

Parental Guidance for Elective Home Education (EHE)



This guidance contains information on:

1. What parental responsibilities are in regard to Elective Home Education.
2. What the council's responsibilities are in regard to Elective Home Education.
3. Help available for parents who are considering this option or who have decided to educate their children at home.





What is Elective Home Education?

The government definition:

‘Elective home education is a term used to describe a choice by parents to provide education for their children at home or in some other way they desire, instead of sending them to school full-time.’

You may wish to educate your child without any assistance from others.

You may also wish to use:

- private tutors
- tuition centres
- other adults or settings
- flexi-schooling (a mixture of school-based and home-based)
- part-time college (for Key Stage 4, those aged 14 to 16)

It’s important to understand that schools may not always agree to flexi-schooling and college places are limited with agreed criteria for enrolment. Other adults or settings may not be inspected and regulated in the same way that schools and learning providers are. Parents using other adults and settings need to be satisfied that their children are safe.

What does the law say?

You are responsible for making sure that your child is properly educated between the ages of 5 to 16 years old. This does not have to take place through attendance at school.

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 says:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable -

(a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and

(b) to any special educational needs he may have,

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

This means that if you choose to educate your child outside of a mainstream school through Elective Home Education you are still meeting your legal requirements as a parent or carer.



When can I start Elective Home Education?

As parents, you are your child's first educator and will be supporting their learning and development from birth onwards even if you decide to educate through a school.

Please notify the council at the earliest opportunity. You can register your intention to educate your child at home at any point after they are born.

Some parents will decide that they do not want their children to access school as a lifestyle choice and will notify the council of this at the point at which they would normally start school (the term before their fifth birthday).

Sometimes children will start their education in school and parents will decide that this isn't the best option for their child and may decide to Home Educate instead. If this is the case, please let the council know so that we can register your choice to remove your child from school and educate them at home or in other settings which are not schools.

Things to think about

Why are you thinking of educating your child at home?

If you start to feel that the school system is not working for you and your child, you should talk to the school first to discuss your concerns. If you're not satisfied with this, you can also speak to the Education Welfare Service at Barnsley Council. If you genuinely believe that your child's current school is unsuitable, please consider all the alternatives and discuss them with our team.

For children in Year 10 or 11, you need to think about whether taking them out of school when they are preparing for exams is the best thing to do. If you feel stuck and your only option is to remove your child because their behaviour is leading to exclusions, please contact with the Education Welfare Service who can offer advice and support.





There are some things you need to think about when deciding whether Home Education is right for you and your child.

- **Time:** EHE may involve full-time, one-to-one support for your child and might be something you have to do for a long time (from 5 to 16 years).
- **Money:** There is no funding for EHE, so you will need to fund all equipment and activities for your child. This also includes the costs of any examinations. You may also have to give up working to do this.
- **Teaching:** You need to have ideas around the type of education you plan to deliver and what the outcomes for your child are going to be (including qualifications and their associated costs). Can you provide access to sport, art and other experiences?
- **Friendships:** What social opportunities will there be for your child to mix with other children and develop friendships?
- **Space:** Is your home suitable for undertaking teaching and learning?
- **Support:** What support do you have from others? What would happen if you were unable, perhaps through illness, provide teaching for your child for a period of time?

What does your child think?

It's important to talk to your child about the options available and make sure they're involved in deciding what is best for them. Have you asked your child what they think about being home educated?

What if you change your mind?

If you change your mind and want to return your child to school, you would have to make an application in the usual way through the council's process for in-year admissions.

For more information please visit barnsley.gov.uk/school-admissions-and-transfers



How do I start EHE?

If your child has never been enrolled at school

If your child is under 5 years, then you do not have to do anything. However, the council aims to keep an up-to-date register of all children who are educated at home. It's really helpful if you can write to us, so we know that you are going to teach your child at home. In the letter, please include your child's name, date of birth, address and a start date for education.

If your child is in school

If you take your child out of school for home education, you don't have to let the council know by law, but again we ask you to do so voluntarily, so we know about the decision you have made.

You need to write to your child's school(s) to let them know that you will be educating your child at home. This letter must have a start date when you will start to home educate your child. The school can then remove your child from their register once they receive this.

Schools and academies will let the council know that you will be educating your child and that they have taken your child off their register.

If your child is in a special school

If your child attends a special school and Barnsley Council or another council arranged this, then the permission of that council must be given before your child's name can be removed from their school register. Please contact the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) department at Barnsley Council on 01226 773966 to discuss this with them.



What does 'suitable, efficient, full-time' education look like?

