

Elective Home Education – Frequently asked questions

Please find below some common questions asked about home educating.

Is it legal to educate my child at home?

Yes, parents may educate their children at home. The LA recognises education is compulsory, but school is not. Parents' legal duty is set out in section 7 of the Education Act 1996 as follows:

“The parent of every child of compulsory school age has a legal duty to ensure that he/she receives efficient full-time education suitable:

- to her/his age, ability and aptitude, and
- to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”

I am thinking of home educating my child, who should I speak to about this?

Before deciding to remove your child from school for elective home education, you should request a meeting with the headteacher so that any issues can be discussed.

I have decided to home educate my child, what do I do next?

If you have decided to take the step of home education, you will need to write to the school to confirm your decision and when you want to start. The school will then remove your child from roll on the specified date.

Do I need to let the school know that I am home educating my child?

Yes, because if you simply remove your child from school without informing them in writing, you could be prosecuted for non-attendance.

Do I need to let the local authority know that I am home educating my child?

There is no need for you to inform us of your decision to home educate as the school will be required to tell us what you have decided. However, if you let us know, we will be able to work with you and offer you guidance and support. This is in the best interest of your child, especially if your child is not currently registered with a school.

Do I need permission to home educate my child?

If your child has an EHC plan you can still choose to educate them at home but the education you provide must be suitable to your child's age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs he or she has. The LA's SEND Team will decide whether the provision you are making is suitable. If your child currently attends a special school, the LA must give consent for the child's name to be removed from the school roll. If your child has an EHC plan, the SEND team will review this annually to assure itself that the provision set out in it continues to be appropriate and that your child's special education needs continue to be met.

If your child does not have an EHC plan when you choose to educate at home, you do still have the right to ask the LA to conduct an Education, Health and Care needs assessment for your child and the LA must respond to your request within six weeks.

What is the role of the local authority?

Once the LA has received confirmation of the parent's decision to home educate their child, the EHE officer will carry out an initial assessment to ensure the education provision is suitable and provide any further guidance to help make improvements. The LA may take further action in cases where it appears that a suitable education is not being provided as per The Education Act 1996. This action may include additional visits, support and/ or enforcement against the parent (School Attendance Order)

Can I partly home educate my child and still have them in school some days (flexi-schooling)?

When a child spends a part of the week attending school and some time educated at home or at an off-school site, this is called flexi-schooling. You will need to make a formal request for this arrangement and must have approval from the school. In such arrangements, the child will always remain on the school roll.

I have issues with the school, can I home educate my child instead?

If your child is registered at a school, then a decision to home educate may not be the best way to solve an issue with the school or to overcome difficulties with attendance. You may be able to resolve these issues with the headteacher or governors at the school, or through one of our services.

My child's school has suggested that my child is better off home educated – should I agree to this?

If you feel under pressure from your child's school to home educate and do not want to, please do contact us.

The Department for Education is clear that schools should not persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding an exclusion, or because the child has a poor attendance record. Ofsted refer to this practice as of 'off-rolling' and it is not acceptable.

Can the Council help with any costs for elective home education?

Local authorities have no legal responsibility or obligation to fund parents who choose to home educate so there is no funding available to help you with the costs of elective home education.

Full responsibility for all aspects of educational provision, including any additional requirements for a child with SEN, now falls to the parent.

There is no automatic provision for young people to take public examinations – these also have to be researched, funded, organised and resourced by parents.

Do I need to be qualified to educate my child?

You don't need formal qualifications and you do not need to employ a qualified teacher.

We believe there is no one form of education; children learn in different ways, at different times and speeds so how your child learns is up to you, as long as the education is efficient, suitable and full-time.

Do I need to follow the school curriculum at home?

Elective home education does not need to be identical to school education: no specific curriculum is laid down and you do not have to follow the National Curriculum.

However, while there is no rule to follow a specific curriculum, some parents find the National Curriculum is useful.

Can I use a private tutor?

Yes, you may use a private tutor to educate your child if you wish. However, if you choose to use a tutor, you are still responsible for the welfare and education of your child.

When selecting a private tutor, we suggest that you:

- check the tutor's identity
- check their qualifications
- ask for appropriate references
- ensure they have a recent Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate

We also advise you to monitor your child's teaching and learning from the tuition.

Can my child return to school after being home educated?

Yes. Should you decide that you wish for your child to return to the school education system in the future you will be required to submit a new application. In Slough, your application is will be considered at Fair Access Panel where your child can be placed on roll at their last registered school. Otherwise you can apply for a place at your preferred school. Please note, it may not always be possible to get a place at your preferred school and you may be put on a waiting list.

There may be occasions where, since your child's period of Elective Home Education, they have transitioned from Primary school age to Secondary school age. In such circumstances a Secondary School place offer will be confirmed by the Panel.

I from can be accessed via the following link:

- [SBC's admission's process and referral](#)
- [SBC guide to home education and useful education resources](#)

- [Department for Education guide on home education for parents published by](#)

Can my child still take exams if he/she is home-educated?

Yes, but we would recommend that you follow the relevant curriculum. Please research the curriculum and exams before you begin studies so that you can decide which examination board and syllabus you wish to follow. You will also need to arrange and pay for your child's examinations at a registered examination centre.

Below are some GCSE examination boards.

- [OCR \(Oxford, Cambridge and RSA\)](#)
- [AQA \(Assessment and Qualifications Alliance\)](#)
- [JCQ \(Joint Council for Qualifications\)](#)

What happens once my child turns 16 years old (compulsory school age)?

Young people who have been educated at home can choose one of the following post-16 options:

- full-time education, such as school, college or home education
- an apprenticeship
- part-time education or training if they are employed, self-employed or volunteering full-time (which is defined as 20 hours or more per week)

If your child chooses to take further education college courses, it is important to know that many courses have specific entry requirements such as GCSE passes. Your local further education college will be able to give you more information or visit the [GOV.UK's information for young people](#).

The Slough Attendance Service automatically refers all Year 11 EHE children to the post 16 Careers Team whom will offer your child support and guidance for post16 learning pathways.

Useful Links

The list is not exhaustive but is intended as a guide to possible sources of information.

The [Department for Education \[DfE\]](#) provides information on home education on their website.

Tel: 0370 000 2288

[Contact DfE](#)

The [Home Education Advisory Service](#) is a national home education charity.

Tel: 01707 371854

[Education Otherwise](#) is a membership organisation providing support and information for families whose children are being educated outside school.

Tel: 0845 478 6345

[Edyourself](#) is a website which can provide you with information on elective home education practice and policy in England and Wales.

[AQA](#) can facilitate entry for GCSEs as a private candidate. Exams Office Support.

Tel: 0844 209 6614

[Edexcel](#) can facilitate entry for GCSEs as a private candidate.

Tel: 0845 618 0440

[BBC Learning](#) - various links are available on BBC websites

Any other questions

If you have any further queries please feel free to contact the Attendance Service.

Details below:

Attendance Service Main Line: 01753 787670

Attendance Service Email: attendance@slough.gov.uk