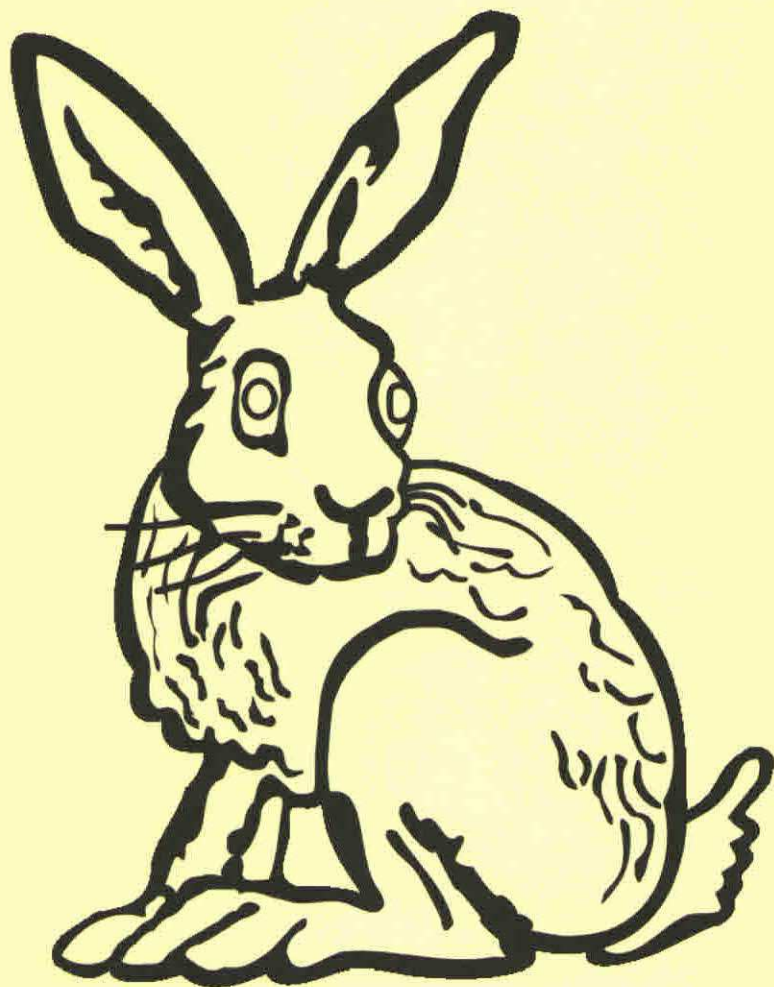


education otherwise



Newsletter Spring 2015

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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, self-addressed envelope. If no acknowledgement is received, or in case of queries, please contact the Publications Secretary (see inside back page). *Please also ensure your EO membership is up to date before submission.*

Deadline for the Summer issue is 1st May 2015

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

Anne Rix (Acting) eonl@educationotherwise.org

[Postal contributions to: EONL Co-ord, PO Box 1309, Blackpool, FY1 9HN]

~~~~~ N.B. postal system subject to forwarding delays ~~~~~

Section Editors

REVIEWS: *Tammy Dolling:* bookreviews@educationotherwise.org

or EO Reviews, PO Box 1309, Blackpool, FY1 9HN

Got an idea for a section you'd like to edit? Contact Publications Secretary (inside back page)

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Co-ordinatorial

As I said back in May 2006 ...

"It's me again – I don't really want to be doing this on top of my Council commitments, and in any case it's not good practice for NL Co-ord to be the same person as Publications Sec."

In fact, I've said the same thing (or something very similar) several times over the last twelve years – oh yes, I've had plenty of practice in co-ordinating the NL!

Fiona has looked after the newsletter since September 2013, but now needs to move on. She's been a pillar of strength and I am most grateful for her efficiency, goodwill, skill at finding information and resources, and flair for making everything look as good as possible. Not to mention keeping us up to scratch with copyright law – thank you Fiona!

So we urgently need a new co-ordinator who is reasonably proficient in IT, has good literacy skills and is able to work to a fairly tight deadline. Fiona has said she'll be happy to support a new volunteer, and pass on her experience and knowledge.

If you are interested, please get in touch.

Anne Rix, March 2015

EO VOLUNTEER VACANCIES *(We Need You!)*

Newsletter Co-ordinator

To liaise with other members of NL team, prepare copy and ensure it is delivered to printer on time ... further details of what actually happens in practice and FAQs available from Pubs. Sec.
Anne Rix <arix@educationotherwise.org>
or Fiona Stewart <eonews@btinternet.com>

Local Contacts and Helpline Volunteers

Always needed! If you've had support from EO in the past and want to give something back; or you now have enough experience of home education to share with others and want to experience the 'glow' you can get from supporting new home educators, please get in touch to find out more.
Contact: Enquiries@educationotherwise.org

(images in the newsletter from openclipart.org)

The wonder hug poem

by herbie (12)

If you ever feel sad and lonely
Just call out to the wonder hug boy.
He will come, and when he comes
Your heart will fill with joy and happiness
And love. When he hugs you
It's wonderful, it's like your
Fire just started again, it's
Like shedding a skin of coal
And becoming a diamond.
So if you ever meet the wonder hug boy
And if you ever need a hug.
Just ask and the answer will always be yes.

A poem to my lovely parents!!!

***More of your lovely contributions
always wanted, please!***

EHE concerns - What should EO/HERs be doing about it?

EO Trustees have been taking note of and discussing the recent issues around the publication of the NSPCC report (that disastrous, cherry-picked, re-hash of other reports!) and increasing activity by Local Authorities and MPs with regard to their Elective Home Education procedures and Guidelines. But at the moment it's not clear how we should respond to the query above.

One trustee has summarised the issues thus:

The NSPCC report is only one of three things that are causing concern now. The other two have occurred since November. These are:

- Barry Sheerman's call for a parliamentary debate on home education, and
- The launch of the new national Association for Home Education Professionals (AEHEP).

What has happened is that there have been rumblings in certain quarters that have caused some concern. Only last year it was stated (at the Capita Conference) that there is no political will to change the law in relation to home education. However, these three things have cropped up since then.

The main issue that keeps coming up (with Barry Sheerman, the NSPCC report and the AEHEP) is safeguarding, even though there is no evidence to support their belief that home education presents a risk to children. This all comes on the back of the government saying in 2009/10, following the Badman Review, that they would be returning to the issue of home education, after failing to get the recommendations of the review implemented following historic protests from home educators and time running out before the next election.

Most of the people associated with the new National Body for Home Education Professionals are in favour of increased monitoring. If safe guarding is used as an issue to attempt to bring about a change in the legislation surrounding home education, we need to consider how to address it.

At this point we need to be alert rather than alarmed. There are some home educators who remain permanently alert to new developments, and will be very vocal when they feel we need to do something. However, discussion on some of the home education groups on social media show us that not all home educators are convinced that visits will not prevent abuse.

In the meantime, it's a good idea for any EO members who feel able to do so, to go and see our MPs - to let them know that home educators are doing just fine as it is, that we are aware of these rumblings, and explain how we feel about them.

A group of home educators whose constituency MP is David Cameron have recently met with him. Mine is Nick Clegg and I have recently met with him (though still awaiting his written response as to whether there are plans to change the law or guidelines related to home education. So we already have the two leaders of the coalition listening to our concerns.

Jill Ingle

Action for Home Educators ...

In line with EO's long-standing ethos of empowerment, EO trustees have often suggested that if local home educators have an issue with their LA, they should get together and suggest a meeting; also with their MP. Now would seem an ideal moment for EO members to be proactive in contacting their MP or LA. Recently, several LAs have become involved in discussions

with local home educators; sometimes the initiative has come from the LA itself (e.g. Thurrock) but in other areas it's home educators themselves who have asked for meetings. Cambridge home educators have a constructive series of meetings going on with their LA, and a group of home educators in Staffs & Lancs recently had a very encouraging meeting with officials from those LAs, aiming to address problems that have come up in Staffs. Some of these meetings are being reported and discussed on the EO-HE-Support Yahoo! Email list.

In Cambridge, HErs "are totally assured that your attendance will in no way identify you to the LEA, and involuntary registration will absolutely not occur." But others (e.g. Triborough) have insisted that names must be given. It should be pointed out to them that that is unlikely to lead to positive co-operation. It's important for constructive debate that the LA doesn't take this as an opportunity to 'register' those who were previously unknown. Perhaps that's an area where EO (trustees) could help – e.g. with a letter in support of the initiative by local home educators – if needed.

Home educators might also refer their LAs and their MPs to this quotation from a recent debate about education in the House of Lords on 29th January: Lord Lucas (Con) 3:21 pm:

"We have also stuck fast with the important fringes such as home education. I count the noble Lord, Lord Adonis, as someone who laid down the rules on that some time ago: that education in this country is about parents, that parents drive it and the state facilitates, and that if people choose to educate their own children, they are exercising their own responsibilities, not doing something that is out of order. It is enormously important to hold on to the principle that it is about the parent and not the state, and we have done that."

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201415/ldhansrd/text/150129-0002.htm>

Action for Education Otherwise ...

Prior to these recent developments, EO trustees had already decided to put together a document for distribution to all LAs, recognising that this 'push' by LAs and others has been building for some time. Most LAs will say that they understand about EHE (even if we know they don't really!) and that the majority of home educating parents are conscientious, 'teach' the right sort of things, and generally look after their children properly. However, LAs often say they are concerned not for the 'good' majority but for the minority who (they are convinced) use HE as a cover for abuse/neglect/inappropriate education/whatever. The NSPCC report (which seems to be saying that home educated children may be at risk of some kind) is grist to their mill.

The 2007 Guidelines are pretty good for home educators, although (and here we reluctantly agree with LAs) parts of them are confusing and ambiguous. That's why our interpretation, based on experience within the HE community, differs from that taken by many LA officials, who generally have a 'school' background and/or continue to conflate 'education' and 'welfare/safeguarding'.

Also, LAs are worried that if they don't 'monitor' the education (even for families they're not otherwise worried about), they can't fulfil their responsibilities to make sure all children receive an appropriate education – despite that not being within their legal remit.