What is a 'suitable' education?

There is no legal framework for suitable education; however, Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 says education must be suitable to the age, ability and aptitudes of your child, and take into account any special educational needs.

Your child's education should help them, when grown-up, to function as an independent citizen in the UK.

A 'suitable' education should:

- be age appropriate
- take into account your child's level of ability
- stretch your child so they can progress
- take into account any special needs or abilities
- not directly conflict with the Fundamental British Values as defined in government guidance
- encourage your child to have friendship groups and time to mix with children of their own age



As parents who educate at home you do not have to do any of the following:

- work towards getting your child a qualification
- have the place where your child is being educated, equipped to any particular standard
- teach the National Curriculum
- provide a 'broad and balanced' curriculum
- make detailed lesson plans in advance
- give formal lessons
- mark work done by your child
- formally assess their progress, or set out development plans
- copy school type friendship groups
- match school-based standards

Many home-educating families do some of these by choice so that it is easier to show that the education being provided is suitable, but this is your decision to make.

What is 'efficient' education?

There is no definition of this in law. However, it can be interpreted as meaning education which 'achieves what it intends to achieve'. In schools, this can be demonstrated where teachers have lesson plans and identify what they intend the young person to learn from any given activity. This can then be assessed to determine that this learning has been achieved. In Elective Home Education, your child could demonstrate this through progress made over time.





What is a 'full-time' education?

Home-educating parents are **not** required to:

- have a timetable
- have set hours during which education will take place
- follow school hours, days or terms

Home education doesn't have to happen during school hours, but it is helpful for you to know how many hours your child spends learning, so you may want to record this in some way.

What is the role of the council?

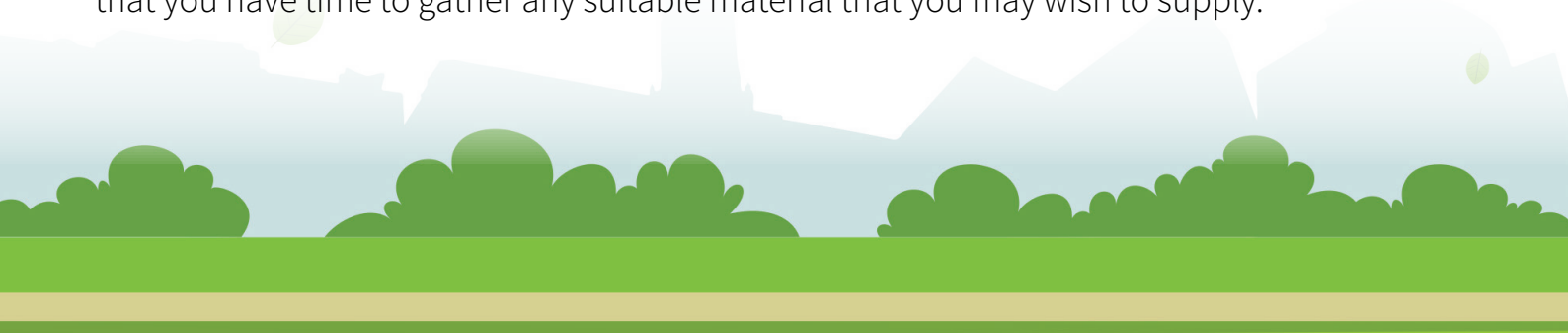
Barnsley Council has a statutory duty (under s.436A of the Education Act 1996) to make sure it is aware of children in the area who are not receiving a suitable education. The council monitors attendance at school and works with parents who chose to home educate to make sure that education is taking place.

Councils are allowed and encouraged to work with parents to understand what education is being provided and confirm that this is suitable, efficient and takes place full-time. In Barnsley, the EHE Advisor will work with parents, usually by meeting with parents and children at their home.

The Advisor is there to offer advice and support if you feel you need it. They will agree with you a reasonable timescale for you to show that education is in place. This doesn't mean that there can be a long break between the end of schooling and good education at home.

Once the Advisor and the council are satisfied that your child is receiving a suitable education, they will want to update their records every year, through an annual review with the EHE Advisor. The council will work with you in these reviews; by working together, we can make sure your child is receiving the best possible education.

If the Advisor is worried that your child is not receiving a suitable education at home, they will work with you to address any concerns in the first instance. If concerns continue, we may serve a notice (known as a s.437(1) notice), requiring that you satisfy the council that your child is receiving full-time and efficient education at home suitable to your child's needs. This usually means that you need to supply more information to show us how you are delivering a suitable education to your child. You will have at least 15 days to respond to the notice so that you have time to gather any suitable material that you may wish to supply.



