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**Home Education &
Special Needs**

**Home Education
Around the
World - Mexico**

**How Home
Education
Works**

£3

Newsletter - Summer 2011

SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

The deadline for inclusion in the autumn 2011 issue is July 30th (news items, August 19th)

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

Email submissions: arix@educationotherwise.org

Postal submissions:

Newsletter Co-ordinator

Education Otherwise

PO Box 3761, Swindon

SN2 9GT

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If you change your address, telephone number, email or other contact details, or if your newsletter does not arrive, please notify us by email: database@educationotherwise.org, or by post: Database Administrator, Education Otherwise, PO Box 3761, Swindon, SN2 9GT

Welcome

This is not how I had hoped to announce our 'new' quarterly newsletter, which we are circulating to every member just this once – you'll also find the full colour version on the new website – all in one place, so you don't need to keep clicking links to read the whole thing. Members who choose the new electronic-only subscription at a reduced rate (see accompanying letter), will not receive further paper copies.

Members tell us that what they want to read is other families' HE experiences, different ideas for activities, resources you've found useful, etc. I've got one in the pipeline for next issue – but it would be good to have several on the theme of how Home Educators Do It - (in pyjamas, at lunch-time ...?)

NL Co-ordination is still on my desk for the time being. However, the production side of the job has been taken on by Rob Stone – it's a great relief not to have to do the entire layout, design etc. as well as gathering the contributions. We still need more help with the NL and I've now revised the task lists, so please request these if you're interested (see Volunteer Vacancies). As Publications Secretary I'll remain involved and available for support and backup if needed.

Some sections (e.g. Local Groups) are incomplete – bear with us, we're still trying to catch up ... (and keep checking the website).

Anne Rix 1st June 2011

(Acting NL Co-ordinator)

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Heidi de Wet

It is with great sadness that the trustees of Education Otherwise have to report the sudden death on 26th May of Heidi de Wet, who had been a trustee since November 2010 and was currently Membership Secretary.

Heidi had been taking a break from her EO duties on a family boating holiday, when she collapsed; she died shortly afterwards in hospital.

As well as being a stalwart of EO administration and an invaluable colleague, Heidi had a thoughtful and generous personality. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her. Our thoughts and sympathy are with Heidi's husband Tony (also a trustee) and her sons Colin and Aidan.

Donations in Heidi's memory may be sent to Liberty (www.liberty-human-rights.org.uk/index.php) and entries for a book of remembrance are being collected at memorial@educationotherwise.org or by letter to: *Remembrance, P.O. Box 3761, Swindon, SN2 9GT*

EO Trustees



Home Education and Special Needs

by Andrew, Teignbridge EO local contact.

Although home education may not seem the obvious choice for special needs children, sometimes a different approach can be the right one, as it provides the opportunity for each child to progress at their own rate and in their own direction, without the pressure of a formal educational environment. A tendency to anxiety is not going to be helped by having a deadline when our loved one will have to pass their grades. Waiting until confidence is at a high and wanting to take certain qualifications seems more appropriate. However, if we feel we need to be more supportive and flexible, that should not apply only to education and qualifications.

The question “how will I be able to socialise my son or daughter?” could seem a major obstacle to home educating. This may be a little difficult to start with, especially if there were socialising problems at school. The most common answer is usually to follow their own individual interests, which can often lead to a socialising circle, e.g.: art classes, gymnastics, swimming, chess,

photography etc. Home education groups can vary, from meeting up in the same places to different ones, large numbers to a smaller circle of friends, or some a mixture of both. So usually a Home Education group can be found to suit. Also, there is the less formal style of socialising that some children love, such as playgrounds, indoor soft play centres and other local attractions. The National Trust and other local organisations do regular activities. Even if there are no ‘friends’ to find, there is still the opportunity to be out and about, but you will need to watch the child to make sure there are no difficulties for them.

There can be some children who just do not want to socialise (the LA will often accept this with some special needs) and Tony Attwood (specialist in Asperger’s) states this with ‘he won’t be interested in socialising full stop.’ Just how difficult interacting can be for some children is shown by the problems that school (whether mainstream or special) raises for them. Tony Attwood says – ‘get them out of there and home school them.’ The great plus

of home educating is there is no rigid way of doing it, because it is what works best for the child.

Parents of children who have difficulties will more than likely have to deal with a double edged sword when it comes to educating/socialising their children (in school or other type of education). This is because whatever type of impairment the child may have, they could also have anxiety and confidence issues. As if that is not enough to contend with, there are other people's perceptions of your child and even of yourself! Some children may not appear to have an obvious disability but cause mayhem or suffer silently because they live in a world which is very confusing for them, and only a specialised paediatrician or someone with experience will understand (these can suffer from bossy know-hows - those 'put children in their place' adults). Other children may look different and have to deal with prejudice from their peers (and from some adults).

A Leeds University project on disabled children reports that some children say other children won't play with them because they are disabled, some say it is hard to find friends, and some say 'when you're in public, people stare at you'. These problems could be very difficult to deal with in school-type education but if home educated, then at least we can choose where and when to take our children out into the community or on excursions.

The public holidays and summer months can be some of the most challenging times for getting out and about, whether at school or not. Attractions that should be great places to go for younger ones, such as theme parks, local zoos/events and local parks, can be suddenly transformed to busy crowded areas. This could unnerve a sensitive child from going out, or result in a more confident but more obviously less able child being a victim of prejudice. Possibly home educated children are less vulnerable in this context, as they are able to do this type of socialising more out of public holiday time, and so suffer less. By

thinking ahead, the problem can be avoided and something else planned, so there is not even a break in any routines. Check if somewhere is busy before you go if possible, and have a plan B. Not all children are the same and some just need more time than others to be able to do certain things. Do not be too concerned if your child feels they cannot go because it is busy; try to arrange something quieter. In time a child may get used to a busier environment if you do things gradually, but there is not the need to force it.

Conclusion: Special needs children can really flourish when home educated. They and we find what works for them and what they enjoy doing, becoming creative! This gives them confidence and they become happier. As Samuel and Bryant discovered: 'it is the social situation that influences whether or not a child will show what they know' (The Educational Approach Of Jean Piaget).