So those are the issues that we need to address. However, deciding exactly what to say to LAs is something of a headache. Some ideas that have come up are:

- Outline (again!) the variety and individuality of EHE provision, and its unique framework for each child
- Stress the need for staff involved with HE families to be fully aware and trained in the above
- Remind them that home educated children are not isolated and in any case get out and about, are seen by the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker ... clubs, GPs, dentists, librarians ...
- Suggest giving schooled children the same 'right' to be asked about their education as has been proposed for HE children
- Quotations from relevant bits of Human Rights Act (while still in place!)
- Pointers as to how LAs can interpret their existing duties while still respecting the rights (actually, duties!) of parents to choose and deliver an appropriate education for their own children, and to avoid discriminating against HE families
- Comment on the fact that in the few high-profile abuse cases reported by the NSPCC where HE was a factor, there were (almost?) invariably other more disturbing issues of safeguarding, involving several different services, but Local Authorities had not used their existing powers effectively
- Ask whether they can justify further intervention on solid evidence

Comments and further input from EO members would be most welcome!

EO Trustees

P.S. EO trustees contacted the organisers of the new National Association for Elective Home Educational Professionals to ask for an invitation to the launch on 26th February. Their reply was: *"... the AEHEP is launching in February to LA employed staff. At this stage LA staff have not even met to discuss any matters so the launch is a chance for LA folk to meet and network. When we have met as an association for the first time I am certain we will want to engage with all groups such as Education Otherwise to better support parents who wish to take responsibility for their children's education."*

Banana and walnut tea loaf

This is our go-to baking for wintery days when we have friends popping round. It's easy to double up (just make sure you have two 900g loaf tins ready), freezes beautifully and great for getting the kids measuring ingredients. Yum!

'Frazzled'

Ingredients for one tea loaf:

- 100g butter, softened
- 140g light muscovado sugar
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 100g chopped walnuts
- 2 ripe bananas, mashed
- 2 tbsp milk (works well with dairy or non-dairy milk)
- 225g self-raising flour

What to do:

- Turn oven to fan 160/ conventional 180/ gas 4.
- Grease and line a loaf tin.
- Cream together the butter and sugar, then add the eggs.
- Set aside 25g walnuts and fold the rest into the mixture with the bananas, milk and flour.
- Spoon the mixture into the tin and sprinkle the reserved walnuts on top.
- Bake for 55-60 minutes until risen.
- Leave to stand for 10 minutes then turn onto a wire rack to cool completely

Musings of a Permanently Frazzled Mummy

Running a local home-ed group...

As we enter the start of a shiny, new year, I'm very relieved to be able to say that peace is restored in the Permanently Frazzled household, and that I've regained the enjoyment of spending time with my four little ragamuffins. I must admit that it's an easier task when fuelled by the odd glass of vino (well, one has to try to join in with the Christmas spirit!) and having hubby at home definitely helps as well. The whole world seems a slightly rosier place when you're getting a lie-in most mornings and have someone to help share the household chores for a couple of weeks.

Our Christmas highlight was definitely the very unexpected arrival of Santa on Christmas day as we were sitting down to gorge ourselves on pancakes for breakfast. Our tiny conservatory was suddenly filled by a large, red, fluffy object, shouting 'Happy Christmas' over and over, punctuated by a few 'Ho Ho Ho's: Grandpa had left Shropshire just after 7am that morning, driven non-stop for nearly 4 hours, pulled over up our country lane to clamber into his hired red suit, in order to surprise the ragamuffins on their special day. What a star!

Mid-January, and our wonderful Christmas experiences are confined to memory and a collection of crazy photos, and we're firmly back into our weekly routine. Actually, the kids seem to be enjoying an extended holiday, while it's actually only me who seems to be getting back to serious business and buckling down to my ongoing task of running a local home-ed group. 'Eureka!' is in its 4th year now, which seems to be quite a rarity in the world of home-ed.

It all started in the summer of 2011. I'd just given birth to number 4, and wasn't looking forward to spending another winter with little to do in the way of local, indoor, cheap activities for my little gang. We had been part of a local group until a year previously, when the family who'd established the group had left the area, and no one had really felt able to take over the reins. The group had quickly disintegrated into a crazy, free-for-all, kids doing circuits round the walls, kind of chaos. New families joined us, for one week only, and were never seen again. We began struggling to pay the hall hire, so as a group, we decided we had no choice but to fold. Cue a whole winter of struggling to entertain the ragamuffins, on an extremely tight social and fuel budget. It was certainly an interesting time!

So a dear home-ed pal, who I'll call 'Crafty Ali', and I, decided we'd stick out necks out and set up a new group: a bit like when a school is 'fresh started', we figured (and hoped!) that a new group, with a new name, new location, and new 'management', just might have a chance of surviving. At least long enough to get us through the winter of 2011 anyway. We'd worry about the following winter later!

With families in tow, we discussed what we wanted from a group, what our kids wanted from a group, and what we felt was currently missing from the local home-ed scene. We researched possible venues (having a safe outside space was key, so that kids could burn off steam whenever needed), looked into the cost of public liability insurance (EO's is definitely the best deal around!) and started brainstorming what activities we could offer

for the first 3 months. We also spent some time discussing the ethos that we felt a potential new group should have.

We worked out possible ways of charging for attending the group: per child (I'd be pricing myself out with 4 to pay for), per activity (a nightmare to manage), by contribution (way too risky), or per family (our chosen method). Hubby, having a few technical skills, put together a simple, online questionnaire for families to fill in anonymously, and express their opinion as to what was needed, what they'd like, frequency, preferred day and time of the week etc. Crafty Ali and I were absolutely amazed at the positive response: it certainly confirmed that we weren't the only ones missing a local, regular meet-up.

Taking a deep breath, we went for it, and 'Eureka!' opened its doors for the first time in September 2011. We'd both invested in the region of £100, to pay for the first 3 months of hall hire and a year's worth of insurance upfront. We had our metaphorical fingers crossed that we'd be able to make our money back within 5 sessions or so, and then would close the group down if it hadn't really taken off.

We needed 8 families per monthly session to break even - we had 12 families that first month, and apart from one month when the weather was amazingly atrocious, we have grown to an average of 37 families per session, with last December seeing a new record of 50 families! Crafty Ali and I were able to fairly quickly repay what we'd both invested in the group (huge relief!) and 'Eureka!' now pays for itself, with just enough money in the bank account to pay for the odd treat for the kids.

While Crafty Ali and I focus on running 'Eureka!' each month, there are many wonderful families who organise regular sporting, drama, and social events, as well as educational trips to museums and other places of interest, so that there's always something to do, and always some friendly folk to meet up with. We use a local email list to communicate, which provides a quick and easy way for newbies to get involved in the local community and ask for advice, as well as allowing us 'oldies' to keep in touch. We get a lot of traffic on the list but it's great knowing we're part of an enthusiastic and growing community.

So, how has 'Eureka!' managed to not only survive, but thrive, when so many other groups don't make it to their first birthday? Well, it's certainly not down to luck. Crafty Ali and I have toiled, sweated, cried, torn our hair out, and questioned our own sanity on a fairly regular basis. It certainly helps that we started with a very strong friendship and were prepared to be honest and open with each other.

We feel that the biggest factor in its success is down to us establishing the ethos that we wanted for our own children, and sticking rigidly to maintaining that ethos.

We made it clear at the beginning that this was an activity group: children were more than welcome to come along and just enjoy using the excellent outdoor space, (basketball court, football pitch, large field for games, separate play area for littlies and older kids), but that the indoor space was for calm, sensible, behaviour where all ages could enjoy themselves in a respectful environment. This was not, and never will be, a place where kids are allowed to run wild, climb the walls, and generally behave in the way that we, personally, encourage our own families to do in the great outdoors. We have always maintained that, if necessary, we

would challenge any families who weren't buying into our ethos, but fortunately, this has never been necessary.

Another major factor in the success of 'Eureka!' lies in the variety and standard of activities on offer each month (according to many of our supporters, anyway). We have a loose theme for each session, around which we brainstorm and then devise at least 12 different tables, trying to offer craft, science and construction activities, suitable for tots to teens. Crafty Ali isn't so-called for nothing: she really is an arty genius, and constantly comes up with amazing crafts that really have the 'wow' factor.

Would we do it all again? Yes, we can both emphatically say (although I think starting it all with a newborn to breastfeed and the minefield of sleepless nights to manoeuvre around possibly wasn't the easiest time to start something like this). The first couple of years were certainly the hardest, when we were providing all the tables by ourselves, with just the odd offer of help, but we now have a wonderful little posse who regularly offer table activities, to whom we are extremely grateful for lightening our workload.

We feel that the two of us, 'Eureka! HQ', retaining the reins of the group and ultimately making all the decisions, is essential if we are to continue to work as a team and if 'Eureka!' is to continue running like a well-oiled machine. It's a tricky balance to achieve between 'Too many cooks spoil the broth' and 'Many hands make light work'. It does still take up an inordinate amount of our time (we both spend more time preparing for Eureka! each month than either of us do in our part-time jobs!) and does impact on family life ("No, we can't go out on Sunday because we have 'Eureka!' prep to finish!").

Our homes are littered with 'Eureka!' crafty paraphernalia and we still spend hours researching possible craft ideas, although discovering 'Pinterest' has greatly helped in that department. This is especially difficult for me because anyone who knows me will readily confirm that I'm seriously challenged in that department, but having extra hands on board has meant that I can focus more on the management side of running the group, while Crafty Ali works to her strengths and focuses on the crafts. We've found that having supportive hobbies has been essential, and we appreciate the time that our menfolk spend, not only being a sounding-board, but also putting together activity tables themselves.

As long as our kids are enjoying it, benefitting from it, and as long as our energy endures, we'll continue. Running a local group certainly isn't a walk in the park, but if something is worthwhile doing at all, it's worth expending a certain amount of elbow grease. Seeing our kids' faces light up when we remind them that it's Eureka! week, is enough of a payment for Eureka! HQ for now.

