind in her studies, so I had

asked for catch up maths workbooks for her to complete at home. Studying at home she had raced through them. We had reached the financial quota for maths workbooks for the year and her teacher could see we were doing better at home than at school. We then relocated to Darlington, 350 miles away. The customs and people were quite different from what I was used to, coming from the South of England, and it was a bit of a culture shock. I decided to home educate my daughter from then on.

Unfortunately at that time Co. Durham was one of 5 counties with diabolical records for bullying parents into submission. Being a responsible mum, I wanted to follow the same health checks being done in school. When I took her for a hearing test, the clinic asked me which school she went to. I said she didn't go to school, so behind my back they informed the authorities! Luckily I had already done my homework and found Education Otherwise. Your booklet clearly explained my rights as a parent. I knew that if the LEA were allowed to assess my daughter and subsequently give her a 'statement' of special educational needs, our right to home education might be taken away. The LEA could place her in a special needs school. The Headmaster had already said she needed a support worker in the classroom with her, and I was afraid they would take it further.

When the inevitable knock on the door came, I invited the Welfare Officer in. My husband was away on business, so he immediately began his intimidating and threatening routine. He told me I was in breach of the law. I told him that it was strange that a Welfare Officer didn't know the law and I was fully within my rights to home educate. He then tried to suggest that a 'good mother' would want to have her child assessed! The LEA arranged a meeting in their office to force my hand. So, to get them off our backs, I eventually agreed to visit a child psychiatrist. He was another pitiful example of the hideous attitude towards home educators in Darlington at the time, and tried to make out that I was a bad parent. Needless to say, I knew the law and was sticking to it!

Teaching my daughter at home was very involved. I found it hard going at first as she had become institutionalised after 2 years in school, and kept asking for another piece of work to do. There were many areas such as social education that I felt needed to be included, so I became a specialist respite carer for Barnardos because I felt that our daughter shouldn't be educated in isolation. I also founded and ran a national network for sufferers of Encephalitis; the first in the country. Life was becoming quite hectic.

Having a senior social worker from Barnardos regularly visit the house to discuss the respite children in our care gave me a sense of security as she approved of the way I dealt with the children who came to play with my daughter after school. I had an imagination room which she thought was really special. We didn't have a TV, and when a friend felt sorry for us and gave us one, my daughter said she hated it and asked why she should have to stop playing in the imagination room with her dolls house to watch boring, educational TV! The house was filled with things to see and do; the Local Education Officer, newly appointed, with fresh new ideas, called it 'an Aladdin's cave'. The social worker from Barnardos was chatting to me once, whilst a visiting friend of my daughter's tried to shove knitting needles up my nostrils! The social worker said she knew I could cope with being a care parent at that point.

The house was fast becoming a hive of home educating activity. The lambs that a local farmer loaned me to bottle-feed, were brilliant at encouraging one of our care children to interact. We had chickens, ducks, rabbits, goats, lizards, mice and snakes. The local children used to sit on the wall peering into our yard or stand outside the back gate discussing which animals we might have. Everyone wanted to come to our house and I ended up teaching one other local child in transition for a while. The Northern Echo even did a piece on our menagerie!

For my daughter, learning to read and write 'just happened', without any input on my part. I simply gave her a book after letting her listen to a tape recording of the book, and also asked her to read a novel!

whilst I washed up or cooked. It was fun. We laughed a lot. I am sure you have similar experiences. We laughed and danced to the broken washing machine as it banged out each cycle and marvelled at how the animals played and the cats loved to just sit and stare at the fish in the tank – we called it cat TV. How the chickens would sit on the windowsill and peck at the window when I washed up to let me know it was breakfast time. Home educating for me wasn't really that hard, I was pleased to find out. Except for writing, which she found boring because I was quite uninspiring at teaching it. But there were experiments in the kitchen, maths sessions on the floor. Many of you know how interesting as well as exhausting home educating can be on a good day.

So, that is our story. I am writing to you because in our hour of need it was Education Otherwise who I turned to, to inform me of our rights. We were directed to an amazing family who were our EO's local area representatives. They knew the score and the background history of this, one of 5 worst counties in the country to home educate in. They were welcoming, informative, compassionate, bright, thoughtful and competent. Those are the kind of people, along with others I met, such as the home educating geography teacher we met on an EO outing when we all went to see the first house lit by electricity. She who took us to an old slate mine explaining the significance of what we saw, she was so knowledgeable; she loved education. I was fascinated and in awe of their competence as teachers to their children. They rose brilliantly to the challenge of teaching them to be interesting human beings who loved education! I know it's not always like that but it can be!

Time passes faster than you think but the relationship we forged with our daughter through home education meant that when, aged 13, she had to start school in Hong Kong, several of her teachers sought me out with praise for her skills. Of course there were an equal amount of disasters! She was given the form tutor prize her first year at school and later came top of her year in GNVQ, gaining 100% in one module and in the 90's for others. She passed 7 'O' levels whilst sitting in a wheelchair after a sporting accident, which left her with a Titanium plate in her leg. Since she was now used to studying on her own, I gave her no help in her studies. Like all UK students she did OK in some and worse in others. But this is China; grades are everything here. If you don't get an A\* you are a failure in your peers' eyes. No, I'm being deadly serious, that is the situation. So it made competing a bit of a challenge for her. In spite of this I have lovely memories of various teachers being astonished with her progress and bounding up to me with smiles on their faces and news of her success - including the Headmaster. I couldn't understand what he meant when he said she had come top of year, as it seemed so unlikely!

Early on the Head of Art told me that he had never met a student like her who had come up to ASK for homework (a home education legacy). The time she went on a class trip to Vietnam and confounded everyone when she finished first in a very competitive school cycling race, when they were sure she was lost! These children go onto Oxford, Cambridge, Durham and Harvard. Their exam results top even the best British institutions. Competing with the jet set when you have had a very different experience in education was a tall order! But home education had given her the chance to grow as an individual, so she had an extraordinary combination of fearlessness in taking opportunities, whilst also being horrified at some of the situations she was now being placed in!

I hope I haven't bored you or made out that home education is all fun and a piece of cake. It's not! However, sometimes we need to look at the positives and forget all the drudgery, hard work, sweat, tears and screams it took to get our children where they are now and just focus on the results. Unless we tell our stories the parents of other children in dire circumstances will be left wondering whether or not home education can work for them. I hope that Education Otherwise remains for many years to come, safeguarding the right to home educate for future generations. In our hearts we know we were not all born the same and we don't all fit a narrow view of education. We shouldn't be squeezed until we give up, but encouraged to look for new solutions to old problems of difference.

