

Staffordshire Elective Home Education (EHE)

Educating children at home works well when it is a positive choice and carried out with a proper regard for the needs of the child. **Elective Home Education is not the same as the 'distance learning'** that children have been receiving with resources from school during the Covid-19 lockdown. These free resources will no longer be available when schools go back in September.

Information for parent /carers.

Deciding to educate a child at home instead of sending him or her to school is a step which should be carefully considered. It will mean:

- Giving time and energy to educating the child
- Committing finances to buy materials, pay for tutors and enter exams
- Finding/making a learning space
- Planning for the day when the child leaves school and starts EHE
- Finding resources to meet the child's needs and interests.
- Considering the impact on the child's socialisation

It is especially important that parents or carers consider the nature of the education they intend to provide for their child before they begin to teach them at home. They will need to think about the curriculum they will provide:

- Will this allow the child to reach their potential now and in the future?
- Will they expect your child to sit public examinations such as IGCSEs?

Home education can be very rewarding for parents and their child. We recognise that for some children this is a very positive experience with good outcomes.

However, if parents are considering home education because:

- The school system is not currently working well for your child
- The child has poor attendance, and you are facing prosecution
- The child has behaviour issues, and is facing exclusion
- The child is anxious or has medical needs
- Parents have had a disagreement with the school or a teacher or the school have referred to safeguarding with concerns, parents should contact the Head teacher and arrange a meeting to talk about their concerns. If this is unsuccessful, they could contact the elective home education co-ordinator at the local authority to see if they can offer them some support. The elective home education co-ordinator is happy to attend meetings at school with parents. Children who are medically unfit to attend school can receive support but only if they remain at school. Parents must provide the school with evidence their child is unfit to attend school who will then follow the procedure to arrange some tuition for the child.

Pressure should never be put on parents or carers by a school or any professional to remove their child from a school to avoid formal exclusion, or because the child is having difficulty with learning or behaviour. This practice is sometimes called 'offrolling' and is unacceptable. If pressure of this sort is put on parents by any school, they should inform the elective home education co-ordinator in the local authority.

If parents genuinely believe that their child's current school is not suitable, then they should discuss with the school's admissions team or the SENDIASS service what alternatives might be available before taking any decision to home educate their child. Information about school admissions can be found using the following link

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Admissions-secondary/In-year/In-year-schooladmissions.aspx>

Information about SENDIASS can be found using this link: <https://www.staffs-iass.org/>

If parents remove their child from a school in order to educate at home but then change their mind, there is no guarantee that a place would still be available at that school. An application would have to be made for in-year admissions.

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 provides that:

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

- (a) to their age, ability and aptitude, and
 - (b) to any special educational needs, they may have,
- either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

If parents choose to educate their child at home, they as parents or carers take on the full function of section 7 above. They will assume full financial responsibility for their child's education, including bearing the cost of any public examinations. There are no funds available from the local authority to support them.

As part of making the decision to educate their child at home, it is worth considering not only the immediate benefits of home education but also longer-term implications of delivering it. Parents may find it useful to consult the government guidance for parents and local authorities at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/elective-home-education

Within this document it asks parents to consider how they will:

- ensure there is a systematic approach to literacy and numeracy in accordance with their child's age, ability, aptitude and any SEND including the appropriate resources being used
- provide a broad range of learning opportunities showing a breadth and depth of knowledge across a variety of subjects, topics and disciplines including appropriate resources being used
- ensure that home education takes up a significant amount of time in the child's life - parents should at least be able to quantify and demonstrate the amount of time for which the child is being educated. Education which clearly is not occupying a significant proportion of a child's life (making allowance for holiday periods) will probably not meet the s.7 requirement.
- ensure they can show the expected progress they intend their child to make in each area including the progress their child has achieved
- provide teaching for their child if they were unable to deliver this for a period perhaps through illness
- provide social experiences, access to cultural and aesthetic experiences and physical exercise, to help their child develop?

Finally, if parents choose to educate their child at home, they need to be aware the local authority has a duty under section 436A Education Act 1996 to ensure all children receive a suitable education. Therefore, the LA will contact them to confirm this is taking place and offer them information, advice and guidance if appropriate.