(name and address supplied)



Exploring New Patterns of Education

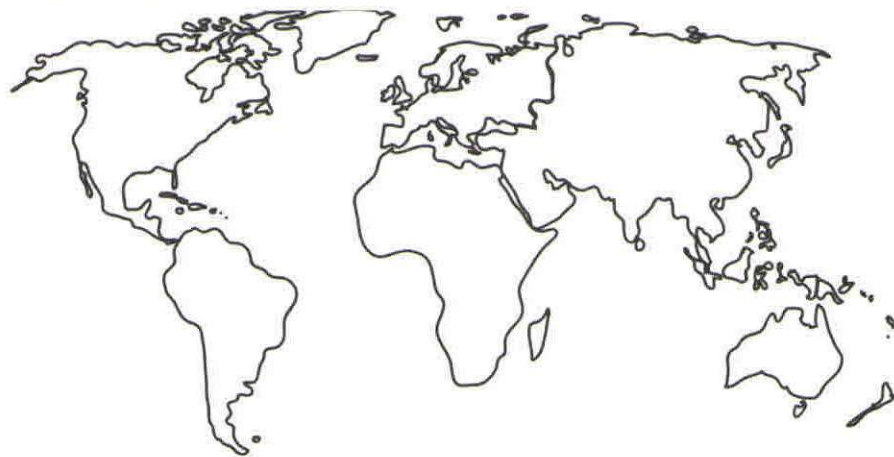
After eventually establishing that a parent's right to choice for their children's education extends to all parents, the home education movement has opened up an area where parents are now in effect conducting valuable research into the development of new advances and approaches to education itself. Further advance is possible now that more of the decision making and discussion about how our children need to be educated is the responsibility of parents themselves.

Clearly a need for change was arising because of deficiencies in the existing school systems, which interestingly was also being identified internally at the time by some of those running them, but whose remedies were not then officially seen as acceptable and so without support were not able to be applied, except in a limited way by a few heads with strong parent groups, including in the private education sector. They had often become involved because they felt they could provide missing aspects essential for updating education. One area where improvement was seen as overdue is that of international education, and clear views about the need for this were often held by those whose teaching career had started in the inter war years. During that period it became recognised that, for education to effectively support following generations' needs in the future, their study of rapidly advancing science and its applications would need to be undertaken within an appropriately connected social and international context to avoid a repeat of the disaster driven by the abuse of science that had occurred in WWI. With the failure to achieve this, such concerns were raised again after WWII, when local papers reported on what some heads, usually of girls' schools, were saying at their speech days about the state of the world into which they would shortly be expected to release their pupils. Such comments were understandable, after everyone had just acquiesced to going through a severe period of death and destruction on the understanding that it was all worth it to obviate such a situation re-occurring afterwards. One group with some freedom to make a difference sometimes, were the heads of the poorer private schools, whose level of independence necessary for such a challenge, was sometimes slightly greater *vis-a-vis* society and its failing aspects as a whole.

I was lucky to be at such a school in the late 1950s, where the Head Mistress, after pre-war co-educational teaching, had taken the bold decision in 1951 to open a boarding and day school to provide a fully international educational experience for pupils locally and from around the world. The school had been set up in Hastings, as the neutral south east local accent assisted her programme of international English teaching which had to form the foundation for international education for children from other countries. Having experienced state primary education, the contrast when I arrived could not have been greater, through one's exposure to children with such a variety of backgrounds from here and abroad. This included some from conflict areas as the empire still existed, and our chatting between friends overcame much censorship that news media might have observed to protect us, ensuring that our international experience made us aware of the effects on families of conflicts that many people may only have heard about through headlines. This started to expose inconsistencies in the official curriculum for the then GCE examinations, when General Studies was not taught until sixth form, which we did not have. So the head started teaching us general studies from ten years old, as any delay would have been incompatible with assisting our understanding of the international environment that we were already experiencing. Likewise she encouraged philately by selling cheap stamp albums, and from this we became aware of the revolution in Iraq in 1958, when the British families living there had to leave within 24 hours, and we then learned that the young king featured on our stamps, together with his family, had not been allowed any such escape for survival. That parents approved of her approach of encouraging our awareness and understanding which they felt necessary for their children's education, was shown by their increasingly wanting to send their children, leading to a long period of school expansion requiring new classroom blocks to be built.

But the really essential instruction that the head knew we needed, she was unfortunately not able to introduce. This occurred when pupil numbers hit the threshold such that notification arrived for Latin teaching to start. This appeared to start all right until the end of the first term of Latin teaching, when the head arranged a protest during our teacher's last class. Although next term we had a new teacher for Latin and French, a strong memory had been left that something else was now wrong. Later on one discovered that many of our history books were deficient as well, as they were of no help for understanding how deep the problem really was when it came to our education failing to properly prepare us for the world we would be inhabiting, rather than the one we were leaving.

Only because of a later developing interest in history, did one eventually discover why the head had been so angry about parents' money being diverted to supporting Latin teaching, instead of what we should have been taught as discussed in the interwar years by the League of Nations, and which had the support of the developing world behind it, and that was Esperanto (about which our history books were silent). It is often said that Latin helps with word roots for English and other languages. But Esperanto is far more essential for children in today's world because not only does it use most of the Latin word roots but in addition, its logical design enables it to be mastered in such a short time, providing direct communication access to people from all countries - something Latin or even other languages can never do. So from those six irreplaceable years when young, one could have some knowledge of Latin which will soon be forgotten, or one can have in comparison complete mastery of a language one will always be using in today's international world.



How frustrating it must have been, seeing us all starting on six years of learning that was never going to provide us with the vital communication access we were going to need in the world we would be living in.

As a parent, one is aware of one's own children's struggling with learning all the irregularities of English and the extra time this can often take for many children. This is inevitable as very young children's brains are looking for logical patterns in the rules of the speech they hear from their parents. Because national languages are evolved over centuries with no thought for logical development, learning them for children is like trying to use really badly written language software, delaying the building of their confidence in their first language. So children often need quite a lot of extra time for this, whereas Esperanto had the irregularities designed out by its author Ludwik Zamenhof, who knew twelve languages, and it is noticeable how much more quickly children learn it as a result, which research has now borne out again; as did that originally provided for the League.

My full realisation of just how valuable and practical such a language skill is, only came when I attended my first Esperanto meeting in France. As it was an international meeting, one cannot begin to explain the communication benefit from being able to go up to anyone from the many different countries attending and have a conversation with them, regardless of nationality - truly an effective method of breaking down barriers that parents and all children everywhere are so much in need of now. The meeting was arranged so that parents bringing children could attend, while leaving their children at a crèche where they could start learning Esperanto. Perhaps the biggest surprise was the knowledge and acceptance by French society of Esperanto compared to the relative ignorance even of its existence here in UK - another demonstration of how national perceptions can be so different depending on whether one's history books and information sources have been affected by censorship or not.

One could see from all this how Esperanto would have been such an ideal complement and support for the international education we were receiving at School, particularly as the way the school functioned was in the nature of a large family. Bullying was not even heard of and so didn't involve any question of toleration, and growing up to appreciate girls as people requiring appropriate respect was part of everyday life. Thus family values that we would all wish and expect for our children permeated the whole educational ethos of the school. This ensured the appropriate educational background in which international respect and co-operation was encouraged and certainly expected, despite our having to learn to accept that success in this area was not always being achieved in the world. Despite that our experiences of mixing with children of other countries and religions, and finding that in our daily lives their origins had no inhibiting effect on our friendships and building of trust, was another essential benefit of the family ethos in which our education took place.

So our ability as young people to continue to experience and benefit from understanding and co-operation more effectively over the longer term, would have been immeasurably increased had we been equipped with the appropriate means of communication for furthering that approach while still young, before encountering possibilities of our being misled into modes of dangerous misunderstanding and worse, which dangers nearly always depend on communication failure for their success. Because the logical design of Esperanto ensures that it is less than half the cost of learning English, it can sometimes be difficult for us in the UK to appreciate how essential it is that our children are also given the ability to communicate with the majority of children in the world, who in reality will never be able to afford to learn English, especially as we are the ones in the position to make that advance in international education for better relations, and they and their parents are not able to.

The arguments about Esperanto undermining national languages are also incorrect as research shows that when young children know Esperanto, its ultra logical design assists them greatly in learning their first foreign language, while also giving them a much wider choice as it provides language preparation skills just not available in the same way with any national language.

Because these skills are now available from the internet, we have an opportunity with the Centenary of World War I over its four years and more, when we can honour our dead by ensuring that their effort to try to overcome any necessity for war will be upheld, and that their efforts will be remembered in a practical sense and not forgotten in the way that our old history books forgot about them.

References:-

Tuition available, www.lernu.net

An excellent example of how parents in Africa are encouraging their children via education at the Zamenhof Institute can be seen at <http://unuighotogolandaporesperanto.jimdo.com/>
(in French – try Google Translate if needed...)

Mike, Rye.

A properly crazy year! 100 things we did in 2014

Phweesh, what a crazy crazy year. It has been a wild ride. Occasionally frustrating, sad, stressful, as life can be, but overall.... Wow! Here's what I have compiled to help us remember what we did and who we met. In spite of some sad things going on in the lives of friends and family, I've loved this year so much. Welcoming our daughter into the world with no midwives present was a really life-changing and defining event for us and made us step up in so many ways to what is important to us in life! The experience of taking on that kind of level of responsibility was intense beyond anything else that has ever happened to us, but it has totally strengthened us all and given us a lease of life, energy and passion that spurred us into action to do so much cool stuff!

Earlier in the year I watched a heartbreaking series of photographs a husband took of his beautiful wife over the months that she slowly deteriorated to cancer. It made me sit up and take note that life is unpredictable, short and precious. I have decided to really live life to the full this year and live truly authentically in my own power and by living more on my own terms, not everyone else's... because we don't know how long any of us will be here on this planet... we all live on borrowed time.

I've met some wonderful people this year in the process of producing a document called Birthplace Matters and becoming a grass-roots birth campaigner, and I will continue to campaign for others so they can have midwives at their homebirths, since not everyone want to freebirth like myself, eh?

I truly feel that putting off what's important to you or swallowing bitterly what others serve up to you is madness. And, in waiting to fulfil dreams and lifelong goals, we might not ever get to do them. We only have today, we only have the here and now... So this year has been a year of living, doing and daring. It's been absolutely amazing and I don't have a single regret.