*Sandy, Hong Kong*

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

*(This article first appeared in EONL no. 162, February 2005)*

### Diary of a Home Educating Nobody

by Ross Mountney

There's something we need to reassure ourselves about as HEers. Well, actually there are lots of things, aren't there! But this is particularly relevant if the reason we don't send our children to school is that they had 'problems' there.

We need to keep reassuring ourselves of the simple fact that: there's absolutely nothing wrong with our children, just because they had a problem in school!

I met another family thinking about Heing a few weeks ago, with their intelligent, polite, sensitive teenager who had been suffering in school since seven years of age. For six suffering years the family had pressed on, forcing their child to go into school, enduring long spells of illness, enduring confusion about their competent child. Even enduring visits to doctors and psychologists, all baffled by this child's so-called 'problem'.

When really the only problem that this young person has (and I don't see it as a 'problem' at all), is a completely normal reaction to - a basic unhappiness with - the whole environment that some schools create.

For years this family had believed that there was something 'wrong' with their child. They had been made to feel, by the professionals they turned to for help, that there was something wrong with their parenting and the way they were encouraging their child to attend school (or not - as was suggested). And something wrong with their child's attitude and abilities.

It is so thoroughly sad that yet another family has been made to feel that there's something wrong with them, simply because they feel the same way that so many of us do. That is: we feel unable to enjoy, can't settle with, have distinct unease about, much of what goes on in school.

Take any of us adults, take any one of us parents, take any employee, any politician, any other professional and stick them in a classroom not only for one day, but day after day, week after week, year after year, and ask them if they like it.

How many of us would now enjoy or even survive being in a school?

And there's nothing wrong with us is there?

We're just normal. And the fact that we wouldn't want to endure a classroom atmosphere for over ten years if we had the choice, does not indicate that there's something wrong with us, does it?

If we were employed in that kind of stressful atmosphere, which had that kind of damaging effect upon our health, we'd do our utmost to change our job. Or maybe sue for harassment!

Yet we expect our children and teenagers to endure it without offering an opinion, without having any kind of reaction to it, and without allowing them to rebel against the injustice of it. And when they do have a reaction, we make out there's something wrong with them!

Inside a great many schools - and I admit not all - the atmosphere is in many ways detrimental to the health and happiness of our young people. Unless the school happens to have a lucky cluster of empathetic and respectful staff who all actually like the children! And a catchment area of angels!

The fact is that the atmosphere of a school alone - even without incidents like bullying, humiliation, peer-pressure, academic failure and differences in learning - is enough to make some of our young people ill. It would me!

But there's nothing wrong with our children if they have that reaction or simply don't like school! They are not soft, weak or pathetic. They are not 'underachievers'. Do not have 'learning difficulties'. Are not tied to their mummies apron strings. Are not 'problem' children. I'm not - but I couldn't hack school. I couldn't write anything in there. I wouldn't flourish. The nature of its makeup is something I hate. And I'm not weak, pathetic or soft. (Just ask the kids on a bad day!) It's just the way I am.

Each of us has a unique personality. Each of us needs a different environment in which to thrive, let alone learn. Some personalities don't thrive well in schools. But there's nothing wrong with those personalities simply because of that.

And thank goodness HE offers those personalities, like the one I met, an alternative. I don't ram HE down people's throats. HE is not an ideal answer for all. But I fail to see the value of school for some children. I fail to see the value of forcing all children; all the differing, idiosyncratic young people of the world, down the same path if it makes them ill or unhappy in the process.

Ill and unhappy children do not learn; do not realise their potential. And all kids start out with potential. There's nothing wrong with any child who cannot realise that potential in school. And there's nothing wrong with your children if they didn't. Mine didn't either!

Reassure yourself of that now and then!

I met the family again recently. After they'd left last time I'd been worried that maybe I'd put them off HEing by spouting my rather way-out educational ideas to them too soon, and discussing the HE problems which they'd asked about. It's easy to dwell on difficulties - we all know they take some working out!

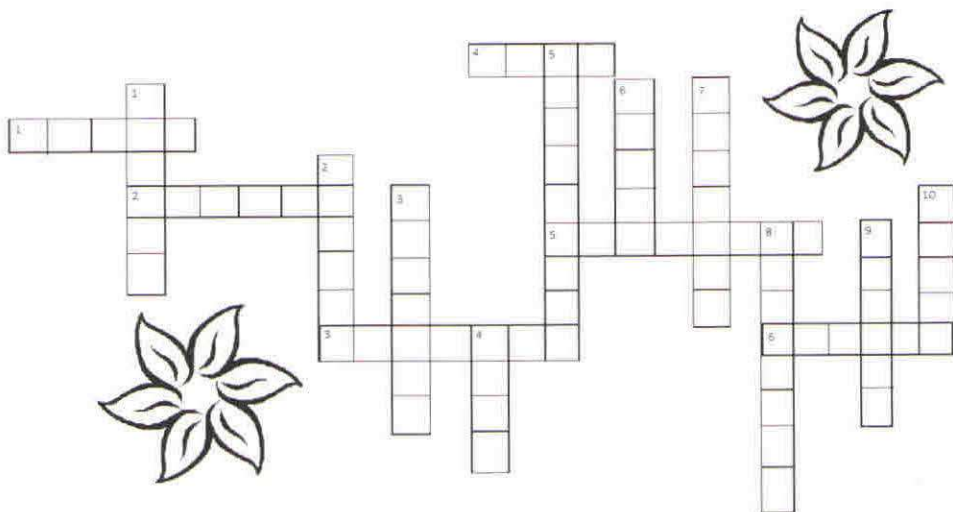
Thankfully, I hadn't put them off! Their teenager had spent their last visit chatting and chilling out with my kids. They told me that as they came away from our house that day a huge weight had been lifted off their shoulders (sigh of relief when I heard that!). Simply because I'd told them that, in my view, there was nothing wrong with their child not flourishing in school. Many children don't.

Despite the obvious difficulties with choosing such an unconventional path, they'd decided without a doubt that they wanted a part of the happy, healthy and fulfilling education that our family enjoys so much!

Ross Mountney <http://rossmountney.wordpress.com>

(Ross has since written 2 books on Home Education, available through the EO Amazon Store)

# \* \* \* Spring Crossword Puzzle \* \* \*



## \* \* Clues \* \*

### Across

1. We hope the skies will be this shade of blue
2. A nest thief seldom heard these days
3. Light rainfall
4. Baby leaves and flowers tightly furled
5. Now we have more of this morning & evening
6. Baby birds of all shapes and sizes

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

### Down

1. Tiny orange & purple blooms in grass
2. English men dancing to tradition
3. In May, English girls traditionally dance around this
4. A delicious symbol of new life
5. Wordsworth's famous poem features these flowers
6. Small animal delivers eggs at Easter
7. Birds are busy doing this in Spring.
8. Another flower grown from bulbs
9. Spring forward an hour around the solstice
10. Bouncing baby sheep!