References:

Tony Atwood and Aspergers:

<http://www.tonyattwood.com.au/>

Leeds University project on disabled children:

<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/disability-studies/projects/children/kidsnews.pdf>

The Educational Approach Of Jean Piaget:

<http://forum.education-otherwise.org/viewtopic.php?f=170&t=5019>

EO Members forum, Disability and special needs:

<http://forum.education-otherwise.org/viewforum.php?f=41>

A support email list for parents home educating special needs children: www.he-special.org.uk

Home Education Around the World - Mexico -

by Corinna

Mexico is very different from the countries we have covered so far. As there are no clear laws on compulsory school attendance (apart from the fact that schooling is required through lower secondary school only) and age requirements for schooling also vary in all states, home education can legally flourish without much interference by the general government - in theory.

In practice, numbers are still low; the HSDLA reckons around 5,000 families. There seem to be several support groups (religious and secular) in Mexico City, but not much is going on in rural areas, so that families can feel quite isolated when trying it out for the first time. Here are some impressions from my e-mail friend Graziella, who currently lives in the country:

“Escuela en Casa or Educación en el Hogar, as home education is called in Mexico, is extremely rare, especially among Catholic people. Some protestants, however, have been practising it for years, but since they are a minority, it is not well-known overall”.



Some families have found a school that takes them on their list without the kids needing to be present. They get their books from the school (as the state provides them for every student signed up at a school) and sit their exams there, but it is not clear in how far this system is actually legal. Particularly families of older children fear it may be hard for them to get into college and university later, as students have to show their various school diplomas to do so.

The annual homeschooling conference usually attracts several hundred parents and is constantly growing. It has been organized in northern Mexico by El Hogar Ecuador, the homeschool ministry, for the past 15 years (read about it in this article: <http://www.homeschoolfoundation.org/index.php?id=111>).

Some helpful websites:

- <http://www.hslda.org/hs/international/Mexico/default.asp>
- http://mx.groups.yahoo.com/group/Educando_En_Familia/
(Yahoo group for homeschooling families in Latin America in general, Spanish).
- <http://www.elhogareducador.org/>
(free magazine for Christian home educators, also in the USA, Spanish)
- <http://www.guidetopuebla.com/Homeschooling-in-Mexico.html> (report from an expatriate mother in Puebla).



How Home Education Works - One family's story

(from EONL no. 141, August 2001 – and just as relevant in 2011)

Six months ago, my husband and I decided that we would home educate our son. We had no choice – he had become school-phobic through no fault of his own. We had watched him go through months of agony and been through the same ourselves. We had watched our son go through the sort of stress which, had he been an adult, would most likely have ensured him months off work and counselling. And yet, we were still advised to force him back into a situation that affected him so badly. It had got to the stage where he was threatening to harm himself. He was a nervous wreck, and close to a breakdown.

The reason, as is often the case, was a bullying problem that had not been dealt with effectively. Our boy had lost faith in the teachers to sort things out. Frankly, so had we. Surely every child has the right to feel safe at school?

Other schools were not really an option at this stage, although we tried. However, by this time our son had lost faith in the whole education system.

To be honest, the thought of home education terrified us initially. We could not afford to employ home tutors, and we were not teachers. There were some excellent correspondence courses available but they were far too expensive for us to even consider. However, we soon discovered there was a wealth of information at our fingertips. We joined an excellent group "Education Otherwise", which consists of other home educating families, and began attending local meetings. EO also has a network of people who can be contacted for advice. The Home Education Advisory Service is also very good. Many museums allow us free entry on production of our EO card.

For the first 'term' we realised that our son needed a period of recovery. He had lost his sense of humour, his self-esteem, and was sleeping badly, suffering from frequent nightmares. For those few months we allowed him to choose to learn about things he was most interested in. He did this with an enthusiasm that astounded us.

Now, several months later, we understand what home education is all about. The child is educated rather than schooled. There is a big difference.

Our son learns from many different sources – CD roms, the internet, library books, history, geography, science, biology, English, maths, I.T. and DIY programmes on digital satellite television programmes and also from the BBC Learning Zone and 4Learning. He reads two newspapers daily and is keen to discuss various topics such as politics and education, among others. His computer skills have rocketed. He has started up his own website building business, and has written to professional people for advice, of his own accord. We are trying to find a mentor in this field to guide and encourage him further. His latest project is a website for home educated kids, where they can all communicate with each other. Socially he still has friends that he sees in the area where we live, and he has also made other friends through Education Otherwise.

Our child is not doing GCSE courses at this stage but can go on to college and take these when he is older – if he chooses. I imagine academics reading this will throw up their hands in horror, but our child is motivated, he is learning, and most of all he is happy.

He is following a path of his own choosing, with supervision and tuition from us, his parents. Imagine if we had gone to a school and learnt only the subjects that we truly enjoyed and were interested in along with the basics of English and Maths? Imagine if such a school had catered only to our individual needs, rather than forcing us to learn languages which we loathed, and wouldn't even need later in life, for example? How many of us, then, would be in careers we love rather than jobs we hate because we had been able to pursue subjects which we had a thirst for learning about? Not possible I know in the education system as it is, but in Home Education – yes!

Since I wrote this piece which was printed as a letter in our local newspaper, our son has had the website he created for kids of EO accepted by the council of EO. He has also done a week's work experience at a company which creates and makes computer games. I am sending this in case it may help and encourage other people who are worried about home educating.

(name and address supplied)

NEW SCIENCE DAY FOR HOME-EDDERS WHERE THE KIDS ACTUALLY GET TO DO THE EXPERIMENTS THEMSELVES!

Hi Everybody! Adults and Kids!

I am a home-ed mum of four from the North Wales area. Currently I am looking at doing some Edexcel Science IGCSEs with my older kids – chemistry, biology and physics. I have downloaded the curriculum and bought the relevant books etc. and begun to work through them with my kids.

It is becoming apparent to me that if we want to do all the required experiments it is quite a logistical and financial challenge! I did price some chemicals, and was disappointed at the large volumes that I would have to buy, plus the cost of the haz-mat shipping was very expensive. And frankly, a lot of chemicals were just unavailable to the 'general public'. This is before I had even looked at the cost of lab equipment!