Bring on 2015! Who knows, I might get to do some hands-on doulaing again.... that would be fab!!!! So without further ado, here's the amazing list of 100 things our family did in 2014

- 1 Met the girl of our dreams (literally) when she swam up to meet us all in our birthpool at home, surrounded by just us, and she has rocked our world ever since. Love her soooo much
- 2 Celebrated 20 years together as a couple! Wow. I'm so glad to be with Pete after all these years, we've journeyed together through good times and shit times and I love him completely, with all my heart. He knows me inside out and loves me flaws'n'all. Woohoo for real love!
- 3 Our Winnebago burnt down in a glorious blaze... so... we searched our hearts and decided life on wheels is part of our lives now... and got a new bus!
- 4 We went around England and visited... Wales, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Italy, San Marino, Vatican City and Spain and travelled thousands of miles in our bus - with five kids!
- 5 Stayed in a real actual castle and celebrated 70 years of the lovely Dennis
- 6 Slid down wooden slides into the Salzburg salt mines

- 7 Canoeed on the beautiful lake at Zell am See In Austria
- 8 Walked across the three dragons bridge in Ljubiana
- 9 Took a land train up to Ljubiana castle
- 10 Walked across the famous Rialto Bridge in Venice
- 11 Saw models of Leonardo Da Vinci's inventions in a church that was in an Indiana Jones film
- 12 Took a super cool 70's style boat taxi across Venice waterways
- 13 Met a long lost cousin at St. Mark's Square, Venice
- 14 Went to the Peggy Guggenheim museum and saw Jackson Pollock paintings amongst others...
- 15 Took a funicular ride up to San Marino
- 16 Swam in a lake at a really cool campsite
- 17 Visited Emperor Hadrian's Palaces outside Rome - Villa Adriana
- 18 Took an open-top hop on - hop off bus tour round Rome
- 19 Took a family Pizza making and Gelato course in Florence and got a certificate
- 20 Visited an artisan Gelato making café and had a private tour of their kitchen
- 21 Walked across the famous bridge in Florence, Ponte Vecchio and looked at the tat
- 22 Had an old-fashioned photograph taken by an American photographer who then sent us a copy months later
- 23 Visited The Leaning Tower of Pisa, and touched it, even though you're not supposed to!
- 24 Went through 92 tunnels in one day
- 25 High fived hundreds of runners who ran past our bus on a fun run
- 26 Went to Parc des Lutins - an awesome treetop adventure playground park
- 27 Visited the most Fabuleuz gastro-circus-musical-eatery in all of France
- 28 Went cherry-picking on the family farm of an artisan cherry grower called Jeremy
- 29 Camped by an AMAZING river where the kids paddled and swam and birds and crickets sang long into the night
- 30 Turned up at a really cool campsite where there was an awesome pool party in full swing
- 31 Saw the World's Biggest Tyre at the Michelin factory in Clermont-Ferrand
- 32 Took a train and stood on top of a dormant volcano and felt on top of the world at the Puy-de-Dôme
- 33 Visited a pottery museum in an old château
- 34 Visited the fabulous medieval castle Guedelon (BBC had a series about it - see BBC website) in France which is being built using medieval tools and techniques and saw demonstrations of all the crafts and skills
- 35 Walked around the medieval city of Troyes
- 36 Visited friends and family in Brighton, Worthing, Dorset, Nottingham, Norfolk and Suffolk
- 37 Went to The Green Gathering festival with friends
- 38 Operated a lock for a canal boat to pass through on the River Avon
- 39 Went to the MAD museum in Shakespeare's Stratford Upon Avon
- 40 Visited the chocolate box town dubbed Little Venice, of Bourton-on-The-Water, in the Cotswolds
- 41 Camped up by the rivers Cam and Trent for two special birthday treats

- 42 Did some glassblowing at Caithness Crystal
- 43 Visited a lavender farm
- 44 Had fun with my sister and cousin who stayed at our house this year
- 45 Heard the Shantymen sing their beautiful songs in The Lord Nelson Pub at Nelson's birthplace village with some dear friends
- 46 Hired a beach-hut at sunny Hunstanton for a fun day with friends
- 47 Went laser-questing, wild swimming and kayaking with The Styles family
- 48 Did archery, pellet-gun shooting targets, multi-climbing sports and multisports sessions
- 49 Became a grass-roots birth activist and produced a document of people's feelings about natural and home birth called Birthplace Matters
- 50 Made placards and organised a demo in King's Lynn
- 51 Was in the Lynn news in an article about Birthplace Matters
- 52 Met some Witchez in Brighton and learnt how to make Kopytka (a sweet Polish fried dumpling), inspired by said Witchez
- 53 Took a horse riding lesson
- 54 Hung out with my cousin and niece and auntie for some cuddly times
- 55 Spent hours and hours and hours smiling at my daughter and hours and hours feeding my tongue-tied sweetie, which has been incredible, intense and so beautiful
- 56 Climbed up Glastonbury Tor at sunset
- 57 Hardly drove my car since Poppy wails in her carseat unless I am literally right next to her!
- 58 Met the lovely ladies at The Fire Pit and Norfolk Sling Group
- 59 Paid our respects at a War memorial In Normandy
- 60 Walked around the streets near Notre Dame Cathedrale in Paris and soaked up the atmosphere
- 61 Visited the world-famous bookshop Shakespeare and Co in Paris
- 62 Took a ride along the Seine
- 63 Walked all 1710 steps up and down the Eiffel Tower - phweesh!
- 64 Walked round an abandoned and very magical sun-dappled castle
- 65 Visited Futuroscope - a fantastic futuristic amusement/science park, on the warmest Halloween ever and time-travelled - bwaaaah!
- 66 Freecamped right next to the wild Atlantic ocean and got lashed by rain and wind
- 67 Went to WOW! Park - a really cool treetop adventure place with scramble walkways in the treetops and climbing frames in the sky
- 68 Camped on the top of a cliff near San Sebastian
- 69 Visited the fantastic Eureka Science Museum in San Sebastian and saw a film in Basque in the Planetarium
- 70 Blew bubbles in the street with a street artist in San Sebastian
- 71 Went to Madrid and hung out in the rather pretty Park del Retiro
- 72 Visited the Science Park and saw the Egyptology displays of Tutankhamun replicas in Granada
- 73 Visited Escape Park - and solved a Sherlock Holmes/Dan Brown style mystery in a staged apartment, saving the kidnapped man by working out a complex riddle of clues

- 74 Walked around The Alhambra complex and enjoyed the walk down to town from the top
- 75 Drove the hair-raising drive to a tiny village called Atelbietar and stayed in a gorgeous house high in the Alpujurras - no cars, just houses and a truly fabulous family living off-grid in a place of jaw-dropping beauty
- 76 Slept on a dam
- 77 Visited the National park of El Torcal taking the most awesome and scary helter-skelter journey up the mountain in our bus
- 78 Met up with friends by the sea and went fishing, swimming and playing
- 79 Quit my writing job for Education outside School Magazine
- 80 Went rollerskating
- 81 Went to an awesome indoor skatepark
- 82 Slept on a clifftop in Nerja and watched the sunset and sunrise
- 83 Watched an Alpha Romeo advert being filmed
- 84 Boys went to Wildwise camp in Devon and made Atlatl (spear thrower) and spears, and learnt to walk silently and track animals, be careful with knives and fires
- 85 We got our bus stuck in Bovey Tracey and some lovely people helped us!
- 86 Visited the House of Marbles
- 87 Went Geocaching at Wandlebury Country park
- 88 Said hello to our old house in Littlehampton, the place where Herbie and Indie were born
- 89 Learn how to make iron hooks by getting hands on at a blacksmith's forge
- 90 Gave thousands to people who needed it more than us
- 91 Met, for the first time, the wonderful... Awen, Jess, Cameron, Lanaya, Josh, Vero, Jeremy, Alison, Lizzie, Rachel, Claire, Sadie, Nancy, Bessie, Ali, Josh, Ruth, Lucile and Fabian, some others I have sadly forgotten names of but who were lovely, many awesome midwives and mamas through the process of writing Birthplace Matters, and will hopefully meet more before the year is through - Vanessa B you are next!
- 92 Improved our Spanish and French
- 93 Saw a bitch with her full-moon born pups just hours after the birth :-)
- 94 Cried big fat tears but laughed even more
- 95 Went to a 3-D Symphony Orchestra in Granada
- 96 Grew a bit fatter (not all of us... just me! oh well)
- 97 Offered a spot writing for Education Otherwise...
- 98 Offered and turned down a fab job because it's not quite right, right now... maybe one day.....
- 99 Applied to two magazines for paid article work - watch this space!
- 100 Planning surprises yet to come.... ?

Still planning more adventures for Herbie's 12th Birthday, Christmas and New Year... as I write, we are in Spain... still travelling...so much fun to be had still... must keep remembering to live in the moment, count my many blessings and laugh lots....

Friday, 19 December 2014

Paula, Wisbech (sometimes!)

P.S. A little poem I wrote, hope it inspires xxxxx (see last page for poem!)

Home Education and Teenagers – Moving On

I am a single parent with two teenage children – my son (now in College) is eighteen and my daughter, who is home educated, turned sixteen in January. I have home educated my children on and off at different times throughout their education up to this point. My son was home educated more than my daughter, and he did really well – he was given a medal as one of the highest achievers in our borough. He is at College now doing exactly what he wants to do and very happy.

My daughter did really well too. Last year she got a place at a nearby performing arts and music school, but after the initial giddiness and exhilaration wore out, gradually she started to hate "the ego-driven environment" more and more to the point where she decided that she really didn't want to be there and wanted to leave. So after some meetings with the school (to cut a long story short) she did leave towards the end of last year.

It's been quite nerve wracking as it's the GCSE year in schools; all the schools are full and I do not have the financial means right now to pay for her to do her GCSEs privately etc.... So since the end of last year my daughter has been home educated, which has been difficult as (in the view of many people) I shouldn't have allowed her to leave the performing arts school "as this is a once in a life time opportunity" and "there are thousands of children all over the country who would love to be there" – as the School kept on reminding us quite forcefully on many occasions before she left. Plus the whole panic that other well meaning people felt, that if she would not be at school or get a school place she might not get any GCSEs and then she could not go to college or university, she won't get a job etc. etc.... So I am allowing her to wreck her future – in their view.