## Makes & Bakes

To Alleviate Boredom, Hunger...Or Both!

**Wristband or Cuff** ~ Carol Davies and her daughter Amber sent in some great ideas for the newsletter! This is a lovely idea I would never have thought of before – Cut the elasticated top part off a sock – Neaten the raw edge – Decorate with whatever you like – beads, flowers, buttons, ribbon, etc. And you have a cute and fashionable wristband/cuff!

**Bangles** ~ Another idea from Carol and Amber! Don't throw away the spool from the middle of a large reel of sticky tape – Instead cover it with strips of newspaper and diluted PVA glue. When thoroughly dry it can be painted or decorated with patterned paper and glitter etc. then sealed with varnish to make a unique bangle!

**Decorated plant pots** ~ Now Spring is in the air, pots of seedlings might make a brave appearance again! Give plain terracotta or plastic flowerpots a wash, then when dry, paint on a coat or 2 of white emulsion paint for a base-coat (first seal the inside of a terracotta pot with varnish), then decorate with painted patterns, words, pictures, paper cutouts – whatever you fancy. Household emulsion tester post have a great range of colours to use. Seal with varnish to withstand the weather better, but treat gently if you want your design to last long.

**Coasters** ~ For all those dribblesome cups. Old t-shirts are in abundance here, many of them quite sad looking. Cut 3 squares from a teeshirt, about 5" (12cm) square – they won't be seen so don't worry about what they look like. Stack them together and sandwich them in between 2 more squares of woven fabric – the top piece pretty – the bottom piece plain. Sew all the layers together with simple running stitches, in 3 evenly spaced lines, using embroidery thread if you like. To neaten the edges of the coaster, bind with a strip of fabric or more simply, cut the bottom, plain piece of fabric 2" (4cm) bigger all around than the other squares, and when they're all sewn together, fold the extra fabric border inwards, and then over the cut edges of the other squares, and sew it down to the top of the coaster, with running stitch again.

**Hot Cross Bun Pudding** ~ Split 6 hot cross buns in half and butter them. Butter a medium sized oven proof dish and lay the sliced buns, butter side up, slightly overlapping to fit the dish. Sprinkle with 4 desert spoons of brown sugar. In a large jug or bowl, whisk together 2 eggs, 2 mugs of milk (or half and half milk and cream) and a few drops of vanilla essence. Pour over the buns in the dish, sprinkle with another 4 dessert spoons of sugar, and leave to soak for half an hour. Bake in a pre-heated oven for about an hour, at 180 C/Gas 4/160 fan/350 F

## Home Education Around the World – Australia

To me, Australia has always been the epitome of a home educating nation. Long before I had children myself, I had heard about the remote farms on this continent, where children live so far from town they have to be taught at home, via radio instructors. This system is actually still in place today; in fact celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2011. It is called the *School of the Air* correspondence course and does not require registration as a home educator, because it falls under state supervision and as such is virtually a school at home approach. So, no surprise then that home education is not only legal, but very well organised in Australia, with state aid regarding curriculum support, test facilities, college and university acceptance, as well as plenty of support groups in all six states and several of the territories on this continent.

The HEA, Home Education Association (non-profit, volunteer-led, founded in 2001), takes an active part in shaping the overall policies, in addition to the informational and educational content available for parents. Small wonder that there are an estimated 15,000 home educating families overall, so the HEA claims (HSDLA states 30,000 but this includes correspondence school pupils). The states and territories have individual laws in place regarding registration and school leaving age, but all have websites where this information is readily available. On registration, parents even get a certificate for being their child's educator!

So, is Australia the home-school paradise that it seems to be? Not quite. There have been attempts to undermine parental influence, and most recently the state of New South Wales has tried to change its education laws without consulting any home educators, restricting home education significantly by prescribing certain aspects of the curriculum. This has caused an outcry in the very well organized home ed. community. Even so, the number of home educators has gone up by 65 percent in the last four years, and home education is also booming in Western Australia, with more people willing to register.

### Links:

- A mine of information: <http://www.hea.edu.au/>
- General overview:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homeschooling\\_international\\_status\\_and\\_statistics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homeschooling_international_status_and_statistics)
- HSDLA, a (Christian) home ed law support organisation:  
<http://www.hslda.org/hs/international/Australia/default.asp>
- Department of Education, very comprehensive website:  
<http://www.det.wa.edu.au/homeeducation/detcms/portal/>
- The Christian home schooling group claims to be the largest in the country:  
<http://www.achs.edu.au/>
- Yahoo group for South Australia (membership approval necessary):  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/home-education-sa/info>
- Yahoo group for the Perth region (membership approval necessary):  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/HBLNPerth/info>

## Penny Pinchers

Tips for Education & Life On a Budget

**Mending Clothes** ~ Another great tip sent in by Carol Davies and her daughter Amber – this is something I confess I had forgotten I could do! I now wish I hadn't thrown away my trousers when they got a hole in them – because I could have used a piece of similar material, and sewn a patch over the hole! Which would have been another good way to use one of those old t-shirts my son grew out of – I'll know next time....

**Hankies** ~ Or handkerchiefs, to give them their proper name. When I was a young child, paper tissues weren't normally used – we had loads of very pretty hankies! A few years ago, when I was getting through 5 boxes of tissues a week (do the maths!) I decided to go back to hankies, to save money. Old t-shirts are actually PERFECT for this. No hemming needed – nice and soft – easy to wash: just cut them to whatever size you want, and blow.

**Use it up** ~ Sometimes I challenge myself to NOT do a weekly food shop. Sometimes I leave it just one day longer, and see what I can make from what is in the cupboard/fridge already.....and then I'll leave it just one MORE day.....and one more.....and pretty soon I have gone a week with what I already had in stock, and saved the cost of my weekly shop! Admittedly, those weeks we do have some VERY strange meals by about day 4 of my 'experimental cookery'. Some are borderline edible in fact – but we survive the horrors and have a dish of cereals for supper! And really, when I get to my normal shopping day again and realise I've saved about £50 – I don't mind the strange meals so much!

**Pasta** ~ There is a good reason why large, Italian families invented so many delicious ways of serving pasta: because it's also cheap – cheaper than chips in fact! We use it instead of chips or potatoes. Just add oil, salt & pepper to cooked pasta, and smother in ketchup (Basics ketchup of course!) Or mix a dessert spoon of tomato puree with a little boiling water, and stir it into the cooked pasta – herbs optional.

**The Licence Fee** ~ I don't have a TV licence, or watch TV any more of course .....But I do watch catchup TV on my computer the day after broadcast! BBC i-player, 4-OD etc. have saved me a small fortune. Obviously I have to pay for broadband internet, but with unlimited free phone calls, that's a bargain too (BT) and the broadband is unlimited too, which is handy for all that 'money-saving' online shopping I do.....

