

Elective home education

Parent/carer Information

If you are reading this, you are likely to be considering home-educating your child as an option in the near future. The decision by parents to elect to educate their child at home should be an informed, active and positive one. It is important that parents obtain sufficient information about home education before making the decision.

The reasons that parents elect to home educate their child, or children, are extremely varied. Some parents make a philosophical, planned decision to home educate their child or children, and research the area in depth. However, we find that many parents turn to home education as a reaction to a school-based issue or dissatisfaction with a school environment.



If there is a school-based issue, we strongly advise you not to withdraw your child from school until you have explored all the options. Once your child is off a school roll, you are responsible for ensuring they have a full-time, suitable education. There are no automatic support services or resources for home education.

You are not entitled to claim for free school meals or food vouchers for school holidays. You will receive no financial support for home education, this includes funding towards exam fees, resources and tutors.

If you want your child to take GCSEs, this can be very costly. If you would like your child to go back to school in the future, there is no automatic right to return to their previous school. You will have to go through the normal admissions procedures and there may not be an available place at the school you choose. If you would prefer your child to move to another school rather than home educate, the local authority may be able to help.

We would suggest you take advice before “opting out” of school, either from the Local Authority (LA) or one of the independent home education organisations.

If I do decide to home educate, what kind of education should I provide?

The law (section 7 of the 1996 Education Act) says that you should provide a full-time education that is suitable for your child's age, ability and aptitude, taking into account any special needs that your child may have. It is good for your child to have a wide range of knowledge, understanding and skills. We would like to see that they develop the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, have opportunities for physical exercise and social contact with others. It is up to you what approach you take. You do not need to be a qualified teacher, cover the national curriculum or take any tests or exams unless you choose to do so.



How will I know if the education I am providing is suitable?

It is our responsibility, as the Local Authority (LA), to make sure that the arrangements being made for your child's education at home are suitable. We welcome the opportunity to meet home educating families to see evidence of your child's learning activities and once we know that you intend to educate your child at home, we will contact you to propose an informal meeting to

discuss your educational provision. We will ask you to provide an education plan outlining how you will be providing a full-time suitable education. We will need to know how you will assess your child's learning and how you will show they are progressing. We will maintain regular contact with your family until your child goes back to school or is no longer of statutory school age. Your child must continue to receive an education until the end of June in the academic year in which they have their 16th birthday.

What would happen if my arrangements aren't considered suitable?

Newcastle LA will support the choice of parents who elect to home educate, unless it appears to us that suitable provision is not being made for the child. If we consider that provision is not suitable, we will recommend improvements and agree to reassess your provision. It may be that the arrangements you have in place for your child's education continue to be unsuitable despite the efforts made to improve them. In this event we will recommend that you consider alternative arrangements or place your child in a school. Recourse to legal action in the form of a School Attendance Order, which would direct you to register your child at a named school, is the last resort. As well as your child's educational needs, we will be mindful of their personal, health, safety and welfare needs at all times.

What is the process if I decide to educate my child at home?

If, after careful consideration, you make the decision to educate your child at home you need to inform the head teacher of your child's school in writing and ask them to remove his/her name from the school register.

Please remember that your child's school staff and governors are there to help resolve any difficulties and that it is important to explore all avenues before deciding to home educate your child as a reaction to problems at school. Do take the opportunity to speak to members of staff, the Head teacher or the school governors if you have a concern regarding your child at school.

You should be aware that your child's name will be removed from the school roll once you have withdrawn him/her and notified the school of your decision to home educate. In the event that your child should re-enter the school system, there is no guarantee that a place will still be available in your child's original school.

Can I educate my child at home if my child has Special Educational Needs?

Yes, however if your child attends a specialist school, the consent of the Local Authority should be sought before removing him/her from school. Your child's name cannot be removed from the school register without our agreement. Where a child has an Education, Health and Care Plan, it remains the LA's duty to ensure that the child's needs are met whilst educated at home.

For more information about elective home education please contact:

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