Ok ... so... Where are we now? Actually everything has fallen into place for her miraculously. To cut another couple of long stories short – she has a job now that she enjoys, which she wouldn't have been able to do if she was at school because of the hours, and she is earning enough money for herself to save for a good laptop so she can continue to do her photography and video editing on a more professional level with the right software etc. Plus another bit of good news is that she will be able to go to College in September without GCSEs. I will tell you a little bit more about the college as it might be useful for other home educating parents in a situation like ours to know that this is an option.

In January, we were invited to an event organised by our local council (i.e. Children Missing Education section of the Education department of our Local Council) for children in her year and in her situation at the local F.E. college, after I contacted the Council and was pushing gently over the last two months for them to make a referral for her for one of the "special educational providers" (or whatever they are called), which are primarily for children who have been excluded from normal schools, as I could not see any other option for her to do her GCSEs since I could not afford to do that privately at this point. So as part of the event she sat some assessments in Maths and English and with the results she got she was invited by the college to apply for courses in September without any GCSEs, just on the strength of her assessment results (which apparently were the equivalent of what's required for applying for level 2 BTEC or lower) and the work she has been doing with photography and writing and video editing by herself.

So this is all really good news; I thought I will just share this as it could provide a ray of hope or inspiration for other families who might be in the same place of worry and confusion as we were just a couple of weeks ago... Both I and my daughter are very relieved. Now she has four months (of what's left from the current academic year) to prepare for college and to further develop her work and her portfolio.

Mirena, London

India has a mandatory school system (from ages 6 to 14), with home education now being quasi-legal. To get to that stage was a long and slow process, because in 2009 a new law (the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, RTE) threatened home as well as alternative schooling, which caused both sides to petition together for freedom of education. In September 2010, the Minister of Education finally made the following statement in The Times of India:

“The RTE Act wants every child to be in school, but if somebody decides not to send his/her children to school, we [the government] are not going to interfere. The compulsion is on the state, not on the parents. Parents are free not to send their children to school, but teach them at home. We cannot be micromanaging”

which, even though not strictly speaking a law-making process, seems to clarify matters.

The spectrum of Indian home education is quite wide, with all approaches from radical unschooling to Montessori, Waldorf and School-at-home represented. Many homeschoolers seem to follow formal education methods according to the national curriculum (CBSE, Central Board of Secondary Education, offer senior school exams in spring for classes 10 and 12). Another pathway is through the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), the Board of Education for Distance Education, also government-led. Established in 1989, the initial purpose of this institution was to provide basic literacy and numeracy skills for children in remote, rural areas, and with about 350,000 students enrolled every year, this has become the largest open schooling system in the world. Internationally-minded families can also opt for the IGCSE exam.

Most problems in organising home education are down to the sheer size of the country. This is also one reason why the support network is primarily online, and joined mostly by those who live in the larger cities (Pune, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, New Delhi and Kolkata), whereas in rural areas families tend to associate with the local alternative schools for support.

Even though it is claimed that home education is now steadily growing, gaining support and becoming increasingly popular in India, it is still inhabiting a grey area, as far as the law and easy access to certain activities and competitions (that are open to school children) are concerned. The Association of Indian Homeschoolers is holding an annual home schooling conference; organising anything on that scale must be a huge challenge.

Links:

- General overview:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homeschooling_international_status_and_statistics
- Great article on Wikipedia:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homeschooling_and_alternative_education_in_India
- The Indian EO equivalent, the Association of Indian Homeschoolers, founded in 2012:
<http://homeschoolers.in/>
- HSDLA, a (Christian) home ed law support organisation, with many interesting, recent newspaper articles: <http://www.hslda.org/hs/international/India/default.asp>
- Yahoo group for all alternative schooling issues: <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/alt-ed-india/conversations/topics>
- Helpful Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Homeschooling-Alternative-Education-in-India/135772739790943>

Book Reviews & EO Amazon Store

Did you know that Education Otherwise has an Amazon store? It is full of a wide range of books and games for parents and children that are perfect for home educators. By shopping in the store you are helping Education Otherwise in its work to support home educators in the United Kingdom. You can access the store by visiting www.educationotherwise.net and clicking on the link in the top right hand corner.

Freebies!!! This issue we have a fantastic new children's cookbook to give away. To enter the draw to win **Pocket Money Cookery** email your name and details to bookreviews@educationotherwise.net by April 1st.



Pocket Money Cookery Author: Cecilia Valente
website: www.ooberkidsrepublic.com Price: £7.00

Ooberkids Republic is a new website that has been created to help children with English, Math and Science at KS2. It is a fun and interactive site that makes learning fun. One of the activities that the site promotes is cooking and they have published a new children's cookbook to motivate and encourage children to get busy in the kitchen.

The author of the book is Italian and most of the recipes have a Mediterranean feel about them. There are 10 featured recipes and space for children to add 6 more of their own. Each recipe is well laid out, easy to follow and includes nutritional information from Jessica Scott, a registered nutritional therapist. They also include information about the cost of the recipe, the number it serves and prep/cooking time.

The author includes stories and amusing facts about each dish as most are family recipes. My 13 year old made the Broken French Dinner (an Italian bubble and squeak type dish), he said it was easy to make and we all thought it was delicious to eat! There is a nice mix of savory and sweet dishes and most are vegetarian or have vegetarian option. All in all this is a nice cookbook that should capture the imagination of most budding young chefs!

Parents: Help your Child Succeed! Author: Sylvia Edwards
Price £2.24 for the Kindle version – other ebook formats are available

Sylvia Edwards is an educator with a passion for helping children, especially children with special educational needs (SEN), to realise their full potential and get the most out of school. She has authored several books aimed at educators and has now just released a series of books for parents. There are 4 books in the series and they are designed for parents to help them understand the what is being taught in schools at each stage and how to support further learning at home so that children can achieve success.

The first book in the series deals with helping children with SEN and will be a great help to parents who have a child with SEN in the school system, the other titles deal with EYFS and Key Stages 1 & 2. Though primarily aimed at parents of school children, this series can also be useful for home educators who want to see what their children would be learning at the EYFS and Key Stage 1 & 2 and the goals that they would be expected to achieve. Each book is full of useful and



easy ideas to help parents make learning fun. As a home educator with a teenage and toddler I found the books informative and useful with lots of ideas that I will be using with my toddler as he starts to get curious about letters and numbers and more formal learning. The books are well written, easy to follow and packed full of useful information for both parents with children at school and home educating parents.

We love including book reviews from our readers so if you and your family have enjoyed a book why not send in a review to the email address shown above? It doesn't have to be newly published – it's great to hear about your favourites that may be new to others.

Tammy



FROM THE ARCHIVES

[This article first appeared in EONL no. 96, spring 1994]

HOME EDUCATION AND HEAD LICE

I used to believe that one advantage of home education was nit-free children's hair. I now know this was a false hope. Ever optimistic, I now try to see the educational value in these periodic infestations. The first time it happened we were hooked on simple nature-study. We observed the little creatures through our pocket microscopes as they breathed and kicked their last. We noted which ones had bellies full of our blood. We identified the glossy eggs and the empty egg cases and admired the way they were cemented to a slippery hair.

When we had exhausted the possibilities of lice-watching we moved on to more advanced science – experimental design. How can you prove that lice like clean hair? What if I don't wash my hair ever again?

Then there are all sorts of mathematical problems to solve: If one female louse lays 8 eggs in one night, how many eggs is that in two weeks? And if it takes a week for each egg to hatch, how long have these creatures been living on my head to produce this number of blood-sucking youngsters? We could draw a graph...

We also need to raise the social and moral questions. Who did we catch them from this time? Who could we have passed them on to? How many people have we seen this week? Should we phone and tell or keep quiet? This brings us on to geography. If we caught these lice in Sheffield and passed them on to one family in Leicestershire and another friend from Scotland; at the same time the Leicestershire family had a visitor from Cornwall and he went home via friends in London.... We could draw a map showing where our head lice are living and thriving. Head lice also bring up the contentious question of creation versus evolution. Where did head lice live before there were heads?

By the way, I wonder why our inspector hasn't been to see us for such a long time?

[Stephanie, Derbyshire]



EO SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) News

Thankfully, the College of Occupational Therapists have set out a guide to show how the ongoing SEN reforms affect you, wherever you live in the UK:

Scotland: The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 came into force in November 2004 and was amended in 2009. This states that children and young people with special educational needs may be supported through Personal Learning Planning (PLP), Individualised Educational Programmes (IEP) and Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSP). Statutory Guidance relating to the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 as amended can be found at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/04/04090720/0>

England: From 1st September 2014 the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice will come into effect as part of the Children and Families Act 2014. Special educational needs and disability support will be graduated for children and young people in nurseries, schools and colleges. This will replace School Action and School Action Plus. Statements of special educational needs will be replaced with education, health and care (EHC) plans for children and young people with complex needs. For further information please see:

<http://www.cot.co.uk/children/children-young-people-and-families>

(for transitional arrangements for children and young people who have statements, please see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/implementing-the-0-to-25-special-needs-system>)

Wales: Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2004 states that children with additional learning needs may be supported through School Action, School Action Plus and Statements. For detailed guidance please see: <http://learning.wales.gov.uk/resources/special-educationneeds-code-of-practice/?lang=en>. This is currently under revision and pilot sites have been using Individual Development Plans (IDP). For further information please see <http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/programme-action-research-additional-learningneeds-pilot/?lang=en>

Northern Ireland: Statutory responsibility for services relating to children and young people with special educational needs rests with both schools and the five Education and Library Boards (ELBs). For further information please see:

http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/support-anddevelopment-2/special_educational_needs_pg.htm

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 came into operation on the 1st September 2005. This states that children and young people with special educational needs may be supported through statements.