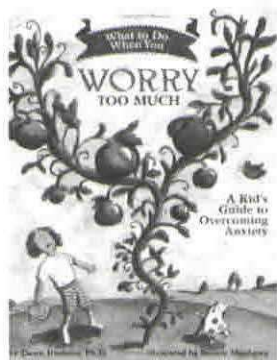
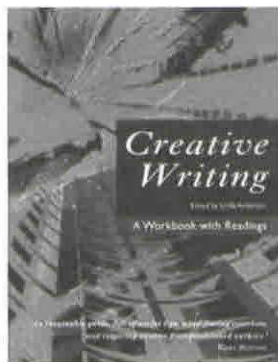


## World Book Day

March 6th, World Book Day, is fast approaching. As usual the World Book Day team have put together a fantastic selection of books to excite children and adults alike! A full list of the books is available at [www.worldbookday.com](http://www.worldbookday.com). All the books are £1 (or one WBD token) and will be available from major supermarkets and booksellers. Home educated children are entitled to the vouchers and there are details on the website about how to register to receive them for next year. We would love your reviews of the World Book Day books or of any books that you and your family have read and enjoyed. Please send reviews to [bookreviews@educationotherwise.org](mailto:bookreviews@educationotherwise.org). Happy Reading!!!

## Book Reviews

3 inspiring, educational books which are suitable for adults or children of all ages – Do not let illustrations put you off – they are not just for the kids, even if that's what is says on the cover!



### **What To Do When You Worry Too Much**

Auth: Dawn Huebner

RRP: £15.50

Pub: Magination Press

ISBN 10: 1591473144

ISBN 13: 9781591473145

Worries are often irrational and seemingly grow out of control. If you or your child are a compulsive worrier, then this book contains great advice to help you take control of anxiety. My teenage son scorned to read such a 'baby book' (it is very well illustrated !) but I digested it in principle and used the advice from it to help him beat his fears. It is fantastic for all ages, although presented in a format designed to appeal to younger children (also quite American in tone and vocabulary). Don't let that or the price put you off, as this book really is a life-changer, especially when your local child mental health teams have let you down. Now does anyone fancy a tomato sandwich? Which leads me neatly to my next book.....

### **Beginners Cookbook**

Auth: Fiona Watt

RRP: £12.99

Pub: Usborne

ISBN 10: 0746085389

ISBN 13: 9780746085387

Introducing children and 'kitchen-shy adults' to essential cookery skills with a wonderful selection of recipes, all beautifully illustrated step-by-step, with mouthwatering photography too! Also contains lots of advice and tips on food-preparation, nutrition and healthy eating, and safety in the kitchen. There is a great variety of recipes, from sweet to savoury, and from snacks to full meals, including lots of vegetarian options, and home baking - ensuring there is something to tempt everyone. A good-sized book, the spiral-bound format makes it easy to use in the kitchen too. Next stop, Masterchef?

### **Creative Writing**

Ed: Linda Anderson

RRP: £27.99

Pub: Routledge

ISBN 10: 0415372437

ISBN 13: 9780415372435

Particularly suited to those working alone, as it is the core text for an Open University creative writing course, this would be an excellent guide for the creative older child (or parent!) who enjoys reading and writing. Essentially a workbook, the first part contains many interesting and inspiring exercises for flexing writing 'muscles', whilst the second part of the book contains associated excerpts to read, from the work of established authors and poets. The workbook takes you from wondering how to get started, through to advice on presentation and publication, in 3 main genres; fiction, poetry and life-writing. The majority of exercises are designed to take from 10 minutes to an hour, and may be repeated as many times as you like, often leading to new ideas and ways of working.

Although quite expensive, it is a very hefty book – and far, far cheaper than many creative writing correspondence courses out there. The only thing missing is a tutor/mentor – but the book encourages a self-reflective attitude, and each of the exercises is followed by a 'discussion' section encouraging you to review your own work alone, but also ideal for real discussion.

## Our 'Key to Life'

As I sit tight, enclosed by the comforting old stone cottage walls, I see overgrown sun-dried grass waving to me. In front of that, a back drop of lush fields full of Aberdeen Angus cattle grazing contentedly. In the distance what appears to be an endless sky reflects in the blue waters that surround this part of Orkney. In the foreground a young man appears, bouncing up and down, up and down. He's been on that trampoline for at least an hour.

I'm out visiting friends for a couple of days; their sons were periodically home schooled too. There are not many of us up here, so it's a bit of a solitary existence. Was it worth it for them? Have the boys, now aged 21 and 25, gained a better quality of life? It's a difficult question to answer. What I do know is that with lots of determination, dedication and effort we can allow our children to move on to an adult life that is joyful and fulfilled. These two have anyway. Set up with a little croft to take over, with some cattle to tend, along with a vegetable plot overlooking the sheltered bay, where inquisitive seals keep a keen eye on their work.

Our latest project is taking part in the 'Take a Deep Breath' performance, to celebrate the coming 2014 Commonwealth Games. A week of dancing with a group called Indepen-dance from Glasgow, who run dance projects for special needs adults, their families and carers. Their work now acknowledged in the latest government guideline document 'The Keys to Life'. Published in March 2013, it highlights the improved health and wellbeing which dance gives their clients, alongside their model of good practise in providing positive employment opportunities for adults with special needs.

Well I guess life sounds idyllic here, but it's certainly not always. Prejudice, fear, regulations and simple naivety towards adults with special needs forces many families to withdraw from 'the system'. We never entered the system, and don't plan to in the near future. The only 'special need' we have is to do it our own way! Acknowledging others who do it successfully too goes a long way towards changing attitudes. As Bob Dylan sang; "The times they are a changing".