What will happen during a visit with the Advisor for Elective Home Education?

The EHE Advisor is an experienced teacher; their role is to advise you and to work with you to understand whether your child is receiving a suitable, efficient and full-time education.

Once you have removed your child from the school register, the school will inform the council. We will then notify the EHE Advisor, who will arrange to visit to see you and your child. This will be arranged by post, the visit usually takes place in your home though you may choose a different location. The appointment is informal and usually takes around 30 minutes. The EHE Advisor will fill in a record of your child's education based on evidence seen and any information you wish to provide; this might include samples of work as well as discussion with you and your child. The EHE Advisor will keep the record, and a copy will be sent to you after the visit.

Keeping Children Safe

The council has a general duty to make sure all children are safe under section 175 of the Education Act 2002. This applies to children who are being educated at home, just as it does to children attending school. Any professional that is worried about a child will follow Barnsley Safeguarding procedures to report their concerns which can be found at

barnsley.gov.uk/safeguarding-children-in-barnsley



What if my child has Special Educational Needs?

Your right to educate your child at home is the same if your child has special educational needs or a disability (SEND) or an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

If your child has an EHCP, the council has to make sure that the educational provision specified in the plan is made available to the child. If the home education you provide is suitable, the council has no duty to arrange any special educational provision for your child. The plan should set out the type of special educational provision that the council thinks the child requires, and should also state that parents have made their own arrangements under s. 7 of the Education Act 1996.

When parents feel strongly that their child with SEND (with or without an EHC plan) should be educated at home but cannot undertake this themselves, and the local authority agrees that it would be inappropriate for the child to be educated in a school, post-16 institution, or early years setting, then the local authority itself may arrange that the special educational provision that the child needs is made elsewhere.

If you are educating a child at home already and come to believe that they have special educational needs, you can ask the council to carry out a statutory assessment or reassessment. The council must consider the request within the same statutory timescales and in the same way as children who are attending a school.



Further information

Safeguarding at home

You may choose to employ other people to educate your child; however, you continue to be responsible for the education provided and for keeping your child safe. This means you are responsible for making sure that anyone you get to help you provide home education is suitable to work with children. Appropriate references, and recent Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure certificate will help you do this.

Health and wellbeing

Barnsley Council provides public health and nursing services for all children in Barnsley, previously referred to as health visitors and school nurses. Your child has the same rights to access these services, and they will support you with advice around healthy lifestyles and making sure your child receives vaccinations and immunisations as required.

The service can be contacted on **01226 774411** or email **0-19healthteam@barnsley.gov.uk**

Attending other settings

Children who are educated at home sometimes attend different settings. If you wish your child to attend a state or independent school part-time for this purpose, you should discuss this with the school concerned, however, the school does not have to agree.

If your child wishes to attend college between the ages of 14 to 16, speak to the Advisor who will help you understand if your child can gain attend college. Your child will have to have been educated at home for six months before a place at college can be considered.

Some groups of guardians who home educate their children come together to support each other and teach their children on a group basis. Groups should be aware that if their intended provision will amount to full-time education of five or more school-age children (or just one if that child has an EHC Plan or statement of SEN, or is 'looked after'), then it may require registration as an independent school. If you think this applies to your arrangement, guidance can be found on the OFSTED website at **gov.uk/independent-school-registration**

If your child is involved in any of the arrangements described above, we'll use this information when assessing if your child is receiving a suitable education. It's important to inform the EHE advisor of your child's attendance at other settings or group education and provide information that shows the type of education your child is taking part in to support the Advisor to make their assessment.



Work Experience

If you would like your child to take part in work experience, then you are responsible for arranging this and making sure that your child will be safe when they attend. We can help you if you would like your child to take part in work experience so please speak to the Advisor.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children

Barnsley Council has an understanding of and is sensitive to, the distinct ethos and needs of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families. If you wish to educate your children at home, then the council's policies and procedures remain the same.

Children in faith communities

Barnsley Council has an understanding of, and is sensitive to, the distinct ethos and needs of children in specific faith communities and can take into account the impact that faith has on the home education priorities. However, faith should not in any way stop your child from receiving a suitable full-time education, and this will remain our main focus. It will be helpful if you can explain how faith considerations have affected the content of the home education (if this is the case). There is no legal requirement for home education to include any element of teaching about religion or faith.

Home Educating Post 16

If your child was registered Elective Home Educated before their 16th birthday, you could continue to home educate them after 16.

We don't continue to monitor your child's education after their 16th birthday.

