



One minute guide

Elective Home Education

No. 22, September 2024

What is Elective Home Education?

[Section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#) states that '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. Parents may fulfil this duty either by ensuring regular attendance at school or otherwise.' The word 'otherwise' affirms the rights of parents and carers under the law to educate their child at home instead of sending them to school. This is called elective home education (EHE).

Where a local authority provides home tuition, or an alternative education placement is organised by or through the Area Inclusion Partnership, this is not EHE. 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 through the [pupil premium](#). Parents/ carers take full responsibility for all education and access to exams.

What is the responsibility of the local authority?

The local authority is responsible for ensuring that children of school age are receiving a suitable, efficient, full-time education; however, the Education Act (1996) does not define full-time education and there is no direct comparison with the timetable and educational arrangements for children taught in schools.

Parents / carers are not required to provide any particular type of education and are under no obligation to: have premises equipped to any particular standard; have any specific qualifications to educate; cover the same specification as any school and/or adopt the National Curriculum; match school age-specific standards; make detailed plans in advance; observe school hours, days or terms; have a fixed timetable; or reproduce school-type, peer group socialisation.

In law, parents/ carers are under no obligation to: seek permission from the Local Authority to educate their child at home; take the initiative to inform the Local Authority; or have regular contact with representatives of the Local Authority.

With this in mind, Children's Services hold a register of EHE children where we are informed by schools or parents/ carers. The local authority undertakes checks and offers visits at the point of the child becoming EHE. We request information on the education given to the child, assess its suitability and provide signposting for parents/ carers to access EHE networks and support.

Where families wish to return to mainstream schools, support and advice can be provided by [school admissions](#), Leeds SEND Information Advice Support Service ([SENDIASS](#)) and via [fair access protocols](#).

What happens in Leeds?

If the child is attending a mainstream school and parents/ carers decide to home educate, they must inform the head teacher in writing. Parents/ carers are requested to outline their plans for educating their child/ children at home – these should be assessed for suitability by the local authority, as already outlined. Many parents/ carers who home educate provide well for their children, but some do not. [Legal procedures through attendance](#) can be enforced if education is found to be not suitable.

If a child has an [Education Health 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 or, if the authority refuses consent, without a direction from the Secretary of State. All children with an EHCP who are EHE continue to have EHCP reviews and specialist support where the EHCP outlines this need. When the EHE team is notified that a child with an EHCP will be electively home educated, the team notify the child's SEN caseworker to lead on this. The SEN caseworker is responsible for assessing the education plans and reviewing the EHCP annually, as they would if the child was in a school setting.

What are the responsibilities of other agencies?

Schools

When a school is informed by a parent / carer that the child will now be home educated, they must notify the local authority. Schools are requested to complete a notification form with information regarding the attainment of the child to this point, any information on agencies supporting the family and outline any concerns.

Schools may remove the child from the school roll once they have contacted the local authority – however, where there may be concerns, schools may keep the place open for a short time while checks take place. SENSAP, SENIT and EP services regularly review these arrangements with the EHE team.

Children services

When the EHE team receive a notification from a school or a parent / carer, they will check if any other services are involved. Information is requested from parents/ carers on education provision. Families may be sent information about holiday activities, Youth Offer, Parent Programmes, information advice and guidance, age-related information and signposting to networks and support that may enable their important role of educating their child/ children. There is also a community forum which offers opportunities to meet throughout the year; meeting dates are available from the EHE team.

Partner agencies

If a practitioner working in a partner agency is aware or believes that a child is home educated, they should inform the local authority as soon as possible. If a child is neither on a school roll or on the EHE list, they will be listed as children missing education.

Key contacts and more information

Notifications from schools, parents and practitioners from partner agencies should be sent to: ehe@leeds.gov.uk. Please also use this email address for any queries around elective home education, and a member of the team will respond to your enquiry.