*Emma H. - Orkney*

More information:

[www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk) search for "Keys to Life"

[www.indepen-dance.org.uk](http://www.indepen-dance.org.uk)

[www.orcadian.co.uk](http://www.orcadian.co.uk) photo archive "Take a deep Breath"

## EO SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) News

More interesting updates with the ongoing SEN reforms! Will the new code of practice be suitable for helping those children who really need that help? Near the end of last year, a leading disabled children's organisation (CDC, Council for Disabled Children) thought not:

### Statement from the Special Educational Consortium on the draft Code of Practice

*SEC would be unable to support the draft Code of Practice if it was laid before Parliament for approval in its current form. While SEC notes that some of the content has improved since the indicative Code was published in March 2013, the overwhelming view of members is that the draft Code now out for consultation does not fulfil its fundamental purpose as statutory guidance because:*

- 1) The draft Code does not tell professionals what they need to do to enable children and young people with SEN to get the most from their education.*
- 2) The Code is not written in a way that would help parents and young people understand what they are entitled to.*
- 3) The legal duties in the Children and Families Bill and the draft SEN regulations are not clearly explained.*

*SEC accepts that this is a draft and that we have opportunity to feed into the Department for Education's consultation process. Nevertheless, SEC believes that there will need to be significant redrafting and restructuring if the final Code of Practice is to work for children and young people with SEN. As currently drafted it will not achieve this. We are asking the Department for Education to work with us to identify how SEC members can be best involved during the redrafting period and in advance of the publication of the final version.*

Also published, around that time, was the section 251: 'Information about budget and statements on the planned and expected expenditure of local authority education and children's social care functions, as required under Section 251 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.' This gives the impression that there maybe payments for 'home educated children:

### 1.2.5 SEN support services

*Include the costs of non-delegated centrally retained specialist SEN support services for statemented and non- statemented pupils, whether supported directly by the LA or commissioned by them. This will include services for visual, hearing and physical impairment, specific learning difficulties, speech, language and communication, profound and severe learning difficulties, and autism.*

*Include the costs of these services for 0-5 year olds.*

*Include any costs of providing these services to home educated children.*

*Include the costs of EY SENCOs who are centrally managed across a number of EY providers*

*Do not include the costs of behaviour support services which are not in support of SEN.*

Maybe the CDC's statement had an impact on the Department for Education. No sooner had we gone into the new year, when this news was sent out:

**New £30 million fund for more than 1,800 independent supporters to help parents navigate the new special educational needs process.**

*More than 1,800 champions will be on hand from this September to help parents navigate the new*

special educational needs process following a £30 million funding boost, announced today by Children and Families Minister Edward Timpson.

The £30 million will be used to recruit and train a pool of 'independent supporters' - champions drawn from independent voluntary, community and private organisations to help the families of children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) through the new process following comprehensive reforms to support.

Edward Timpson, Minister for Children and Families, said:

"Our new £30 million fund will allow families to access help and support from more than 1,800 fully-trained 'champions' across the country. I know from speaking to many parents how much they value any support in helping them access the services their children need.

Independent supporters will be able to spend one-to-one time with families giving them the independent help and advice they need to progress through the new SEN assessment and education, health and care planning process. This will ensure that every child and young person with SEN can take full advantage of our reforms.

Independent supporters will be available every step of the way for families as they navigate the new system, which will provide much greater integration of vital services and one system for children and young people with SEN from birth to 25.

Where there is disagreement, independent supporters will also make sure councils understand what families want, and help families to challenge decision making so children with SEN receive the support they really need."

The Council for Disabled Children (CDC) will ensure that a range of organisations provide this totally independent help, overseeing the recruitment and training of the independent supporters - around 12 per area - in time for the implementation of our comprehensive SEN reforms.

Christine Lenehan, Council for Disabled Children's director said:

"Council for Disabled Children is pleased to be leading on this piece of work alongside its remit as the department's strategic reform partner. Independent support will become a valuable resource to help and support parents of children with SEN and young people, parent partnership services and local authorities, as we all move towards implementing the reforms and local offer. We look forward to working with a wide range of private, voluntary and community sector partners as we develop proposals further."

The Children and Families Bill, which is currently progressing through Parliament, will make significant improvements to the support available for children with SEN, including:

Replacing SEN statements and learning disability assessments with a new birth to 25 education, health and care plan - setting out in one place all the support families will receive.

Requiring better co-operation between councils and health services to make sure services for children and young people with SEN and disabilities are jointly planned and commissioned.

Giving parents and young people with education, health and care plans the offer of a personal budget - putting families firmly in charge.

Requiring councils to publish a 'local offer' showing the support available to all disabled children and young people and their families in the area - not just those with educational needs.

Introducing mediation for disputes, and trialling giving children and young people the right to appeal if they are unhappy with their support.

*Introducing a new legal right for children and young people with an education, health and care plan, to express a preference for state academies, free schools and further education colleges. This is currently limited to maintained mainstream and special schools.*

*In addition, the Council for Disabled Children will now trial the training, recruitment and funding allocation, which will conclude in the Spring.*

*Also this Spring, the Council for Disabled Children will invite applications from private, voluntary and community sector organisations who believe they can offer independent supporters from within their ranks.*

### Some FAQs compiled by IPSEA

**Myth:** *'Fewer children and young people will get an Education, Health and Care Plan than get a Statement of special educational needs.'*

The legal criteria for an Education, Health and Care Plan will be the same as the current criteria for a Statement. If a child currently has a Statement of SEN, unless there is evidence that their needs have changed, they should be entitled to an EHC Plan.

**Myth:** *'After a child turns 16 a parent CANNOT be involved in decisions about their child's support'*

Young people can continue to have their parents as involved as much as they want.

The difference is, when a person with an Education, Health and Care plan turns 16 years old, they have the final say (subject to a young person's mental capacity). A parent will not automatically be involved in the process, eg: the right of appeal to challenge a Local Authority decision to the SEND Tribunal will be the young person's right, no longer the parents right.

**Myth:** *'All parents and young people with a Plan will be able to access direct payments'*

All parents and young people will be able to request a personal budget where an EHC plan is in place. A personal budget is an amount identified by the Local Authority as being available to secure particular provision that is specified, or proposed to be specified, in the EHC plan. Once identified, parents and young people can then request that some or all aspects of the personal budget be converted into a direct payment, but the Local Authority and the education provider, where relevant, must agree to this and have significant discretion about what they agree to.

**Myth:** *'ALL young people who have the new Education, Health and Care plans in school will have a plan until they are 25'*

An Education, Health and Care plan will continue only for young people who choose to stay in education or training. For most young people this will be further education college or an apprenticeship.

<http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/media/525596/sec-statement-on-the-draft-code-of-practice.doc>

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/financialmanagement/schoolsrevenuefundin g/section251> [http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/doc/s/s251guidance%202014-15%20v10%20draft %2020%2012%2013.doc](http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/doc/s/s251guidance%202014-15%20v10%20draft%2020%2012%2013.doc)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/30-million-for-new-special-educational-needs-champions>

<http://www.ipsea.org.uk/>

<http://www.ipsea.org.uk/AssetLibrary/News/C%20and%20F%20Bill%20Myths%201.pdf>

**If you would like to contribute to EO SEND, please contact Edwina:**

[e.theunissen@educationotherwise.org](mailto:e.theunissen@educationotherwise.org)

## CRITERIA for LOCAL GROUP LISTING on EO WEBSITE

### ***Is your Local Home Education Group listed on the EO website? If so, PLEASE READ ...***

While we welcome the increasing diversity of HE groups and other alternative education resources, this has meant that some anomalies have crept in to the EO website listing of HE groups, and we feel that clarification is needed.