Current guidelines from IPSEA on the changeover to Education Health Care Plans (England):

TRANSITION FROM STATEMENTS AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES ASSESSMENTS (LDAS) TO EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLANS (EHC PLANS). From 1 September 2014:

- Children with statements of special educational needs (SEN);
- Young people with Learning Difficulties Assessments (LDAs); and
- Those with non statutory "EHC plans" issued before the 1 September 2014,

will start the process of transitioning to an EHC plan within the new legal framework under the Children and Families Act 2014. All children with statements must have completed this process by 1 April 2018. All young people with LDAs must have completed this process by 1 September 2016.

IPSEA's Transition Timeline resource can be downloaded from: <https://www.ipsea.org.uk/file-manager/resources/ipsea-transition-timeline-final.pdf>

This explains the timeline for the transition process from a statement to an EHC plan in more detail.

Statements of SEN will remain in force until the transition to an EHC plan has been completed. Part IV and Schedule 27 of the Education Act 1996, relevant regulations and the 2001 SEN Code of Practice will continue to apply until the end of the process.

In 2015/16 LAs will have to consider whether to carry out EHC needs assessments for young people who are likely to continue in further education or training beyond 31 August 2016.

All of the children and young people listed above will have to undergo EHC needs assessments under the new legal framework before the LA can finalise an EHC plan for them. There are no exceptions to this. In certain cases an LA can use existing evidence to fulfil their duty to gather advice and information.

If your child has received an EHC plan, as part of a Pathfinder pilot or otherwise, before 1 September 2014, go through the new legal process of EHC needs assessment to make it a legally binding document under the new law. It will not automatically become an EHC plan on 1 September 2014.

If a young person has an LDA, they can request EHC needs assessment at any time from 1 September 2014. If the LA does not agree with that request then the decision can be appealed to the SEND Tribunal.

In the case of a child with a statement, there is a timetable for the transition from statements to EHC plans. For details of the timetable, go to the briefing in the resources on the right of this page. When that transfer will happen in an individual case depends on your Local Authority's Transition Plan. This will explain when they intend to carry out the "transfer reviews" for different groups of children and young people in their area. It must be published on the LA's website and be part of the Local Offer. Guidance from the DfE (Department for Education) requires them to prioritise certain groups first.

If your child has a statement you can ask the LA to carry out the transfer review before their intended time but if they do not agree you cannot appeal against that decision. The right to request an EHC needs assessment has been suspended for children with statements for the transition period. However, you can still ask for a re-assessment under the Education Act 1996 during the transition period, you can appeal if refused, and if you win the Tribunal has the power to order the LA to carry out an EHC needs assessment.

The expectation is that all children with a statement will be transitioned to an EHC plan unless there has been a change in their individual needs which mean they no longer need the same level of support.

The expectation is that all young people with LDAs – particularly, but not exclusively, those who previously had a statement – who remain in education or training will have EHC plans.

Regardless of a child or young adult having a statement or EHC plan and a school has been added to them, there is no legal enforcement if the parent does not agree and the child does not attend the first day:

'Schools must enter pupils on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.'

If there has not been an attendance from day one, then 'regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006) can be legally used:

Deletions from Admission Register

8.—(1) The following are prescribed as the grounds on which the name of a pupil of compulsory school age shall be deleted from the admission register—

(a) where the pupil is registered at the school in accordance with the requirements of a school attendance order, that another school is substituted by the local education authority for that named in the order or the order is revoked by the local education authority on the ground that arrangements have been made for the **child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude otherwise than at school.**

More support for mental health is being urged by some politicians:

Shadow Health Secretary Andy Burnham has (on 27 January 2015) set out the importance of improving support for people with autism by health and care services. Speaking at an event at the Kings Fund where he was setting out details of Labour's plans for the NHS, Mr Burnham said:

"Our aspiration is to create a service that supports people with dementia, autism and mental ill health as well as it treats cancer."

We welcome this and urge whichever party or parties form the next Government to make this aspiration a reality by:

1) Addressing the lack of awareness and understanding of autism across health and care services

Training in autism must urgently be included in the core curricula for doctors, nurses and other clinicians, as well as social workers. Further training is needed for those who provide direct support for people with autism.

The Department of Health committed to making this happen five years ago, but progress has been slow. Without this understanding professionals such as GPs and assessors for social care are unable to identify needs properly and refer people with autism on for appropriate help and support.

In addition, those responsible for directly helping people with autism and their families are unable to do so effectively without the right level of training.

2) Action is needed to ensure that people with suspected autism can access diagnosis in a timely way and can access post diagnostic support

Despite the publication of NICE Guidelines and Quality standards on diagnosis and post diagnostic support, getting an autism diagnosis is still taking far too long.

In an NAS survey: 30% of respondents said it took less than a year to get a diagnosis (from the point of first raising their concerns with a professional; For 30% it took between 1 and 2 years; For 34% of people, it took 3 years or more.

We need to make local health bodies more accountable for meeting the standards and guidelines through ensuring that they are measured on their progress. Local health bodies also need to be incentivised to prioritise the development of effective diagnostic pathways.

3) Widening eligibility criteria

Pressure of local authority funding and the tightening of eligibility criteria for support from social care has meant that adults with autism are increasingly locked out of the care system and are unable to get the help they need.

Support for some adults with autism and particularly those with Asperger syndrome might be relatively low in cost to provide, such as help finding a job or social skills training, but can be life changing and save money to the public purse in the long run.

Significant investment in the care system should be a priority for the next Government.

4) Ensuring there is access to very specialist help when needed

Autism is not a mental health problem but as many as 71% of children with autism experience mental ill health.

Four out of five parents responding to an NAS survey told us that there have been times of crisis with their child's mental health when they needed support, but the majority of these parents were unable to access that support.

Specialist autism capacity should be made available within all tiers of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. New statutory guidance should be issued to commissioners to support the effective planning of appropriate local services for children with autism and mental health problems.

*Feel free to contact us if you would like to get involved with EO SEND:
e.theunissen@educationotherwise.org*

References:

UK guide to the SEN reforms from COT:

<http://www.cot.co.uk/sites/default/files/ss-cyfp/public/Frequently-asked-questions-for-education-September2014.pdf>

Guidelines from IPSEA on the transition to EHC Plans:

<https://www.ipsea.org.uk/what-you-need-to-know/transition>

Criteria on the importance of the child needing to attend the first day of term to be registered:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/361008/Advice_on_school_attendance_sept_2014.pdf

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/regulation/8/made>

NAS contacts politicians: <http://www.autism.org.uk/news-and-events/news-from-the-nas/nas-urges-politicians-to-improve-autism-support.aspx>

Revised guidance coming into effect 1-4-2015:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

Help with supported internship providers: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supported-internships-for-young-people-with-learning-difficulties>



CRITERIA for LOCAL GROUP LISTING & INSURANCE

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 dependent 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>

GROUPS THAT DO NOT SUPPLY THE REQUESTED INFORMATION, OR APPEAR NOT TO FIT THE DESCRIPTION ABOVE, WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE EO LISTING

(though we are trying to contact all organisers before doing so – if we have current contact details!)

To apply for your group to be listed ... please complete the application form on the website by choosing 'HE Groups [Area]' from the left hand menu at: <http://www.educationotherwise.net>

To update your activity or contact details ... please email Local Groups Co-ordinator as above.



GROUP ORGANISERS

Have you renewed your

PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE FOR 1st September 2014 – 31st August 15 ?

If not, please do so as soon as possible – if you have any queries please email the Local Groups Insurance Co-ordinator lgic@educationotherwise.org

LOCAL HOME EDUCATION GROUPS

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

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

England

Bedfordshire

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

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

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

Berkshire

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

Expanding Horizons: trips, activities, regular meet ups and information for other Local groups. www.expandinghorizonsuk.com

Contact Rebecca: 01494 882484, expandinghorizonsuk@gmail.com

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

Bristol

Bristol Home Education – A local support group Bristol area. www.bristolhomeeducation.org.uk/

Bristol Home Education Learn Place (HELP) Contact Catherine: catewhyte@hotmail.com

Bristol Home Education Co-op – contact point for all HE activities in Bristol, including 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@yahooagroups.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. Contact: Therese, alternativeeducation.bristol@gmail.com

<http://alternative-education-bristol.moonfruit.com/>

Buckinghamshire

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

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

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

Milton Keynes Home Educators Network (MKHEN) – Educational and social activities and events, online support groups, mentoring and an active relationship with the LA. <http://www.mkhen.org.uk> Georgeanne 01908 662256 sienna-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) Contact

Taryn: tarynearley@googlemail.com

<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 Lane: 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

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

www.educationchoice.org.uk Karen: 01223 573220

karen@karenrodders.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

<http://www.southcheshirehe.btcc.co.uk/>

Cornwall

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

Lostwithiel area HE group – Started 2013 – range of HE activities, all welcome! Contact Samantha: samsawinna@hotmail.com

Cumbria

West Cumbria Home Education Group – friendly group, members from all over W.Cumbria, structured or free range – All welcome!

www.facebook.com/groups/WestCumbriaHE/

Contact Tallie: metallienat@aol.com

West Cumbria Home Educators – (including Keswick). Mutual support for HERS in West Cumbria:

WestCumbriaHomeEd@gmail.com

Derbyshire

Chesterfield Home Education Group (CHEG) – weekly meetings and days out for all ages: Contact Sandy: sandymariott@gmail.com

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

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

Devon

Buckfastleigh Wildspace – Nature study and gardening group based at Buckfastleigh Town hall. Welcomes HE families.

www.hogco-devonrcc.org.uk/index.asp?pageid=279900

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

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

Exeter Home Education Community Wednesday drop-in; GCSE;

green woodwork, permaculture, pottery & more.

