

North Lincolnshire Council

Elective Home Education

Additional Information and Resources
For
Parents and Carers

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**North
Lincolnshire
Council**

www.northlincs.gov.uk

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Does my child have to go to school?

The 1996 Education Act states that 'it is the duty of parents to secure an appropriate full time education for their children of compulsory school age'. Most parents' carry out this duty by ensuring their child attends school. However, for a variety of reasons, a small minority of parents decide to take on the duty to educate their child themselves, that is to 'educate at home'.

Children must receive a full time education from the start date of what would be the school term following their fifth birthday. Compulsory education currently continues until the last Friday in June of the year in which the young person reaches the age of 16 (a young person who is sixteen years of age between September and 31 August the following year is of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June in that year).

2. What are the responsibilities of the parents and carers?

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that:

'It shall be the duty of the parent of every child of compulsory school age to cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude (and to special educational needs he may have) either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'.

3. What is the Local Authority's duty under the 1996 Education Act?

The local authority has a duty to take action if it appears a child is not receiving education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Therefore if your child is not on a school roll, the local authority will ask you for some information about your educational provision.

4. What is compulsory school age?

The law requires a child to be educated from the start of the school term following their fifth birthday until the last Friday in June in the school year in which a child reaches 16. The participation age was raised in 2013 and 2015 and home education is a legal option post-16 just as it is for under-16s.

5. What is full-time education?

The length of time children should be involved in learning is not specified in law. As guidance, children in school spend between 22 and 25 hours on school work for 39 weeks of the year.

6. What is efficient education?

This is not legally defined. It is up to parents to fulfil their duty according to a reasonable interpretation of the term. What is provided does not need to be the same kind of lessons as are provided in school. It will be up to the parent to show that the child is making progress suitable to their age, ability and aptitude.

7. Do I need to be a trained teacher to educate my child at home?

You do not need to have formal qualifications or be a teacher to educate your child at home. Qualities such as patience, enthusiasm and flexibility are invaluable.

8. What happens if I do not inform the local authority of provision for education or the local authority is not satisfied with the provision?

The local authority has a legal duty to satisfy itself that suitable provision is being made. A refusal to provide evidence may lead to the local authority taking steps to return a child to school. However, the local authority would first wish to take all reasonable steps to work together with the parents.

Where the local authority is not satisfied that the parents are meeting legal requirements, parents will be given this information in writing and a reasonable period of time will be allowed to improve the situation. Again if the provision does not improve then this may lead to the local authority taking steps to return a child to school. However, the local authority would hope to reach agreed improvements by detailed discussion with parents and will make all reasonable efforts to do so.

If your child has never attended a school there is no legal requirement to inform the local authority.

9. What if my child has special educational needs?

Children with special educational needs may be educated at home whether or not they have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). If your child has a statement or EHCP and is attending a mainstream school you do not need permission from the local authority to take your child off roll. If your child is attending a special school, then permission must be sought. The local authority will then contact you to ask you for some information.

If your child is educated at home and you believe may require a formal assessment you can speak to the SEND team for advice.

10. Can a school encourage or force me to home educate?

Schools are not allowed to coerce parents in any way to educate their child at home or remove them from the roll of a school. Schools cannot use exclusion as a threat to parents if they do not home educate, nor should they provide you with a template letter to sign.

11. Does the local authority help financially in any way?

If a parent elects to home educate, they assume financial responsibility for their child's education including the cost of public examinations. North Lincolnshire Council is unable to offer any financial support.

12. Will the local authority help plan lessons or provide practical support?

The local authority receives no funds from central government to support elective home education.

The assessor will not be able to direct the learning that is taking place nor can they accept any responsibility to plan your child's education and carry it out. Information and advice may be given including websites and useful contact, but the local authority is unable to provide any books or equipment.

13. Do I have to enter my child for tests and examinations?

No, there is no requirement for you to enter your child for any tests or examinations. For older children, you may wish to consider their need for qualifications, for example at GCSE level. Your records of the education you have provided and your child's progress will be very valuable to your child when gaining access to post-16 provision.

