



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# Elective home education



Information for parents and carers

This leaflet gives you information if you are considering educating your child at home or if you are already doing so. The definition of a parent or carer for the purpose of this leaflet includes any person who has parental responsibility and any person the child lives with, for example a foster carer.

### What is elective home education?

Elective home education – sometimes referred to as EHE – is a term used to describe when parents educate their children at home instead of sending them to school. In Wales, as with the rest of the UK, education is compulsory, but going to school is not.

### Why would I choose to educate my child at home?

Your decision to educate your child at home may be influenced by a number of reasons including philosophical, spiritual or religious beliefs. You may also feel that you are better able to meet your child's individual needs and learning style than a school.

A school or local authority should never encourage you to remove your child from the school register to avoid your child from being excluded or you being prosecuted.

### Do I need to be a teacher to educate at home?

No, you don't need to be a teacher and you do not need any qualifications.

### What do I need to teach?

Your responsibility as a parent is to make sure that what is taught is helping your child to learn. The education you provide must be efficient and suitable. Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996 it is your duty as a parent to make sure your child receives efficient full-time education suitable for their age, ability and aptitude and for any special educational needs they may have. This can be done either at school or otherwise. Education is considered efficient and suitable if it allows a child to achieve their potential and prepares them for adult life.

### What will happen if it appears that I'm not providing a suitable education?

Under section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996, local authorities have a duty to take action if it appears that parents are not providing a suitable education.

Your local authority will offer to make a home visit with the aim of helping you overcome the difficulties within an agreed timescale.

If you fail to prove to the local authority that you are providing a suitable education, and they feel it necessary for your child to go to school, they must serve a school attendance order (SAO) on you.

For more information on SAOs, please see the All Wales Attendance Framework: [gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolhome/pupilsupport/framework/?lang=en](http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolhome/pupilsupport/framework/?lang=en)

### Do I have to follow the national curriculum?

No you don't, but you might find it helpful to use it as a framework to decide which subjects to include and how to assess your child's achievement. You can get a copy of the national curriculum on the Learning Wales website ([learning.gov.wales/resources/improvementareas/curriculum/?lang=en](http://learning.gov.wales/resources/improvementareas/curriculum/?lang=en)).

## Will I receive any funding or support?

If you choose to educate your child at home, you must be prepared to take on full financial responsibility, including paying the cost of any public examinations.

Although local authorities do not receive any funding for families who choose to educate their children at home, many local authorities like to get to know parents and, in some cases, will provide support.

When you begin to educate your child at home, your local authority may write to you to suggest an informal meeting at your home to discuss your plans. Many parents find this helpful, but you might prefer to meet somewhere else or you could write to the local authority and let them know about the education you are providing.

After you have met the local authority, they should prepare a report and send you a copy. The report will say if there are any concerns about the education being provided. The report should give details of any recommendations made by the local authority and any action you will need to take. If the local authority telephones you, they should follow this up with written confirmation of what has been discussed and agreed.

## Will my child be able to take examinations?

Yes. You can enter your child for examinations at your local external examination centre – often a further education college. However, you will have to pay the cost yourself. The local authority can tell you the location of your nearest examination centre.

## Will my child be able to benefit from services like eye tests, health screening and immunisations normally provided through the school?

Yes. These services are available to all children whether they are in school or not. You should contact your GP or local health board to find out how to arrange them.

## I'm interested in educating my child at home. What should I do?

If your child is in school, you should write to the headteacher asking them to remove your child's name from the register as you plan to take responsibility for their education. The headteacher will remove your child's name from the register and tell the local authority.

If your child has never been to school, you do not need to give notice to the school.

## What should I do if my child has a statement of special educational needs (SEN)?

The same procedure applies if your child has a statement of SEN and goes to a mainstream school. However, if your child goes to a special school, you will need to get permission from the local authority before removing them from school.

In either case, the education you provide must meet the aims of the statement of SEN. The local authority will continue to carry out a review each year for the length of time for which the statement applies. This will include whether the wording of the statement is still appropriate and whether it needs to stay in place. You still have a right to appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales (SENTW).

## Can my child return to school?

Yes, but you must contact the local authority or the school if the school is the admission authority. You can do so at any time. However, there is no guarantee that there will be a place at the school your child previously went to.

## Here are some questions to consider before deciding to educate your child at home.

- Is your child positive about the suggestion of being educated at home?
- Are you are convinced it is best for your child?
- Do you have the time to devote to your child's education?
- Do you have the ability to teach your child effectively?
- Will you be able to educate your child to the required level if they want to take GCSEs?
- Are you are prepared to buy the necessary resources?
- Do you have other support available?
- Do you have the space to create a quiet working area?
- Are there opportunities for physical exercise?
- Will social experiences with other children be available?
- Are you sure you are not choosing to educate at home as a way of getting out of quarrels with a headteacher or school, or as an excuse for not sending your child to school on time or regularly?

## Useful contacts and resources

### Careers Wales

[www.careerswales.com](http://www.careerswales.com)

### Ed Yourself

[www.edyourself.org](http://www.edyourself.org)

### Education begins at home

[www.facebook.com/beginsathome](http://www.facebook.com/beginsathome)

### Education Otherwise

[www.educationotherwise.net](http://www.educationotherwise.net)

### Friends, Families and Travellers

[www.gypsy-traveller.org/education](http://www.gypsy-traveller.org/education)

### Home Education UK

[www.home-education.org.uk](http://www.home-education.org.uk)

### Home Education Advisory Service

[www.heas.org.uk](http://www.heas.org.uk)

### Learning Wales

[www.gov.wales/learning](http://www.gov.wales/learning)

### TSO

[www.tso.co.uk](http://www.tso.co.uk)

### Welsh Government

[www.gov.wales](http://www.gov.wales)

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