I had the idea to approach Technquest, which is a science/discovery centre in Wrexham (on the Glyndwr University site) that we attend monthly because they hold home-ed science days (they put a Barbie to a Van de Graaff generator recently – it was class!)



I explained to Technquest the problem for home-ed kids of getting to do hands-on experiments linked to IGCSE/GCSE courses. The man I have been speaking to is called Scot Owen and he is the new education manager for Technquest, he is a laid-back guy but very enthusiastic for the idea of holding home-ed 'IGCSE experiment-days' where the kids get to actually do experiments themselves, with help and demonstrations being on

hand. Scot has spent the past 6 years teaching A level science in schools, and is familiar with GCSE level requirements as well. He is currently looking at the Edexcel IGCSE curriculum to determine which experiments would be best. Scot is very honest about his brief at Technquest, which is to bring in numbers of people, plus some cash on the door. We did talk about price, and really it comes down to numbers of people who would attend. Maybe £10-£15 each for the day, maybe less. The more kids who attend the cheaper it will be. We are totally guessing at the numbers at the moment thinking it might be 10-20-30-40 kids. We don't know yet if we are talking monthly sessions? Bi-monthly? Quarterly? We really are in the early stages of this project!

Scot is saying we might go for a first session on the first Monday in September. I assume it will be more-or-less a whole day affair. It is a good centre, there is plenty of parking and little eating places there. Scot is talking about mixing it up - maybe doing some chemistry/biology and physics experiments all on the one day. And his team are going to do an A4 type write-up on each experiment which we will be able to access through Glyndwr University's Moodle (VLE) site, which Technquest will give you password activated access to. This will help you to prepare kids for the day, or maybe it will be helpful to refer back to later.

There are on-going possibilities, there is a second Technquest centre in Cardiff, and it might be possible to link with the home-ed friendly Catalyst chemistry centre. Who knows, maybe we could end up asking them to be an exam centre for all our young home-ed scientists!

What we need at this stage is for people to register an interest so that Technquest can gauge possible numbers of people. More importantly, because this project is being assembled now, Scot and his team want to know what it is you want 'science-experiment days' to offer. Are there any particular experiments that you want the kids to do? And we are talking about the kids being able to do the experiments themselves rather than them just watching 'demonstrations'.

Although we have been talking about the Edexcel IGCSE curriculum if you need experiments

for another curriculum let Scot know, you have a chance here to say just what science experiments you would like see offered at these events. And of course it goes without saying that you don't have to be doing the exams to take part in the 'experiment days'.

I hope you can see the positives in this. It seems to me to be a case where home-edders and Techniquet can maybe help each other. I cannot do these experiments cheaper at home, if at all. And although it is possible for the kids to learn the experiments without actually doing them, I personally would rather they had a chance to try stuff out for themselves. After all, it is the experiment that proves the theory!

Finally, please please please mail this to all your home-ed friends/groups, and please please if you are interested in coming e-mail scot@tqg.org.uk (or telephone him on 01978 293 584) and have your say in how you would like these kinds of 'science-experiment days' organised and what you would like to see happening on the day.

Thanks in advance to all for your interest!

Mandy: mike@mikephoenix.freeserve.co.uk

P.S. if you google Techniquet Wrexham you can get a better idea of what the centre is about.

TRAVEL ON THE CHEAP FOR HOME EDUCATORS

Hi, I'm an American Homeschooling Mom who has begun a Home Exchange Site for Home-schoolers to enable them to use travel as a way to educate their children. My heart is that it will spread worldwide so as to connect homeschooling families the world over. I would love to offer to your members the opportunity to take advantage of our service at half price (which would be about 9-10 GBP) Please visit our site to see if it is something that your members would benefit from. It would be fabulous to connect your members even if only in the UK, but potentially in our countries as well. I hope to hear from you.

Amy Simpkins Davidson,
www.hsneighbor.com, amy@hsneighbor.com

12th STUDLAND BAY CAMP DORSET FRIDAY 15TH TO FRIDAY 22ND JULY 2011

Chrystia and Keith still warmly welcome all Home Educating families. Come and meet adults and young people with years of home educating experience.

- A wild and beautiful area of pine forest and lowland heath
- 4 miles to the sea, dunes and bird sanctuary
- Dorset steam railway nearby to the beach at Swanage
- Free outings to Corfe castle
- Cycleways and paths through the woods to the sea
- Camping in a large field backed by pine woods and nearby stream
- Access to facilities at adjoining Burnbake campsite
- We bring canoes, cargo nets, rope swings and large army tent
- You bring bikes, drums, instruments
- We sing together and play instruments around a fire on some evenings
- There is a mid week bring and share meal
- Morning - acapella / gospel / taize & children's singing; some sharing meetings

Cost for week £120 a family

(concessions and daily rate available)

Teenagers welcome with families only.

Information & booking: *Chrystia & Keith Hertogs, 75 Kent House Rd Sydenham, London SE26 5LJ*

Tel: 020 8776 8597

And then you could pack up your tent and dash across country to:-

The Home Educators Summer Festival HESFES 2011

is at Rougham Airfield, Rougham, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. Sat 23 to Sat 30 July.

Lots of Workshops, Live Music, Entertainment & Activities. 12 Marquees, 3 Stages, Toddler Play Area, Cinema, Teen Tent, Cafes & More....

Ticket price includes 7 nights camping and all facilities, workshops and activities.

Single Day/Overnight tickets also available.

Huge venue at Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk

More details: www.hesfes.co.uk

CONCESSIONS FOR EO MEMBERS

Please note: this section is in course of being updated, and additional entries will be added to the concessions list on the new website, www.education-otherwise.net where links to further details are also available. For information and suggestions about concessions, please email the EO Concessions Contact, concessions@educationotherwise.org For more information and instructions on how to access the EO discounts (where applicable) please see members area of website.