14. What information can I provide to demonstrate a suitable education?

There is no acknowledged 'correct way' to provide an education at home, but suggested below are some examples of the sort of information you may be able to provide to demonstrate that your child is receiving a suitable education. These are not exhaustive and may not be relevant to the style of home education you choose to adopt and you may wish to provide other information that demonstrates a suitable education:

The aims and objects of the education you are planning, for instance;

- ❖ to 'keep up' with the National Curriculum (e.g. while you are seeking a school place)
- ❖ to prepare your child for specific exams
- ❖ based upon an educational belief or philosophy

Although the National Curriculum is optional for home educators, you may choose to cover particular subject or topic areas such as:

- ❖ literacy (English)
- ❖ numeracy (maths)
- ❖ science
- ❖ ICT (computers, etc.)
- ❖ design and technology (including cooking, textiles etc.)
- ❖ art
- ❖ history
- ❖ geography
- ❖ religious education
- ❖ personal, social and health education
- ❖ citizenship
- ❖ music
- ❖ foreign language
- ❖ any other subject or areas of study

How your child might spend their day, for example:

- ❖ the number of hours a day or week you are available to help your child
- ❖ the resources you will be using

- ❖ any tutors used, or classes your child attends
- ❖ the sorts of activities your child will be engaged in
- ❖ how will you encourage contact with other children

How will you know that your child is making progress? Are your methods and resources achieving your aims?

Support available to you:

- ❖ a description of any support or advice that will be available to assist you with your programme
- ❖ others who may be able to help (friends, family etc.)
- ❖ If you are aware of any local support groups who may be able to help you

During any follow up visits or discussions, there will be the opportunity to discuss the education you have been providing for your child and the progress being made

15. Will my child be entitled to careers advice and access to the school nurses?

Yes, all young people will have access to the Information, Advice and Guidance Team (careers) and the school nursing service is available for all children in North Lincolnshire regardless of how parents choose to educate.

16. Are there organisations or groups of other home educators who may be able to offer advice and support?

There are other organisations and groups within North Lincolnshire and the wider Lincolnshire, Humber and Yorkshire regions. But we are unable to endorse external groups or websites.

17. Can my child access college whilst on elective home education?

From September 2013 colleges and sixth form colleges were able to admit electively home educated pupils and be funded directly for them by the Education Funding Agency using the post-16 system. Local authorities will no longer be able to claim direct support funding for them.

14-16 year old students of all abilities will be able to study vocational and academic subjects in a college environment. Colleges will receive roughly the same funding for a 14-16 year old with some adjustment for the cost of providing technical courses and disadvantage and pupil premium payments.

Parents should contact individual colleges for further information or the Department for Education website for up to date details.

18. What if I want to put my child back into a school?

A schools or the local authority admissions team may receive a request for a place in school from a parent or carer who has for some time been educating a child at home. In fact, the child may never have been to school, and also may never have come to the attention of the local authority. This request should be treated as any other request for a place in the relevant year

group, respecting that the parent was free in law to make this choice. It should be borne in mind that a child may have not necessarily followed the national curriculum, there may be some areas or subjects where the child lacks knowledge as well as areas in which the child may have acquired knowledge and skills well ahead of their year group in school. These features will not affect the availability of a place, only the guidance that may be given to class or subject teachers if the child comes on the school roll.

19 Guidance on Flexi-time Schooling

19.1 What is flexi-time schooling?

Some parents who currently educate their children at home may also wish them to attend school on a part-time basis to benefit from the specialist facilities and social context available.

19.2 Is there any obligation on schools to consent to such arrangements?

Each request should be treated on its merits balancing the needs of the individual child and the needs of the school as a whole. A school and governing body is not obliged to agree to such requests from parents. It is at the discretion of each governing body whether or not to grant permission and they would obviously do this in consultation with the Headteacher. Financially, the position is neutral (the school would receive the age-weighted pupil unit as for any other registered pupil) so that consideration of parental requests can focus on curriculum, pastoral and logistical factors.

