



One minute guide

Elective Home Education

No. 22, January 2021

What is Elective Home Education?

It is the duty of parents of children of compulsory school age to ensure that they receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to meet any special educational needs. This is set out in [Section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#). Parents may fulfil this duty either by ensuring regular attendance at school or otherwise. The word 'otherwise' affirms parents' right under the law to educate their child at home instead of sending them to school. This is called elective home education (EHE).

When home educating, parents take full responsibility for all education and access to GCSE exams, work experience and Post-16 college placements. There is no funding provided if a family choose to home educate, and children with eligibility for free school meals do not receive any support such as the [pupil premium](#).

Where a local authority provides home tuition or an alternative education placement is organised by school or through the Area Inclusion Partnership; this is not EHE.

Parents are advised that the decision to home educate is a significant one and parents should not be pressured to take this action to avoid attendance processes or exclusion.

What responsibilities do parents and schools have?

If a child is attending a mainstream school and parents decide to home educate, the parents must inform the head teacher in writing. Parents are requested to outline the plans for educating their children at home – this will be assessed for suitability by a teacher within the elective home education team.

Many parents provide well for their children but some do not. The local authority will undertake legal procedures if education is not found to meet the child's needs dependent on their age, ability and aptitude.

Where a child has an [Education Health and Care Plan](#) (EHCP) and attends a special school (in Leeds, a Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre) through arrangements made by a local authority, they cannot be removed from that school without the consent of the local authority. Parents need to outline their plan to cover the needs as set out in the EHCP. If the local authority refuses to give consent, the family would need to obtain a direction from the Secretary of State. These children will continue to have reviews of their educational needs and specialist support.

When a school is informed by a parent that the child will now be home educated, they must notify the local authority immediately.

Schools are requested to complete a referral form, now available on the [Leeds for Learning](#) website site (via a log in) and provide detailed information on the attainment of the child up to this point, any information relating to agencies supporting the family and outline any concerns they may have about the child being home educated. Schools may remove the child from the school roll once they have contacted the local authority and this has been confirmed by receipt of the information.

What are Children and Families Services responsible for?

When the EHE team receive a notification from school or parent, they check whether the child has an early help assessment or is known to the children's social work service. A safeguarding home visit is carried out within three weeks of the notification. Information is requested from parents on education provision. Families are sent regular information about holiday activities, Youth Offer, parent programmes, information, advice and guidance. The EHE Team also send age related information to families and offer signposting to networks and support that may enable their important role of educating their child.

The local authority is responsible for ensuring that children of school age are receiving a suitable education and are safe. However, the current Education Act does not define full-time education, though it is assumed from recent case law that it will be literacy and numeracy based and age related. Parents are not required to provide any particular type of education, though it must be suitable to age, aptitude and any special needs. Parents do not need to have:

- have **premises** equipped to any particular standard;

- have any specific **qualifications** to educate;

- cover the same **syllabus** as any school;

- make **detailed plans** in advance or observe school hours, days or terms or have a **fixed timetable**; or

- reproduce school-type, peer group **socialisation**.

Children and Families Services hold a register of EHE children where we are informed by schools or parents. The EHE Team organise the safeguarding visit at the point of the child becoming EHE. They request information on the education given to the child, assess the suitability and provide signposting for parents to access EHE networks and support. Where families wish to return to mainstream schools, support and advice can be provided by admissions, Leeds SEND Information Advice Support Service; for children with special needs and through fair access protocols.

What are the responsibilities of other agencies?

If a practitioner working in a partner agency is aware of or believes that a child is home educated, they should inform the local authority as soon as possible using the contact details below. If a child is neither on a school roll or on the EHE list, they will be listed as a Child Missing Education (there is a One Minute Guide on this).

Key contacts and more information

Notifications from schools, parents and practitioners from partner agencies should be sent to: ehe@leeds.gov.uk

There is information on EHE available for parents through the Leeds Family Information Service [website](#).

If you have any queries around elective home education please contact ehe@leeds.gov.uk. A member of the team will respond to your enquiry.