Inclusion in the list is dependant upon the group being organised in accordance with the general understanding of a Home Education Group, that is:

- A group of home educating families providing mutual support, sharing information and resources, whether by electronic means or by meeting for social and educational activities.
- Activities are free (or at small contribution to cover costs); parents attend with their children, who are of mixed ages.
- Usually, activities take place at a variety of venues, are organised by different parents and open to all local HE families.

These are essential criteria for the EO website Local Group listing.

Please note, we do require two named contact people for the group, with email and/or phone details, to ensure we can keep in touch with you, though these do not need to be shown in the public entry (the email contact form is directed to one of the given email addresses).

Further information about your Home Ed group should give an indication of what kind of activities take place and how it is organised, so that potential members can make an informed choice as to whether they wish to join your group. Where Facebook or other social media are mentioned, this should be part of the general group description and not as a replacement for Yahoo group/email/phone/website.

PLEASE NOTE – alternative/small/free schools/learning centres (e.g. where activities are organised only at a specified venue, requiring fees with a fixed course commitment/timetable, and children are left without parents) do NOT qualify for HE group listing. Nor do websites, Facebook pages etc. that simply list books/resources/equipment/etc. If you are unsure, please email the Local Groups Co-ordinator with a full description.

Organisers of Local HE Groups are asked to check their entries on the EO website AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, to ensure that they conform to the above criteria and that the contact information is up to date and accessible. If you find that amendments are required, please email the Local Groups Co-ordinator as soon as possible: EO Local Groups [eolg@educationotherwise.org](mailto:eolg@educationotherwise.org)

**GROUPS THAT DO NOT SUPPLY THE REQUESTED INFORMATION, OR APPEAR NOT TO FIT THE DESCRIPTION ABOVE, WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE EO LISTING BY 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014.**

*(though of course you are free to re-apply if you missed the deadline!)*

***Do you run a local group with other home educating families?*** If so and you'd like an entry on the local groups list on the website (and in the newsletter), please complete the application form on the website by choosing 'HE Groups [Area]' from the left hand menu at: <http://www.educationotherwise.net>

## 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.org](http://www.educationotherwise.org)**

**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: [eolg@educationotherwise.org](mailto:eolg@educationotherwise.org)**

### England

#### Bedfordshire

**Christian Home Ed** – Scott and Rachel, [scottandrachel@ntlworld.com](mailto:scottandrachel@ntlworld.com)

**Busy B-Hes** – Weekly drop-in offering chats and support; activities. Pauline 01234 720819 / 07976 026167 [p.curl28@btinternet.com](mailto: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](http://www.expandinghorizonsuk.com) : Rebecca 01494 882484, [expandinghorizonsuk@gmail.com](mailto:expandinghorizonsuk@gmail.com)

**Heroes-HE** – weekly Home Education Club at animal farm, with workshops, etc. [www.heroesberkshire.co.uk/homeeducators.html](http://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](mailto:carla-maria@blueyonder.co.uk)

**Bristol Home Education Co-op** – contact point for 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@yahoogroups.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](mailto: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](http://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>

**High Wycombe Home Educators** – for HERs in & around High Wycombe <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>

Georgianne 01908 662256 [sienna-swift7@powernet.co.uk](mailto:sienna-swift7@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](http://www.cambshomeed.co.uk) Jane: [cambshomeed@gmail.com](mailto:cambshomeed@gmail.com)

**Cambridge Home Educating Families (CHEF)** – for parents/carers who HE or considering HE. <http://www.cambridgehomeeducators.org.uk/>  
Morag: 01223 464918 [morag2000@hotmail.com](mailto:morag2000@hotmail.com)

**Cambridge Home Educating Community Activity List** – summary of sessions and regular groups in Cambridge [www.educationchoice.org.uk](http://www.educationchoice.org.uk)  
Karen: 01223 573220 [karen@karenrogers.co.uk](mailto: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, [southcheshirehe@gmail.com](mailto:southcheshirehe@gmail.com)  
<http://www.southcheshirehe.btck.co.uk/>

#### Cornwall

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

**Lastwithiel area H.E. group** – New group just starting up - come along and help! Contact: Craig, [hyrax@hatmail.co.uk](mailto:hyrax@hatmail.co.uk)

#### Cumbria

**Cumbria Home Educators** – Meets fortnightly near Kendal and in Penrith. Trips and interesting activities around Cumbria and further afield <http://www.communitate.co.uk/lakes/cumbriahomeed/>  
**West Cumbria Home Educators** – (including Keswick). Mutual support for HERs in West Cumbria : [WestCumbriaHomeEd@gmail.com](mailto: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

**Unschooling Exeter** – A new group in Exeter. Contact: Zion, [zio.lights@gmail.com](mailto:zio.lights@gmail.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/552587398141482/>

**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 [lindnich@tesco.net](mailto:lindnich@tesco.net)

**Exeter Home Education Community** Wednesday drop-in; GCSE; green woodwork permaculture pottery & more. [nbedford@btinternet.com](mailto:nbedford@btinternet.com)  
<http://exeterhomeeducationcommunity.co.uk> Neil 01363 82314

**Freedom Fields EHE** – Weekly social group, for accompanied children. [http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/PlymouthUK\\_HomeEd/](http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/PlymouthUK_HomeEd/)

**Stover HE Group** – Stover/ Newton Abbot. Informal educational and social meets in local and surrounding areas.  
[stoverhegroup@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:julia@classroomfree.co.uk)

**Dartmoor and SW Home Education Group** – Based in S Dartmoor, local and area groups & resources, plus promotion of your groups.

<http://dartmoor-sw-he-group.yolasite.com/>  
Contact: [dartmoor.sw.he.group@gmail.com](mailto:dartmoor.sw.he.group@gmail.com)

**South Devon Home Education Group** – <http://www.southdevonhomeeducation.co.uk/>  
Helen 01803 390639 [helenlloyd-hoare@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:helenlloyd-hoare@blueyonder.co.uk)

**FLAGS Home Education Group** – Exeter, every Friday - A friendly group for children of all ages. Contact: Lisa 07969299543 or Sue [su.gold777@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:su.gold777@yahoo.co.uk)

<http://www.homeeducationexeter.com/>

## Dorset

**HEoND**, Home Educators of North Dorset, friendly group meeting on a regular basis in Sturminster Newton.  
[www.groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/HeoND/info](http://www.groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/HeoND/info)

**Bournemouth HEED** – Weekly Monday meetings Carol 01202 677066  
[carolstone@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:carolstone@yahoo.co.uk)