19.3 Practical Arrangements

Where parents indicate that they would like their child to attend on a flexi-time basis, they are recommended to put their request in writing in order to avoid any misunderstanding and in order that the school can give proper consideration to the request.

To help the parents, the teaching timetable should be made available to the family. Staff may wish subsequently to discuss the matter with the parents, in so doing, should satisfy themselves that the arrangements are practicable, and would be suitable to the educational needs of the child.

Where permission is not granted, the parents should be notified in writing of the school and governing body decision. Schools are under no obligation to give reasons for their decision but it is advised that the basis for the decision be set out. It is useful that schools keep the LA informed of developments, even by simply send a copy of any correspondence to the EHE Assessor.

Where permission is granted, it is recommended that a learning contract or personal learning plan be drawn up to formalise the practical arrangements. This would cover such issues as:

- the times and days the child attends school
- provision for the child to attend special events that take place inside and outside of school hours
- access to records and reports

- opportunities to meet with class teachers, tutors or other school staff, and for other forms of communication
- arrangements to review and, if necessary, terminate flexi-time arrangements

Any agreement does not negate the child or parent from compliance with the schools policies, such as attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.

Advice and guidance on personalised learning plans is available from the councils Education Inclusion Service or SEN & Disability Information, Advice & Support Service (SENDIASS).

20. Work Experience Placements for Elective Home Education

The following aspects must be covered and documented so that evidence can be produced in the case of an accident or incident and the subsequent investigation that may be carried out by an enforcing agency. This evidence may also be submitted to support your home education.

As a parent taking responsibility for your child's work experience placement North Lincolnshire Council would like to highlight the following points that you would need to ensure are in place:

- ❖ Any placement must comply with current child employment legislation and local by-laws and restrictions
- ❖ A risk assessment should be carried out on the child and place of experience. Documentary evidence should be kept
- ❖ Health and Safety should be discussed, clearly understood by the student, recorded and documentary evidence kept
- ❖ Information on safeguarding and behaviour in the workplace needs to be recorded and documentary evidence should be kept
- ❖ The person, who has duty of care for the child whilst on placement, needs to be recorded and documentary evidence of this should be kept
- ❖ Procedures with the child and employer to report any accidents or incidents need to be recorded and documentary evidence should be kept

Please note that the local authority is unable to take responsibility for this placement and parents should be aware of high-risk environments.

A work placement is not a paid employment and should not be considered so.

Paid work or part time jobs will require agreement under legislation and a child employment regulations and a permit through the Education Inclusion Service at North Lincolnshire Council.

21. National and Regional Organisations

Links to sites who may be able to support and help parents when considering EHE:

- Department for Education: www.education.gov.uk
- Home Education Advisory Service: www.heas.org.uk Tel: 01707 371854
- Education Otherwise: www.education-otherwise.net Tel: 0870 730 0074
- Ed Yourself: www.edyourself.org
- Home Schooling: www.ahomeeducation.co.uk

- HE in the UK – Special Educational Needs: <http://www.he-special.org.uk>
- Advisory Centre for Education (ACE): www.ace-ed.org.uk
- National Association of Gifted Children (NAGC): www.nagcbrtain.org.uk
- Bullying UK: www.bullying.co.uk
- The British Dyslexia Association: www.bdadyslexia.org.uk
- Autism: www.autism.org.uk Tel: 0870 070 4004
- SEN & Disability Information, Advice & Support Service (SENDIASS) (Formerly North Lincolnshire Parent Partnership): help@nlsendiass.org.uk Tel: 01724 277665

- Examinations Boards: <http://www.educationalresources.co.uk/examboards.html>

The above websites have been selected as potentially relevant to individuals sourcing information relevant to elective home education. We do not link to external sites in return for cash, services or any other consideration in kind.

More specifically:

- The inclusion of a link to an external website from North Lincolnshire Council should not be understood to be an endorsement of that website or the site's owners (or their products and services); and*

- The views expressed within external websites are those of the site's owners and unless specifically stated are not those of the council.*