nbedford@btinternet.com

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

FLAGS Home Education Group – Exeter, every Friday. Friendly group for children of all ages. Contact: Lisa 07969299543 or Sue su.gold777@yahoo.co.uk

Freedom Fields EHE – Weekly social group, for accompanied children:

http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/PlymouthUK_HomeEd/

South Devon Home Education Group –

<http://www.southdevonhomeeducation.co.uk/> Contact Helen:

01803 390639 helenlloyd-hoare@blueyonder.co.uk

Stover HE Group – Informal educational and social meets in local and surrounding areas. stoverhegroup@gmail.com

Dorset

HEoND (Home Educators of North Dorset) – Friendly group meeting regularly in Sturminster Newton. Contact June: bugchick@mac.com
www.facebook.com/groups/NorthDorsetHomeEducation

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

HERA – friendly group meets weekly in Poole. Provides support for HE families/prospective HE. Contact Tracie: scallieuk@hotmail.co.uk

Bournemouth and Poole Home Educators – Bournemouth/Poole area for play dates and visits to places of interest/museums/etc.
http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/Bournemouth_and_PooleHomeEducators/?yguid=419936795. Contact Emma: bmth.home.ed@gmail.com

Durham

Durham HE – Yahoo group. Get-togethers arranged 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
Essex Home Education Yahoo Group – Members organise HE events and meetings in Essex, and offer support, advice and encouragement to other Home Educators. Contact Lou: louise.thorn@googlemail.com

<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/essex-he-e-group/info>

Haverhill HE group – Covering South Suffolk/North Essex.

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

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

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/southeasthomeeducation/> or

southeasthomeeducation@yahoo.co.uk

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

Stapleton 07866 701442 elmajose2@yahoo.co.uk

Gloucestershire

GlosHE.org.uk – HE links and local resources in and around

Gloucestershire. www.gloshe.org.uk/

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

Forest of Dean HE group – Bridge and dam building, river clearance,

fire building, woodland walks etc. Roxy: cdshf@googlemail.com

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

Cirencester and Cotswold group – Meetings plus will answer HE

queries. Pam 01285 721008 pamela.perryman@gmail.com

Hampshire

ActiveEO – HE group based in West Sussex and Hampshire. Contact

Julie: 01243 552168 bevmats@btinternet.com

East Hampshire Home Education Group (EHHE) Social activities

mainly for 5-11 yr but all ages welcome. Fields & playground.

Contact Alison: a.johns@btinternet.com

FAREGOS Home Education Group – HE group/email list for Fareham

Gosport and South Hants.

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

Hampshire FRHEBEES (Free Range & Home Educated Bees) – West

Hampshire area and borders to arrange meet ups and activities.

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

Contact Karen: 01425 652721

North Hampshire HE Group – Regular activities and meetings

organised suitable for all ages

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/NH-HE/> Jaki 07731 805323

jakimparsons@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/> **South Hants Home Ed** – A

support group for home educators

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

Herefordshire

Hereford Home Education – Indoor and outdoor facilities ages 3-15.

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

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 or 01983 568516

Kent

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 01304 814362.

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

/

Kent ASD Home Ed – For parents/carers of ASD/Aspergers children

who are educating them 'otherwise'.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/asd-home-ed-medway>

Medway and Maidstone HE activity group - HE OMEGA – A group

of home educating families in Medway and Kent.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HE-omega/> Contact Esther:

e.selhi@yahoo.co.uk

Rochester HE Group – weekly meetings Tuesday afternoon. Contact

Sally: sally_wilton@lineone.net

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.

Contact

Denice 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

Or contact Lesley: 07828193668 lesley294@aol.com

<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

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, 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-ja/>

LEAD Home Education – swap ideas, share stories and arrange local

social gatherings. http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lead_he/

Leicestershire

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>

Leicestershire Christian Home Educators – monthly meet up every

3rd Tuesday. Free play opportunity in a safe and fun place. HE Off-

Peak Pass available: £1.50 per child £5 per family free drinks. All

welcome! Contact Anne-Marie Marshall:

mrsamarshall@googlemail.com

Charnwood & Melton Yahoo Group – many home ed groups, gatherings and Events. Vikki, vikkiandmartin@googlemail.com
Stoneygate – Weekly play session, £3.50 per family, including drinks. Large, safe, grassy area. Contact Cat: catbellinger@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/groups/homeedleicestershire/

Lincolnshire

Home Ed Lincs – Yahoo newsgroup coordinating HE activities in Lincolnshire. http://groups.yahoo.com/group/home_ed_lincs/
Home School Lincolnshire – active and supportive group, 40+ families incl. plenty of teenagers. Monthly events and activities list. Contact Elaine: 01507 328688
homeschool.lincolnshire@outlook.com
Lincolnshire HE – www.home-ed.ukf.net/index.htm
North Hykeham HE Group – Weekly meetings, primarily for toddlers. 07870 787328 debi-crow@googlemail.com

London

Adventures with Education (Hackney) – A home education group based in Hackney London. <http://awe.gn.apc.org/>
Brandram Roaders – Weekly meetings in term time. rubyradburn@hotmail.com
Home Study Groups – small group of HE families pooling resources for tutored home study groups. Ingie 0203 566 8706 iberritt@gmail.com
Magpie Home Educators (East London) – Phil 0208 500 1053
The Otherwise Club (NW) – A community centre for HE families. Leslie 0208 969 0893
WIGWAM Jubilee Park N9. Informal drop-in group for families with children of any age. Contact Eleanor: 07866 701442 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. Lots of activities! <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/WestNorfolkHomeEducators/>
The Barefoot Learners – Games and activities for all ages. Contact 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. Support and friendships; parent-led and professionally-led educational activities. Wide range of resources, large community space, sports facilities and outdoor play. www.iflow-he.org Email: welcometoflow@gmail.com

Nottinghamshire

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

Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire Home Educators – A group for all home educators living in Oxfordshire and neighbouring counties; all welcome. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/OxonHE/>
OHED – Website with information about HE in Oxfordshire www.ohed.org.uk Louisa: louisa.southev@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. Contact Beverley: 01743 718429

Telford area HE – Activities incl. skating football and drama sessions. For times and dates contact Denise: 07866 888879
Shropshire Home Education – For HERS in Shropshire area to chat arrange meets etc. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/shed>
Otherwise Engaged – Online diary of group activities cultural events workshops resources and projects for Shrops and West Mids based HE families. <http://www.otherwise-engaged.org.uk/home-education.html>

Somerset

Taunton Home Education Group – Free play, arts & crafts, games, etc. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/tauntonhomeeducation/> <http://tauntonhomeed.blogspot.com/>
HEY Yeovil – All HE families welcome. Contact Lyn: 01963 23669 heyeovil@hotmail.com
Wells and Mendip Home Education Group (Wam) – meet weekly for home educated 'school age' kids, run by parents; variety of projects and activities. Contact: 01749 675176
Wells Swimming Group – Weekly swimming, term time only. Contact Lesley: 01749 689241 mumfordturner@hotmail.com
Wiveliscombe/Taunton – Monthly meetings and regular outings. Contact Maggie: 01984 624651
North Somerset HE Group – Weekly children's gym walks outings etc. Yahoo! group for members. Contact Vicky: 01275 848425 victoria.preston@yahoo.co.uk
Bath HE Yahoo! Group – <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/BathHomeEducation/>

Staffordshire

Mercia Education Group – Regular, structured meetings, various venues in Lichfield and surrounding area. Academic bias, many activities, wide age range. <http://merciaeducationgroup.yolasite.com/>

Suffolk

Havehill HE group – Covering South Suffolk/North Essex. Contact Eve: 01440 788228 or 07768 763913 wixde@yahoo.co.uk
Ipswich HE Wednesdays – Shared lunch and activities. Contact Emma: emma@nattyem.co.uk
Ipswich town centre group + Book Club – regular meetings. Contact Lisa: 07538 102322 llw_llg@yahoo.co.uk
Tostock HE Group – All families welcome to this very friendly group. Contact Jan: 01359 251184 angusto@btinternet.com

Surrey

Dorking Home Educators – meet fortnightly. Social and pre-booked activities, outings & trips. Amanda: schrodingerscat81@hotmail.com <http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/DorkingHomeEducators/>
Godalming HE Group – A group for HE families based in South West Surrey and surrounding area. <http://swsurrey-home-ed.co.uk>
Home Educators Learning Project (HELP) – educational support, outings. <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/HELearningProject/>
Leatherhead Home Education Group – Leatherhead and surrounding area regular day trips and activities. Chrissie: 07840285703 christabelthorpe@hotmail.com
Surbiton Home Ed Group (SHED) – occasional field trips, picnics, workshops, etc. Contact Ingrid: ingrid.meaker@mac.com
Sutton/Epsom HE group – Meets weekly and also monthly for outings. Contact Neia: neia.glynn@btinternet.com
SW Surrey Home Ed – Weekly gatherings Farnham or Godalming. <http://www.swsurrey-home-ed.co.uk/index.php>

Sussex

ActiveEO HE Group W Sussex and Hants (see Hampshire)
Brighton and Hove Home Educators – Information on HE events and groups in the area. <http://bhhe.wordpress.com/>
Eastbourne EO Group – Regular gatherings & activities. <http://www.shinies.org.uk/>

Forest Row HE Group – regular monthly meetings + many other fun & learning

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/forestrowhomeeducators>.

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

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

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

JIGSAW – social events, educational group excursions, curriculum support, etc. Contact: leliot@gmail.com

South Eastern Home Educators – (Kent/Sussex) See Kent for details
Wealden Home Educators' Network (WHEN) (SE England) see Kent.

Warwickshire

Creative Youth Adventure Club (Coventry) – monthly HE Group for all ages, activities and social get together. Also Arts Awards. Contact Sarah: sarah@nellyb.co.uk

Warwick District HE – Warwick/Leamington. Primarily for 0-11 but all welcome. Weekly meet for play etc. + trips etc. Contact Alison: 07782 299181 <http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/warwickhe>

Wiltshire

Chapmanslade H E Group – for anyone Home Educating (or considering

it) in town and surrounding area. Meetings twice monthly.