Booked Up – The Book Trust

Booked Up's goal is to encourage and support independent reading for pleasure by providing each Year 7 child in England with a free book from a list of specially selected titles. The new book-list will be announced and registration (online only) will open on 13th June. If you are a home educator with a child who will be of Year 7 age in September 2011, you can also take part. More details and registration at www.bookedup.org.uk

The Maths Factor

Themathsfactor.com is Carol Vorderman's online maths school, which offers online maths tuition for primary aged children to use at home. Standard subscription is £14.99 per month – price for Home Educators £12.99 per month; first month's subscription is only £9.99. Annual subscription for Home Educators £125 per year (saving more than £49 off standard monthly subscription). Further details about the course and other products, together with a host of free resources, can be found at www.themathsfactor.com

Mathletics and Spellodrome

Mathletics covers Key Stage 1 to A Level National curriculum framework. Spellodrome is a fun way of enabling students (age 5-14) to develop their own spelling strategies. Full annual subscription: Mathletics = £39 per student ; Spellodrome = £20 per student Discounted EO subscription (new account): Mathletics = £25; spellodrome = £12.50; both £37.50 (renewal) Mathletics - £20; Both £30. More details at www.mathletics.co.uk and www.spellodrome.co.uk

Conquer Maths

Online Maths Tutoring system, covering Key Stage 3 (11-16) and Key Stage 4 (14-16), also available on CD-ROM. Hundreds of animated lessons, narrated by an experienced teacher. Every lesson includes printable, automatically marked tests. Free trial of 16 complimentary lessons, complete tutorials including printable worksheets with automatic marking. www.conquermaths.com
40% off discount for EO members

Bright Spark Education

Expert Maths tutors online. All maths graduates, trained in the UK curriculum, providing one-to-one tuition, for students aged 7 to 16, from only £12 per hour. Virtual classrooms allow student and tutor to talk live and clearly. With free, unlimited use of our online testing, presentations and past papers. 10% discount offered when you subscribe. www.brightsparkeducation.com/

Brain Pop

Educational animated movies in a wide range of subject areas for children of both primary and secondary school age. Provides unlimited access for up to 3 home computers for 12 months. Full price Annual subscription of £49 + VAT; Two types of EO discount – one gives EO members 18 months' access for the price of 12, or the other 28% off a home school/family annual subscription. More information and free trial at www.brainpop.co.uk/

The National Trust

Education Group Membership (school term time only) also available to home-educating families. Does not apply on Bank Holidays, weekends or school holidays. Application form from: The National Trust Membership department, PO Box 39, Warrington, Cheshire WA5 7WD Telephone: 0844 800 1895 Minicom: 0844 800 4410 Email: enquiries@thenationaltrust.org.uk For membership that begins immediately, enquire at any National Trust property, shop or countryside information point. Application form may also be downloaded from website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-trust/w-support/w-jointoday/w-join-education_group_membership.htm

CONCESSIONS FOR EO MEMBERS

English Heritage

Free entry and resources for home educating families and groups.

www.english-heritage.org.uk/education/free-entry/

Listening Books

Fantastic audio book loaning library for those with print disabilities. 15 months for the price of 12. Listening books also offer grants.

www.listening-books.org.uk/

Software for Students

Discounted software for students.

Available to Home Educated children.

Call to order.

Phone: + 44 (0) 20 7193 5335

Contact

Email: support@software4students.co.uk

Address: Software4Students, Dept 150,
21 botanic Avenue, Belfast, BT7 1JJ

www.software4students.co.uk/

Potato Council free 'grow your own' kit

Primary age children learn how potatoes grow and how they fit in to a healthy balanced diet. All you have to do is register to receive a FREE potato growing kit, use the supporting lesson plans and worksheets and enter the competition once you have harvested. www.potatoesforschools.org.uk/

Good Morning Children

www.goodmorningchildren.com/index.asp

Good Morning Children Ltd provide interactive whiteboard resources for the thinking classroom.

These primary teaching resources help develop creative thinking skills. Free trial available.

Buy 1 year get 1 year free

Gillingham ice bowl

Silver Blades at Gillingham offer us a massive discount on a Friday morning.

Receive discounted entry price of £4.00 and free group lesson at 11am.

Attendance at the group lesson is compulsory in order to receive discount. This price includes skate hire for the child and one parent/carer.

For details of rink and directions see:

www.silver-blades.co.uk/page/About_Us/Gillingham

Please note this offer is not currently available at other silverblades ice rinks.

Education City

EducationCity.com provides educational games for 3-12 year olds, covering Maths, Literacy, Science, French, German and Spanish. Your child will be able to access games that suit his/her ability exactly and can be different levels for each subject. You will be able to select games by topic or curriculum strand, as well as assess progress made by using EducationCity.com's SuccessTracker feature. The standard annual subscription fee of £29.95 per child includes 3 FREE level upgrades a year (further upgrades @ £1.99).

EducationCity.com offers Education Otherwise members a 30% discount, open to new and existing customers in addition to any multi-year discounts available. Free trial available.

More details at

www.educationcity.com/uk/parents/home-education

Another home educator has just negotiated an alternative arrangement with Education City, to cover a wider age range as an individual child isn't always at the same stage across the board (but you probably can't have the EO discount too!)

She says:

I have arranged for a years subscription to Education City giving complete access from age 3ish to 10ish as Home Educated children never seem to fit into a neat age range! The cost will be £25.00 per family, plus £2 per child which covers the "homework" module. Every child will be able to access all the modules from pre-school games to end of KS2 work for all subjects. I will keep this offer open until the end of June/beginning of July so you may see it advertised again. No money is required until August. Payment is via paypal or direct bank transfer.

I expect everyone to be online by 1 September - fits in with their school year lol! Please respond direct to me (email addy below) - I will answer any questions that have not been covered here - but please do look at their website

www.educationcity.com/

- take the free trial, and read everything there first.

Kind regards,

Jaki

jakiparsons@yahoo.co.uk

----- Volunteer Vacancies -----

General offers:

If you would like to help out but are not sure where your skills would be best used, please contact our Volunteer Co-ordinator, Wendy Knight vol-coordinator@educationotherwise.org. Wendy may also have further details of the jobs listed below, or you may refer to the current post-holder or person named in the item.

Newsletter co-ordinator:

To collate contributions and liaise with various section editors, Publications Secretary, production manager (yes, we have someone to do the technical stuff!), printer (for paper copies) and EO webmaster (for online version). Other NL posts are also vacant – contact Acting NL Co-ordinator Anne - arix@educationotherwise.org for full list and details.