**HERA** – friendly group based in Creekmoor Poole. Weekly workshops and activities + outings and events. [www.heradorset.shutterfly.com](http://www.heradorset.shutterfly.com)  
**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/Bournemouth\\_and\\_PooleHomeEducators/?yqid=419936795](http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/Bournemouth_and_PooleHomeEducators/?yqid=419936795). Emma: [bmth.home.ed@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://www.adifferentclass.org)  
**Haverhill HE group** – Covering South Suffolk/North Essex.  
Eve 01440 788228 or 07768 763913 [wixde@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:wixde@yahoo.co.uk)  
**WIGWAM Epping Forest** – A weekly informal drop-in group. Eleanor Stapleton 07866 701442 [elmajose2@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:elmajose2@yahoo.co.uk)  
**Southeast HE Group** – Meets weekly. Lots of outings and activities.  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/southeasthomeeducation/southeasthomeeducation@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](mailto:brookesfam@tiscali.co.uk)  
**Forest of Dean HE group** – Bridge and dam building river clearance fire building woodland walks etc. Roxy [cdsnhf@googlemail.com](mailto:cdsnhf@googlemail.com)  
**Stroud email list** Nick 01453 840036 [nick.weir@localfood.org.uk](mailto:nick.weir@localfood.org.uk)  
**Cirencester and Cotswold group** – Meetings plus will answer HE queries. Pam 01285 721008 [pamela.perryman@gmail.com](mailto:pamela.perryman@gmail.com)

## Hampshire

**Hampshire FRHEBEES** – Free Range & Home Educated Bees. West Hampshire area and borders to arrange meet ups and activities.  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FRHEBEES/>  
**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](mailto: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](mailto:herefordhe@gmail.com)  
**Monmouth 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](mailto:newhomeeducators@gmail.com)

## Isle of Wight

**Isle of Wight Learning Zone** – A network of HE families.  
<http://www.iwlearningzone.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](mailto:Karen@curvespace.com) or 01983 568516

## Kent

**Rochester Group** – Weekly meetings Tues. afternoon Contact: Sally:  
[sally\\_wilson@lineone.net](mailto:sally_wilson@lineone.net)

**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: [stephgater@rocketmail.com](mailto:stephgater@rocketmail.com) 01304 814362.  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/dragonflykidzhomeeducationgroup/>  
**Kent ASD Home Ed** – For parents/carers of ASD/Aspergers children who are educating their '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/>  
Contact Esther: [e\\_selhi@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:e_selhi@yahoo.co.uk)

**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: [southeasthomeeducators-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:southeasthomeeducators-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)  
Or contact: Lesley Herriot [lesley294@aol.com](mailto: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/>

## Lancashire

**LEAD Home Education** – swap ideas, share stories and arrange local social gatherings. [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lead\\_he/](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-io/>

## 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: [mrsamarshall@googlemail.com](mailto:mrsamarshall@googlemail.com)  
**Charnwood & Melton Yahoo Group** – many home ed groups, gatherings and Events. Vikki, [wikkiamartin@googlemail.com](mailto:wikkiamartin@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>

## Lincolnshire

**Lincolnshire HE** – <http://www.home-ed.ukf.net/index.htm>  
**Home Ed Lincs** – Yahoo! news group coordinating HE activities in Lincolnshire. [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/home\\_ed\\_lincs/](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](mailto: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](mailto:homeschool.lincolnshire@outlook.com)

## London

**Markfield - Portland H.E. Group** For children under 12yrs. Contact: Shelly - [Shellydonael@gmail.com](mailto:Shellydonael@gmail.com).

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

**Brandram Roaders** - Weekly meetings in term time. [rubbyradburn@hotmail.com](mailto:rubbyradburn@hotmail.com)

**Haringey Home Education Club** - meetings and other events <http://www.hhec.org.uk/> [@hhec.org.uk](mailto:@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](mailto:iberritt@gmail.com)

**WIGWAM** Jubilee Park N9. Informal drop-in group for families with children of any age. Eleanor Stapleton 07866 701442 [elmajose2@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:elmajose2@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](http://www.iflow-he.org) Email: [welcometoflow@gmail.com](mailto: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/](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](http://www.ohed.org.uk) Louisa: [louisa.southey@gmail.com](mailto: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/>

[tauntonhomeeducation@yahoo.com](mailto:tauntonhomeeducation@yahoo.com) <http://tauntonhomeed.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](mailto:tauntonfreerangekids@yahoo.co.uk)

**HEY Yeovil** - All HE families welcome. Lyn Crocker 01963 23669 [heyevuil@hotmail.com](mailto:heyevuil@hotmail.com)

**Wells Swimming Group** - Weekly swimming Wells Leisure Centre term time only. Lesley 01749 689241 [mumfordturner@hotmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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.

Contact: AJ. 01761 413316 [ajlewisatwell@hotmail.com](mailto:ajlewisatwell@hotmail.com)

<http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/Mendiphomeed/info>

## Suffolk

**Dennington HE Group** - Wide range of activities all ages welcome. Janet 01728 638795 [janetlomas@gmail.com](mailto:janetlomas@gmail.com)

**Haverhill HE group** - Covering South Suffolk/North Essex.

Eve 01440 788228 or 07768 763913 [wixde@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:wixde@yahoo.co.uk)

**Ipswich Wednesdays** - Shared lunch and activities. £3.50 per family. Contact Helen: [helen@design256.com](mailto:helen@design256.com)

**Ipswich town centre group + Book Club** - Lisa 07538 102322

[llw\\_llg@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:llw_llg@yahoo.co.uk)

**Tostock HE Group** - All families welcome to this very friendly group. Jan 01359 251184 [angusto@btinternet.com](mailto:angusto@btinternet.com)

## Surrey

**Dorking Home Educators** - Meet fortnightly in Dorking. Social and pre-booked activities. Regular outings and trips. Contact: Amanda:

[schrodingerscat81@hotmail.com](mailto:schrodingerscat81@hotmail.com)

[www.facebook.com/groups/113572308842436](http://www.facebook.com/groups/113572308842436)

<http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/DorkingHomeEducators/>

**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](mailto: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](mailto: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://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](mailto:ingrid.meaker@mac.com)

## 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](http://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/forestrowhomeeducators>

**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](http://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](mailto: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

**Chapmanslade HE group.** For anyone Home Educating (or considering it) in town and surrounding area. Meetings twice monthly – Facebook: Chapmanslade Home Education Group. Or Contact: Maria, [maria@trivialbusiness.co.uk](mailto:maria@trivialbusiness.co.uk)

**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.dilloway@yahoo.com](mailto:dee.dilloway@yahoo.com), 0753 260317

## Worcestershire

**Bewdley HE Group** – Weekly meetings, social/activities etc. all welcome. Sophie 01299 405669, [sophiebutcher29@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sophiebutcher29@yahoo.co.uk)  
**Worcestershire Home Ed** Yahoo Group Email list for Worcs HERS: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/worcestershirehome-ed/>