Contact Maria: maria@trivialbusiness.co.uk

FRHEBees – Salisbury & West Hampshire (New Forest). Warm, friendly welcoming group. Contact Sonia: 01722 711666

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

Salisbury Plain Home Education Circle – Parents who use the National Curriculum as guidance, but believe that best education comes from experience. Contact Dee: dee.dilloway@yahoo.com 07753 260317

Worcestershire

Bewdley HE Group – Weekly meetings, social/activities etc. all welcome. Sophie 01299 405669, sophiebutcher29@yahoo.co.uk

Worcester Home Educators – Meetings usually at least weekly throughout term time at various locations round the county. www.worcestershire-home-educators.co.uk/

Worcestershire Home Ed Yahoo Group Email list for Worcs HERS <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/worcestershirehome-ed/>

Worcestershire Home Educators Network –

Yorkshire

DHE Doncaster home educators Yahoo group for families in the Doncaster and surrounding areas. Contact Cheryl: 07825 914340 cheryl0407@aol.com <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/DHE/>
HENNEY (Home Education Network North East Yorkshire) Regular meet ups around Scarborough and East coast area. Contact Lisa: lisa_riley@tiscali.co.uk henny-owner@yahoo.co.uk

Huddersfield Art Workshops – Monthly 8 yrs 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/> Contact Mandy: 01484 460026 meandchi7@yahoo.co.uk

Yorkshire Home Edders Yahoo! group – Friendly & active group with visits & workshops for children 8-16.

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

NYHEC (group for HE parents) – for parents HEing in North Yorkshire. nyhecowner@yahoo.co.uk

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/>

Contact Pauline: 077764 06409 collicandydog123@yahoo.co.uk

SYHEC – Yahoo! group for parents HEing in South Yorkshire.

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

Wakefield District Home Education Group – Est. 2013. Currently regular Bowling & Ice skating, plus more trips and visits as numbers increase. Contact Tracey: wakefieldHE-owner@yahoo.co.uk

Regional Groups

East of England – **East Anglian Home Ed Network**

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

East Midlands – **East Midlands Home Ed Forum** – inform and support HE families in the East Midlands.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/oup/emhe>

South East

FLAGS (Kent/Surrey/Sussex) – Active group (Kent/Surrey/Sussex) meeting weekly during term time <http://www.flags-education.org>

Karen 01732 864524 korenlow@uwclub.net

ActiveHO HE Group based in West Sussex and Hampshire

Contact number 01243 552168 bevmats@btinternet.com

Home-EASE (Home Education for all South East) – Group of HE

families in SE England. 0753 1677 083

homeeducatingmum@yahoo.co.uk

South East Home Educators – (Kent/Sussex) See Kent for details.
Wealden Home Educators' Network (WHEN) (SE England) see Kent.

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. southdevonhc@gmail.com

<http://hecontactssandeventssw.yolasite.com>

HE in Bristol and SW – see Bristol

West Midlands

Birmingham Home Ed (& W.Mids) – meetings and events for HE families. <http://www.homeeducationbirmingham.org.uk>

HELM – home education group located mainly within the Birmingham, West Midlands area. Any and all home-educating parents welcome.

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HELM_home_ed/

Isle of Man

Home Education on the Isle Of Man – Contact Dawn: sewellbunch@yahoo.co.uk

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

Wales

Cardiganshire – group meets on one afternoon per week near Lampeter. Social with occasional activities. Contact: 01558 685521 thisttlelightofmine@phonecoop.coop

Carmarthenshire

Camarthen HE Group – Regular meetings in Johnstown Carmarthen caroline.milburn@yahoo.com

North Carmarthen HE Group – meetings for friendship & play.

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

Conwy

PLANT CONWY – Weekly get togethers in the village of Conwy for Home edders - all welcome. Contact: lily@ogge.co.uk

Denbighshire

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

Flintshire

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

Glamorgan

Bridgend Home Educators – free play, GCSE classes, Arts Award, outside speakers, activities, etc. www.bridgendhomeeducators.org or email info@bridgendhomeeducators.org

Cardiff Home Education Group – Meets Mondays during term time, in Pontcanna. Social group children all ages, everyone welcome. Contact Sarah: cardiffhomeeducationgroup@gmail.com
www.cardiffhomeeducationgroup.wordpress.com

New Foundations HE – Meets Cardiff Thursdays 10-4. All activities free. <http://www.newfoundationshe.com> 02920 216502
newfoundationshe@virginmedia.com

Gwynedd

Creative Learning and Support – Now meet every Wed. pm in Bangor. Contact Julie on 01286 678181 or Sarah on 01248 355182. <http://www.creativelearningandsupport.co.uk>

Garnolbenmaen Home Education Group Social home ed group based near Porthmadog. <http://garngroup.co.uk/> Contact Steve: mungfu@gmail.com

Langower HE Group – Weekly meetings. rowenna73@hotmail.com

Monmouthshire

Monmouth Home Educators – Meet weekly for fun and friendship, arts, crafts, games and sports. All ages welcome. Check for dates and times. Contact Roxy: 07765 058 777

Usk Home Education – Monthly (Thurs) meet other HEs in the area for fun and games and cups of tea. Contact Roxy: cdsnhf@gmail.com or 01989 768 128
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HerefordshireHE/>

Neath Port Talbot

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

Powys

New Leaf HE Group (Newtown) – Occasional meetings for varied activities all ages. siouxcatsy@yahoo.co.uk

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

Regional

Elective Home Education Wales – Linking HE families across Wales. <http://www.ehew.co.uk>

Monmouth/Hereford/Gloucester – for information about group activities in the Monmouth/Hereford/Gloucester area local EO member Roxy 01989 768128 cdsnhf@googlemail.com

New Foundations – HE group and charity offering social & educational activities and support in Cardiff and South Wales. Every Mon 10am - 3pm. All HE families welcome.
www.newfoundationshe.com

Jayne: newfoundationshe@virginmedia.com Or 02920216502

South Wales Home Educators Network – Email list for Home Educators in and around S Wales to arrange get-togethers/events, share ideas & news and offer support.
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/swhen/>

Channel Islands

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

Guernsey Home Educators – Group of home educators and those sympathetic to home education in Guernsey. Contact Yvonne: 01481 264776 or Atplir@hotmail.com

International (UK based)

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

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

Group organisers – please remember that although the EO paper newsletter is sent only to EO members, some people pass them on to libraries, etc. so for security reasons it is best not to give specific times and places of group meetings.

This is even more important for your entry in the Local Group listing on the EO website, because that is in the public area and can be accessed by anyone.

Please also notify us promptly of contact & other changes via the Local Groups Co-ordinator: eolg@educationotherwise.org

Freedom Poem (Paula, Wisbech)

Make your own sunshine,

Make your own luck,

Make your own rules,

If you think life sucks

Take some chances, say yes more,

Or else your life will be a bore,

Don't sit and wait for opportunity to knock,

Get off your ass and use yer block

Be the change you want to see,

Do what it takes to get yourself free,

Don't whinge and whine about your lot,

Or numb yerself with booze or pot –

Dream it, do it, and dare to be

As happy and free as you deserve to be,

Life is short so do what you love

And your life will fit you like a glove.

Who does What in EO

Current Trustees [Council Members]

Jonathan Adams

jadams@educationotherwise.org

Julie Arnold (*Treasurer*)

jarnold@educationotherwise.org

Lei Ashe (*Local Contacts Co-ord*)

lashe@educationotherwise.org

Shena Deuchars (*Membership Sec.*)

sdeuchars@educationotherwise.org

Vicki Hon vhon@educationotherwise.org

Jill Ingle jingle@educationotherwise.org

Hanna Newton

hnewton@educationotherwise.org

Fe Mukwamba-Sendall

fsendall@educationotherwise.org

Anne Rix (*Chair, Publications Sec., Acting Co. Secretary, Acting NL Co-ord., Buckstopper-General!*) arix@educationotherwise.org

Edwina Theunissen (*Enquiries Sec.*)

e.theunissen@educationotherwise.org

Kathleen Thompson

kthompson@educationotherwise.org

N.B. Email to

trustees@educationotherwise.org

goes to all trustees

Address for general correspondence by letter:

Education Otherwise

P.O. Box 1309, BLACKPOOL, FY1 9HN

WEBSITE: www.educationotherwise.net

Webmaster: Tom

webmaster@educationotherwise.org

Membership

Membership enquiries, address changes,

membership cards, new member admin:

please contact the Membership Secretary:

membership@educationotherwise.org

or by post to: EO Membership, PO Box 1309,

Blackpool, FY1 9HN

Other Useful Contacts

Anti-Bullying Contact: Kathleen Thompson
01942 89 77 79

College/GCSE Contact: Roger Scaife
roger.scaife@gmail.com

GCSEs at Home: Louise 08445 003 688

GCSE/Exams email list:

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

HE Exams Wiki: www.home-education-exams.org.uk

Exam Centres list: http://he-exams.wikia.com/wiki/Finding_an_exam_centre

Concessions Contact: Lynsey Scott
concessions@educationotherwise.org

Concessions Co-ordinator: Cornelia Theunissen
c.theunissen@educationotherwise.org

Enquiries Secretary: Edwina Theunissen 01978
661 882 enquiries@educationotherwise.org

Flexi-schooling: VACANT

Local Contacts Co-ordinator: Lei Ashe
lcco-ordinator@educationotherwise.org
(or via Enquiries Secretary.)

Local Group Insurance: Anne Rix
lgic@educationotherwise.org

Local Groups Listings: Kennell Family
eolg@educationotherwise.org

Newsletter Coordinator: VACANT (Anne Rix Acting)
eonl@educationotherwise.org

Publications Secretary: Anne Rix (see Trustee list)

School Anxiety Support: VACANT

Single Parent Contact: Sam Kruger 08445 003794
singleparent@educationotherwise.org

Special Needs: Alisa: 01749 830034 / 07707 060973
Denice: send@educationotherwise.org

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

Treasurer: Julie Arnold
treasurer@educationotherwise.org

Volunteer Co-ordinator: Wendy Knight
vol-coordinator@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.

Education Otherwise Association Ltd.
P.O. Box 1309, Blackpool, FY1 9HN
Helpline 0845 4786 345

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

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