Penpals co-ordinator:

to keep records of Penpal applications, forward replies, etc. (not currently functioning)

Children's Pages co-ordinator:

Children's Pages haven't been produced for some time, but we would like to reinstate this, perhaps on a quarterly basis, starting in September. You need to work with the young editors who take on one issue at a time and, as we don't have a list to carry over, if you have a child who would like to give it a go that might be a good start. Please contact acting NL co-ordinator (as above) to consider possibilities.

Both the above posts would require CRB check, which EO can provide.

Local Contact Round Up

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

Updating information leaflets

It's like the Forth Bridge, this one – no sooner has our information been revised, than something changes and it needs doing again. So I need a volunteer to keep an eye on each of the downloadable leaflets, check out that links and other contact details still work, keep up with new developments/defunct areas, etc. Have a look at www.education-otherwise.net and choose your interest – or if you notice a topic that isn't there but would be useful to other home educators, compile the information and send it in.

Please contact

EO Publications Secretary

Anne Rix - arix@educationotherwise.org

SEN contact required to answer telephone calls. Surely there's someone out there who would be prepared to give this a go? We have quite a lot of email queries, which are dealt with separately, but we really need someone who can answer the occasional telephone call from someone without email access. The right person will have experience and knowledge of SEN and disabilities beyond that of their own children, knowledge of the SEN Code of Practice, knowledge of how local authorities, including social care, operate and preferably experience or training in telephone counselling. Please contact - jskillen@educationotherwise.org

Helpline Telephone Volunteers

The EO Helpline still needs more volunteers. Some of those who came forward in response to earlier requests are only able to do it temporarily, and there is little leeway if someone is unwell or otherwise unable to take their rota slot. Even if you can only manage a short time, that could be helpful. Please contact

Edwina (Enquiries Co-ordinator)

for more information:

e.theunissen@educationotherwise.org

Manager for Amazon shop on website

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

contact swillans@educationotherwise.org

Reviews

Brainbox English History

Price: £10.00

Recommended

Ages: 8+

**Number of players:
1 or more**



Brainbox games are a big hit with my family and one of their latest offerings is no exception. We are recently given *Brainbox English History* and have enjoyed it as much as the other games in the series.

Brainbox games, the ten-minute memory recall games, are produced by the Green Board Game Company and cover a variety of topics. We were given *English History*, and other titles in the series include: *Art, World History, All Round London, Inventions, US Presidents, English Kings and Queens* and *Australia*. Each game follows the same premise: players have to answer a random question after studying a fact card for ten seconds. The fact cards are bright and colourful and the information is portrayed in a fun and interesting way. On the reverse of the card there are eight questions and the player rolls a dice to see which question they are going to be asked.

If you answer the question right you get to keep the card, and the first player to reach 10 cards is the winner. The game is simple and easy to play, and above all fun. It is a game that you can play over and over again and not get tired of playing. The game is so much fun that you don't realise that you are learning all sorts of interesting facts and figures. We would recommend this game for children and adults of all ages.

Brain Box Pairs Pro App

Price: 0.59p

Ages: All ages



For those on the go, the Green Board Game Company has come out with an app of their popular BrainBox game. It is called *BrainBox The World Pairs Pro*. It's 59p and is available from Itunes for the Ipad, and Iphone. It is a matching pairs game but with a difference-you match cards based on a country name/flag/capital or outline shape. They don't have to be identical, just from the same country. So for example, if you select a card with the French flag on it you can then match it with a card that shows a map of France, the capital of France or the name of the country itself.

You can choose to play either single or multi-player, and can also select how many cards are in the game, 24 or 40. You can keep track of your speed on the leader board and you can also collect awards for matching cards with speed and accuracy. We played the game on both single and multi-player, and it is fun for playing in short bursts but may get repetitive if you play it for longer periods. My son and I came up with only two ideas for improving the game-the first is the ability to change the topic for the matching pairs. There are only so many times that you can match countries, after playing it for too long and too often it loses some of the thrill. The other suggestion would be the ability to change the size of the cards. It may the format that we were using (iphone) but the map cards could be very hard to see properly. I am sure that playing on a bigger screen would have corrected this, but as the game is available for a variety of devices you should have the same quality on all those devices.

All in all it is a fun game that will help improve your geography and is well worth the price.

Reviews

Willowby's World

Author:

Deidre Edwards

ISBN: 978-0-9556327-1-6

Price: £7.99



Willowby's World by Deidre Edwards is a real find. The author has created an enchanting tale full of magic and adventure that also gently show its readers the path to a happy and fulfilling life. Aimed primarily at independent readers between 9-12, it is also suitable as a read aloud for younger children. Although children are the target audience, it can be equally be enjoyed by teens and adults; the message will resonate for readers of all ages.

As the book unfolds, Willowby, an ancient willow, imparts a lifetime of wisdom to Sonya, a young girl that he befriends. He had been planted by her great, great, grandfather on the banks of a little brook running through his garden. Generations of her family had enjoyed the shade and shelter of the tree but Sonya was the first since her great, great, grandfather to discover that Willowby could speak. Over the course of the spring, summer and autumn, Willowby tells Sonya nine magical tales, each with its own valuable lesson to impart. Each story is tailored to something that is happening in Sonya's life to make the lesson more relevant to both Sonya and the reader.

My son and I both enjoyed this book; he enjoyed the tales while I found the lesson contained within them thought provoking. This is definitely a book to be read and reread and shared with the whole family.

Website: www.willowbysworld.com

Advertising

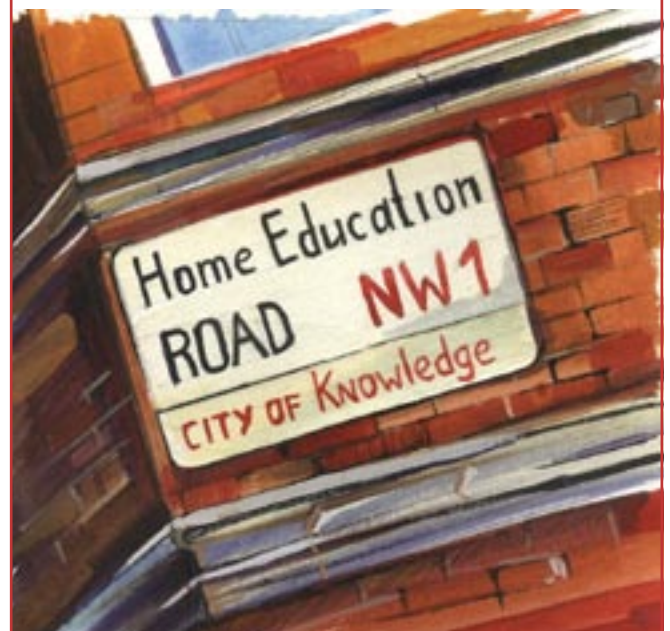
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**Periplus Home Education
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organisation which
provides high quality,
on-line learning for
students aged 11-18.**

Whatever your learning requirement as an individual or a group, we will work to provide a package to meet your need.