## Yorkshire

**HEDG** – Home Education Doncaster Group. Regular H.E. meetups and outings Doncaster & surrounding area. See our Facebook or <http://www.homeeducationdoncaster.co.uk/>, or contact: Gillian, [gillycooper@hotmail.com](mailto:gillycooper@hotmail.com) 07938 007306

**DHE** Doncaster home educators Yahoo group for families in the Doncaster and surrounding areas. Cheryl Moy on 07825 914340 [cheryl0407@aol.com](mailto: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](mailto:lisa_riley@tiscali.co.uk) [henney-owner@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto: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/yorkshirehomededers/>  
**NYHEC (group for HE parents)** – for parents HEing in North Yorkshire. [nyhecowner@yahoo.com](mailto: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 [colleecandydog123@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:colleecandydog123@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](mailto: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](mailto:karenlow@uwclub.net)  
**ActiveEO** HE Group based in West Sussex and Hampshire. Contact number 01243 552780 <http://www.activeeo.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 [homeeducatingmum@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:homeeducatingmum@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. [southdevonlc@gmail.com](mailto:southdevonlc@gmail.com) <http://hecontactssandeventssw.yolasite.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](mailto:isleofmanlc@educationotherwise.org) <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/hen-iaom/>

## Wales

### Carmarthenshire

**Carmarthen HE Group** – Regular meetings in Johnstown Carmarthen [caroline.milburn@yahoo.com](mailto: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. [vivodasm@gmail.com](mailto:vivodasm@gmail.com)

### Flintshire

**Flintshire Home Education** – Regular meet ups activities & support. [flintshirehomeeducation@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:flintshirehomeeducation@yahoo.co.uk)

### Glamorgan

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

### Gwynedd

**Langower HE Group** – Weekly meetings. [rowenna73@hotmail.com](mailto:rowenna73@hotmail.com)  
**Creative Learning and Support** – Now meet 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: [cdsnhf@gmail.com](mailto:cdsnhf@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](mailto: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.zaneseven.co.uk> [ianna.violet@hotmail.com](mailto:ianna.violet@hotmail.com)

#### Powys

**New Leaf HE Group** (Newtown) – Occasional meetings for varied activities all ages. [siouxcatsy@yahoo.co.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.newfoundationshe.com)  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/329840653796249/>  
Jayne: [newfoundationshe@virginmedia.com](mailto:newfoundationshe@virginmedia.com) Or 02920216502

#### Channel Islands

**Home Education Jersey** – New home education group. Jess: [homeeducationjersey@gmail.com](mailto: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 [Atpllr@hotmail.com](mailto:Atpllr@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](mailto:anitakolaczynska@yahoo.co.uk)

## REMINDER

### PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE FOR LOCAL GROUPS

This benefit for Local Groups run by EO members is still very good value at £10 for the remainder of the year (up to 31<sup>st</sup> August) though renewal for the year from 1<sup>st</sup> September might have to be slightly increased. As it's subsidised from EO funds (which means from the subscriptions EO members pay) there are some terms and conditions – for example, we ask for 3 EO family members to sign up to take responsibility for the group and to keep in contact with us.

We realise that groups have different renewal dates, and you might not have thought of taking up this offer because your existing insurance is still in place. However, if your policy comes up for renewal between now and next summer, please consider taking out the EO group policy instead.

Please don't leave it till the last minute to look at the policy documents and guidance for the EO insurance. We have found that groups take some time to digest the information, and then may have queries. Getting the required three EO member signatures also seems to cause delays.

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 prefer 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 (Anne Rix - acting): [<lgic@educationotherwise.org>](mailto:lgic@educationotherwise.org)



## Who does What in EO

### Current Trustees [Council Members]

**Julie Arnold** (email pending)

**Lei Ashe** (Local Contacts Co-ord)  
lashe@educationotherwise.org

**Beverley Cameron-Young** (Treasurer)  
bcameron-young@educationotherwise.org

**Shena Deuchars** (Membership Sec.)  
sdeuchars@educationotherwise.org

**Hanna Newton**  
hnewton@educationotherwise.org

**Fe Mukwamba-Sendall**  
fsendall@educationotherwise.org

**Jayne Palmer** (email pending)

**Anne Rix** (Chair & Publications Sec.)  
arix@educationotherwise.org

**Edwina Theunissen**  
e.theunissen@educationotherwise.org

**Kathleen Thompson**  
kthompson@educationotherwise.org

N.B. Email to  
[trustees@educationotherwise.org](mailto: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](http://www.educationotherwise.net)

N.B. THIS IS SEPARATE FROM THE EO EMAILS  
AND FORUMS, WHICH ARE STILL BASED ON  
THE OLD URL: [educationotherwise.org](http://educationotherwise.org)

### Membership

Membership enquiries, address changes,  
membership cards, new member admin:  
please contact the Membership Secretary:  
[membership@educationotherwise.org](mailto: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/](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](mailto:e.theunissen@educationotherwise.org)

Flexi-schooling: **Alison Sauer**  
[Alison@sauer.demon.co.uk](mailto:Alison@sauer.demon.co.uk) 01282 854719

Local Contacts Co-ordinator: **Lei Ashe**  
lcco-ordinator@educationotherwise.org

Local Group Insurance: **Anne Rix**  
lgic@educationotherwise.org

Local Groups Listings: **Kennell Family**  
eolg@educationotherwise.org

Newsletter Coordinator: **Edana Edwards (Acting)**  
<[eonews@btinternet.com](mailto:eonews@btinternet.com)>

Publications Secretary: **Anne Rix**  
<[arix@educationotherwise.org](mailto:arix@educationotherwise.org)> 01760 44 18 10

School Anxiety Support: **Jayne Owen** 08445 008469

Single Parent Contact: **Sam Kruger** 08445 003794  
[denbighshire-1c@educationotherwise.org](mailto:denbighshire-1c@educationotherwise.org)

Special Needs: **Denice** [send@educationotherwise.org](mailto:send@educationotherwise.org)  
**Alisa**: 01749 830034 / 07707 060973

SEND email list via: <http://www.he-special.org.uk/>

Volunteer Co-ordinator: **Wendy Knight**  
vol-coordinator@educationotherwise.org

Webmasters: **Louisa and Charles**  
[webmaster@educationotherwise.org](mailto:webmaster@educationotherwise.org)

# 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 a stamped, A5 S.A.E. to:

P.O. BOX 3761  
SWINDON, SN2 9GT

Helpline 0845 4786 345

Web Site: <http://www.educationotherwise.net>

Education Otherwise Association Ltd., Registered Charity No. 1055120

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