Please visit our website
www.periplus.org.uk.



LOCAL HOME EDUCATION GROUPS

N.B. Please contact the group organiser for full details and to check that activities are ongoing. Note also that not all the groups are run by EO members. The following list covers only groups whose contact details have been confirmed so far. This work is ongoing, and other counties will be added to the Local Groups area of the website as and when they have been verified. This is a huge task, and if you have some spare time to spend on emailing/phoning a section of the remaining list (especially if your own area isn't well represented) we would appreciate your help. Please contact the Local Groups co-ordinator, Tracey tfoyster@educationotherwise.org

Group organisers please remember when giving details of events that this list may be seen by people who are not members of Education Otherwise, and adjust your information accordingly. Please also notify us promptly of changes via the Local Groups co-ordinator as above.

ENGLAND

BERKSHIRE

Berkshire Home Educators.

This list is a meeting place for home educating families living in Berkshire and the adjoining counties. <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/berkshirehomeeducators/>

BEDFORDSHIRE

Beds Christian Home Educators - *scottandrachel@ntlworld.com*

We are a group of families based in Dunstable who are educating their children according to their Christian beliefs. We meet once a month to provide support and encouragement to each other with a variety of different activities for the children from babies to late teens. Anyone is welcome to join us but will need to respect the doctrines of the group (based on the home service doctrines) and to be aware that each meeting will have a Christian emphasis.

BedHed

This is an informal group of home educating families in and around Bedford. We meet up regularly for events and social activities, which will be coordinated via the forum on this website.
<http://bedhed.org.uk>

Busy B-He's

Busy Bedfordshire Home Educators have a weekly drop in session offering chats and support and weekly activities including art and play, cooking, indoor games, plus other outdoor events and activities. Email: pauline@kc2001.fsnet.co.uk for more information.
Tel: Pauline 07791 850545

DORSET

HEED

Weekly meetings - Bournemouth
An open, friendly group - Everyone welcome!
For further information contact:
carolstonehe@yahoo.co.uk

HAMPSHIRE

Havant area, ActiveEO,

meetings most weekdays:
<http://www.activeo.org.uk> : Julie, 01243 552472

North Hampshire, NHEO.

Open to all home educators in North Hants & surrounding areas. Regular meetings in Basingstoke, ice skating & other activities.
<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/NHEO/>:
Jaki, 07731 805323 : jakiparsons@yahoo.co.uk
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/nheo>

FRHEBEEs

Free Range & Home Educated Bees. This group exists as a means for home educators in the West Hampshire area and borders to arrange meet ups and activities. Members will receive notices of local group gatherings and any pending outings/activities. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/frhebees>

Hampshire West, Fordingbridge and Ringwood Home Educators, ActiveEO

for home educating families in Chichester, Bognor Regis, Havant, Portsmouth or Petersfield.
<http://www.activeo.co.uk>
Contact Julie on 01243 552780

LOCAL HOME EDUCATION GROUPS

FAREGOS home education group

covers Fareham, Gosport and South Hampshire. Several meetings each week for sports, social activities, art, maths and English tuition for GCSE. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/faregoshe>

Portsmouth Home Education Group

a diverse and friendly group made up of families from the city and surrounding areas with children of all ages. They have a weekly group session along with trips to the park, picnics, visits to places of interest and anything else that takes their fancy. They are always happy to welcome new members. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/portsmouthhomeed/>

Southampton and area

SEEDS

for children age 3+, home educators in Southampton and area, we are a friendly group meeting 4 or 5 times each week. Everyone welcome! Lyn: <http://www.groups.yahoo.com/group/seeds1>

South Hants group

An open group, especially good for advice, opinions and support <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/southhantshomeed/>

Farnham Home Ed Group (E.Hampshire & Surrey) friendly social group for children of all ages, meeting fortnightly on Wednesdays. Serving Farnham, Aldershot and surrounding areas. Paula, 01252 316497 : paula.oakley@talk21.com

KENT

Folkestone and Coastal Home Educators

We welcome membership from families already Home Educating, and those seeking advice and help towards taking the leap into the world of home education. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FolkestoneandCoastalHomeEducators/>

SUSSEX/KENT South Eastern Home Educators

We are a group of Home Educators who meet regularly for family and group Support. We meet every fortnight in Tunbridge Wells at a hall, as well as weekly for other activities including: workshops, bowling, swimming, trips to London theatres and museums and many others. Website <http://www.southeast-home-educators.co.uk>

LOCAL HOME EDUCATION GROUPS

SUSSEX /SURREY/KENT F.L.A.G.S

(on the border of all 3 counties)
active group meeting weekly during term time for hall activities, sports and outings.
Karen, 01732 864524 : karenlow@uwclub.net : <http://www.flags-education.org>

LANCASHIRE

Boneheds

We are a group of families who teach our children at home. We offer help, support, advice and friendship to all families who are home-educating (or who are considering home-education) in Bolton, Lancashire and the surrounding districts. This group concentrates on local meetings and events. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/boneheds/>

LEAD Home Education

Initially a place for creating an awareness of home based education in Lancashire. Also a chance to swap ideas, share stories, arrange local social gatherings and basically everything and anything that comes with home education. http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lead_he/

Home Ed Leyland Yahoo Group

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

SOMERSET

Wiveliscombe/Taunton area group

Monthly meetings on 1st Tuesday of month at Oake Village Hall, & regular outings. Maggie, 01984 624651 or email mas36win@btinternet.com

HE Contacts and Events SW

Home education website/network for the SW, creating new opportunities for home educators. New input welcomed.
Contact: andrew.denise@hotmail.co.uk
<http://he-contactsandevents-sw.yolasite.com/>

The Home Education Centre in Chard

A voluntary group supporting families who educate their children outside the mainstream system. It was set up and is managed by home educators. Based in the southwest, the centre has registered members from Somerset, Dorset and Devon. We work in partnership with other organisations to improve the communications network and raise the profile of alternative education. <http://www.homeeducationcentre.org.uk>

LOCAL HOME EDUCATION GROUPS

North Somerset Home Education Group
weekly children's gym, walks, outings etc.
Vicky, 01275 848425
victoria.preston@yahoo.co.uk
we have a yahoo group for members -
please contact us for more information.

Wells and Mendip Home Education Group (Wam)
We meet weekly for home educated school age kids, run by parents, providing exciting and stimulating projects and activities encouraging urchins into self-discovery! For more information please call 01749 675176

Wells swimming group
Meet weekly for swimming at Wells Leisure Centre - term time only. mumfordturner@hotmail.com
Bath Home Education Group. Contact <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/BathHomeEducation/>

SURREY

Farnham Home Ed Group (E.Hampshire & Surrey)
friendly social group for children of all ages, meeting fortnightly on Wednesdays. Serving Farnham, Aldershot and surrounding areas.
Paula, 01252 316497 : paula.oakley@talk21.com

SUSSEX /SURREY/KENT F.L.A.G.S

(on the border of all 3 counties)
active group meeting weekly during term time for hall activities, sports and outings.
Karen, 01732 864524 : karenlow@uwclub.net :
<http://www.flags-education.org>

SUSSEX

Brighton & Hove Home Educators
There are about half a dozen weekly or fortnightly groups meeting in Brighton alone, and BHHE is a way of bringing information about all these together in one place. Visit their website for further information. Home educating parents (or prospective home educators) who live in or near Brighton & Hove are welcome to join the online support and discussion group.
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bhhe>
<http://Bhhe.wordpress.com>

LOCAL HOME EDUCATION GROUPS

Eastbourne Home Educators Club
hold regular gatherings on Fridays at Shinewater Community Centre, for weekly topics, science, and singing sessions, as well as meeting regularly midweek for sports activities. During the summer months, all our meetings are arranged to be outside. <http://www.shinies.org.uk>

East Sussex Drop In/Social Group
New group fortnightly on Wednesday's 1- 3pm Church Hall, Main Street, Northiam, East Sussex. Contact Helen Day lewis.bosher@btinternet.com

Forest Row

We are a local home educating group who meet in Forest Row once a month on a Monday afternoon, and informally in smaller fun and learning groups at many other times. We have a yahoo group which can be found here
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FRHE/>
contacts are Kim McCabe 01342 810505, James Waters and Kate Leopard.

HEDGE Home Education Group

Based in Hastings/St Leonards the group meets every Friday afternoon in St Leonards on Sea. They have lots of other outings and activities going on each week as well. See website for details of forthcoming activities and how to get in touch.
<http://www.hedge-education.btik.com>
Catherine 01424 812213

Worthing Area Home Education

A regular fortnightly social gathering for families who home educate or are interested in home education and would like to meet families in a similar situation. We meet in a fabulous indoor space with comfy seating, kitchen, indoor basketball court, xbox with Kinect, table football and air hockey; loads of toys and space to run around and even a baby area! Price of £5 per family includes all refreshments. We meet at The Maybridge Keystone Centre, off Raleigh Way, Goring-by-Sea, Worthing BN12 6JD 01903 507466 To find details of our next meeting, either phone the Maybridge Centre, contact the organiser Amanda Trotman at Robert.trotman@yahoo.co.uk or find our facebook group 'Worthing Area Home Education'. Emailed awaiting confirmation.

LOCAL HOME EDUCATION GROUPS

SUSSEX/KENT South Eastern Home Educators

We are a group of Home Educators who meet regularly for Family and Group Support. We meet every fortnight in Tunbridge Wells at a hall, as well as weekly for other activities including: workshops, bowling, swimming, trips to London theatres and museums and many others. Website <http://www.southeast-home-educators.co.uk>

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(on the border of all 3 counties)
active group meeting weekly during term time for hall activities, sports and outings.
Karen, 01732 864524 : karenlow@uwclub.net :
<http://www.flags-education.org>

WILTSHIRE

FRHEBees

Warm, friendly welcoming group covering West Hampshire (was primarily the New Forest) and Salisbury. Please contact Karen (Hampshire) on 01425 652721 and Sonia 01722 711666 for more info. We have a yahoo group, please call Karen or Sonia for more information.

The Outpost

Group located near Chippenham, Wiltshire. We meet every Tuesday in term time only.
www.theoutpost.org.uk

YORKSHIRE

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/yorkshirehomed-ers/>

York Education Otherwise

Would you like to meet other families for activities, outings and mutual support? We have weekly meetings east of York. For further information please email us. contact@yorkeo.co.uk sent email requesting information.

LOCAL HOME EDUCATION GROUPS

YORKSHIRE NORTH

NYHEC Group

for parents HEing in North Yorkshire to communicate and exchange ideas and activities. Click here to contact them.

Nyhec-owner@yahoogroups.com

N/W Yorks Home Ed Group

(YORKSHIRE NORTH+WEST)

meets Skipton monthly and Bradford Gym Club weekly. Regular meetings and outings.

Judith, 01756 791356

ORKSHIRE SOUTH

SYHEC A group for home educating families in South Yorkshire and the surrounding area. They have a yahoo internet support group <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/syhec>

YORKSHIRE SOUTH EAST

Nnott-sheep

An online support group for all home educating parents of special needs/differently abled children in and around Nottinghamshire county and bordering counties. This group is also open to families with children currently attending school but actively considering home education. We provide a mutual support forum to discuss, help and advise on all matters concerning home-education of our special needs children.

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

YORKSHIRE WEST

Huddersfield Home Educators

Monthly themed meetings with crafts, games etc. Wednesday monthly. Click here to contact them.

Helen-royston@yahoo.co.uk

WYHEC Huddersfield, Book Group

second Tuesday of each month, 2-3pm. Marsden Library -age range 6-12 yrs. Jane, 01484 645034 we also have Art Workshops, Thursday, monthly, 10-11am, ages up to 8yrs. 1.30-3.30pm, ages 8+. Huddersfield Art Gallery. Mandy, 01484 460026: Jane, 01484 645034

W A L E S

South Wales Home Educators Network

Email list for Home Educators in and around South Wales to arrange get-togethers and events, share ideas and news and offer support to each other. Use the links on the left to access and upload links, photos and files and view or add events to our calendar.

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

South West Wales Home Ed

Covering Crynant, Swansea, Lampeter, Llanddeusant, Llandeilo and Neath Port Talbot

This is the support, information and "What's-On" list for all families Home-Educating in South-West Wales. Here you will find details of the regular and not-so-regular meetings, Welsh, drama, singing and yoga classes, art and craft workshops, theatre and cinema events, visits to castles and museums, bowling and swimming etc that are organised by various people in various places across all of South-West Wales. Here you will also find information about the legal and practical aspects of Home-Education, ask for and receive help and support, or just share ideas and resources.

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

Monmouth /Hereford/Gloucester

For information about group activities in the Monmouth/Hereford/Gloucester area contact local EO member

Roxy: *cdsnhf@googlegmail.com*

or phone: 01989 768128.

CARMARTHENSHIRE

North Carmarthen Home Ed Group

Getting children together to make friends and play with other home educated and home schooled children, sharing friendly parenting ideas, and helping each other.

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

Carmarthen Home Ed group

Carmarthen Home Ed group meets on alternate Wednesdays

12.30pm- 3.30pm at Johnstown, Carmarthen

Contact: *caroline.milburn@yahoo.com*

DENBIGHSHIRE

Froncysyllte HE Group

Fortnightly group, meets 10-4pm. Social play and chat. Email: *vivodsam@gmail.com*

GLAMORGAN

New Foundations H.E

Meets Cardiff, Thursdays 10-4. All activities are free. Contact Jayne Palmer 0292 021 6502,

newfoundationshe@virginmedia.com

<http://www.newfoundationshe.com>

Bridgend Home Education Group

We meet every Tuesday between 10am and 2pm at Tondy. Contact *hectaremagill@aol.com* or go to *bridgendhomeeducators.org*

Newport Home Education Group

Fiona Taylor: *fionataylor910@btinternet.com*

Ty-Du welfare grounds, Rogerstone, 1-4pm. £4 per family

GWYNEDD

Tregarth Creative Learning and Support

Meet every Wednesday 12 - 5pm.

Free weekly newsletter of events via email. A collective of like-minded parents and children living predominantly in North West Wales who believe in the ethos of home learning and education.

Contact Julie: 01286 678181

jdchapmanmaurice@aol.com

<http://www.creativelearningandsupport.co.uk>

Llangower HE Group

Meetings on Fridays 12-5 £4 /family.

Email: *rowenna73@hotmail.com*

LOCAL HOME EDUCATION GROUPS

MONTGOMERYSHIRE

Shiny Happy Children

Regular meetings in Llanfyllin and surrounding areas.

Contact Katie: llanfyllinHE@gmail.com

NEATH PORT TALBOT

Wise Up Community HE Group

A registered charity operating in and around the Neath Port Talbot area of South Wales. Aims to offer support and information to home educating families and those considering home education as an option for their children. Activities include: weekly social and activity club in Port Talbot; Science Club; resource library; Educational Activity Days at museums, historical sites, art galleries and industrial sites around South and West Wales.

We welcome families who decide to home educate for many reasons including lifestyle choice, or as a response to problems in school.

All activities are free to members.

ianna.violet@hotmail.com

<http://www.wiseuphe.netfirms.com>

LOCAL HOME EDUCATION GROUPS

POWYS

New Leaf Group (Newtown)

Occasional meetings for varied activities, all ages.
email: siouxcatsy@yahoo.co.uk

WREXHAM

WASHE:

Wrexham and Surrounds Home Education group

Activities at a number of different locations in the Wrexham area. See website for details.

<http://washe.co.uk/>



IT IS, IN FACT, NOTHING SHORT OF A MIRACLE THAT THE MODERN METHODS OF INSTRUCTION HAVE NOT YET ENTIRELY STRANGLERD THE HOLY CURIOSITY OF INQUIRY; FOR THIS DELICATE LITTLE PLANT, ASIDE FROM STIMULATION, STANDS MAINLY IN NEED OF FREEDOM.

-- ALBERT EINSTEIN

Current Trustees:

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lashe@educationotherwise.org

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Email to *trustees@educationotherwise.org*
goes to all trustees.

PLEASE NOTE EO'S NEW ADDRESS FOR
CORRESPONDENCE BY LETTER:

Education Otherwise

P.O. Box 3761

SWINDON

SN2 9GT

Memberships

Membership enquiries, address changes,
membership cards, new member admin.:
please contact the Membership Secretary:
membership@educationotherwise.org
or PO Box 3761, Swindon, SN2 9GT

Local Contacts Co-ordinator:

Lei Ashe

lcco-ordinator@educationotherwise.org

Single parent contact:

Sam Kruger 08445 003794

denbighshire-lc@educationotherwise.org

Flexi-schooling:

Mandy Phoenix

flexi-school@educationotherwise.org

Anti-Bullying Contact:

Kathleen Thompson 01942 897 779

College/GCSE Contact:

Roger Scaiffe 08445 003 708

SEN/Disability contacts:

Christine Waterman 08445 003 887

Jennifer Skillen *jskillen@educationotherwise.org*

School Anxiety Support:

Jayne Owen 08445 008 469

Enquiries Secretary:

Edwina Theunissen 01978 661882

e.theunissen@educationotherwise.org

Advertising/Local Groups list:

Tracey Foyster

tfoyster@educationotherwise.org

Concessions contact:

Lynsey Scott

concessions@educationotherwise.org

AND NEW WEBSITE:

www.education-otherwise.net

education otherwise®

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

Our principal aims are to:

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

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

Education Otherwise
PO Box 3761, Swindon SN2 9GT
Helpline 0845 4786 345

www.education-otherwise.net

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