

Home Education Information for parents and carers.



This information sheet has been written to support families who are starting their home educating journey and those who are currently considering home education, as an approach to meeting the learning needs of their child or young person.

I am interested in registering my child for Elective Home Education (EHE), who do I contact?

You might want to consider discussing home education with national support groups (contactable via Facebook and online) and other parents who home educate who have a wealth of knowledge and can offer advice. The Kent County Council (KCC) website www.kent.gov.uk/ehe and Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/KCCEHE/> also offer guidance. If you decide to home educate and your child is currently on roll of a school you may notify the school of your wish to home educate in writing. You may also contact KCC by emailing: educationathome@kent.gov.uk

All parents have a right to home educate their child or young person if they wish. If you elect to home educate your child you are **fully** responsible for providing a full time, suitable and effective education. This should be designed specifically to meet the educational needs of your child.

It is recommended that both parents (who hold parental responsibility) agree to home education. Ideally both parents should sign the letter prior to sending it to the school. If parents (with parental responsibility) do not both agree with the decision to home educate, the home education team will accept the decision of the parent with whom the child resides for the majority of the time and will advise parents to seek guidance from the family court.

Am I legally obliged to inform my local authority that I want to educate my child at home?

The law does not currently require you to notify your local authority of your intentions to home educate your child. However, it is recommended that you register your intentions. KCC has a legal duty to ensure it's resident children are receiving a suitable education and may intervene, regardless of registration, if it appears this is not being provided. Further guidance is available at www.kent.gov.uk/ehe

My child's current school has requested I remove my child from their roll and register as home educated, can they do this?

A school cannot request or advise you to de-register your child from the school to home educate. Any decision to home educate must be made by you. The responsibility to provide a suitable education to your child will be effective from the date after you remove your child from the school roll.

My child has special needs with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), can I still home educate my child?

You have a right to electively home educate your child if they have an EHCP. However, it remains the responsibility of KCC, if your child lives in Kent, to ensure that your child's needs are met. If your child is attending a special school, KCC SEN department must give consent for your child's name to be removed from the school roll and state home education as the named educational provision on the EHCP.

What are the main costs associated with home education?

Home educating is likely to incur costs that include the purchase of workbooks, exercise books, stationery, art and craft materials, printer ink, educational days out, exam fees, licenses and subscriptions to online educational sites and tutors if required. KCC does not supply course work, tutors or arrange exams. There is no funding available from the Department of Education (DFE) or the Local Authority to assist with the related costs in delivering education at home.

However, home educating need not be overly expensive; discount stores, supermarkets and charity shops often have educational materials available at reduced prices. The Internet is a valuable resource and there are a range of free educational websites available to support learning at all levels. Links to some of these can be found on our website. A responsible adult will need to be available to oversee the education and supervise the child or young person; this may require changes to an established lifestyle.

What happens if I want to enter my child for public exams?

For home educated children and young people wishing to sit public examinations, including GCSEs or A levels, it is usually your responsibility to find a suitable exam centre, register for the exam, find a qualified person to assess coursework and sit examinations. Information regarding exam centres can be found on our website

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www.kent.gov.uk/ehe. It is important to contact examination officers to register your child as an external candidate and to establish the exam syllabus followed.

KCC offers financial support with core English and Mathematics GCSE's for families who meet the following criteria:

- would be eligible for Free School Meals, if the child was on roll at a school
- have been home educating for two full consecutive years –including Year 10
- evidence has been provided to KCC that the child is working towards the relevant exam syllabus

Am I required to follow the National Curriculum?

If you decide to home educate your child, it will be your responsibility to provide your child with a suitable full-time education that meets your child's needs according to age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs. There is no requirement for you to follow a prescribed curriculum. However, in 2001 the Committee on the Rights of the Child published a paper highlighting the importance of a child's right to an education. Annex 9 states:

'Article 29 (1) underlines the individual and subjective right to a specific quality of education.

Education must include not only literacy and numeracy but also life skills, such as the ability to make well-balanced decisions; to resolve conflicts in a non-violent manner and develop a healthy lifestyle, good social relationships and responsibility, critical thinking, creative talents and other abilities which give children the tools needed to pursue their life options.'

Families who chose to home educate follow a variety of educational approaches. Being home educated offers freedom outside of the classroom and parents can make use of local amenities and the great outdoors. Education can be more hands on and suited to kinaesthetic learners.

Do I need to teach compulsory subjects?

The National Curriculum applies only to schools and therefore, no subjects are compulsory. However, you may consider ensuring your child studies English and Mathematics. Planning your child's work is important and to guide you in the early stages of planning your child's education you may find it useful to complete our online planning support form <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/educating-your-child-at-home/our-guide-to-elective-home-education>

You may find it helpful to consider the assessment method you will be using to record your child's learning and show progress they have made. It is important for your child's development that they have the chance to socialise with family, friends and other children of all ages, on a regular basis. Joining a young people's organisation or club could be considered to provide the opportunity for your child to form relationships in safe and comfortable surroundings. You may wish to consider undertaking outings and visits as they form an integral part of the learning process.

What might my child's learning routine look like?

Your child's learning routine will be tailored to their age, ability and aptitude, and any special educational needs. The time allocated to your child's education will also depend upon their age and wider needs. Most children attending school normally have about five hours tuition a day for 190 days a year, spread over approximately 38 weeks. Home education does not have to mirror this, but, as home educators, you should be able to quantify and demonstrate the amount of time for which your child is being educated and you may wish to establish a routine to support you in this. You should try to offer varied activities to support your child's learning. The Department for Education guidance for parents on elective home education, states that education which is clearly not occupying a significant proportion of a child's life (making due allowance for holiday periods) will probably not meet the requirements of section 7 of the Education Act 1996.

Can I hire a tutor to support my child's home education?

You may choose to employ tutors as part of your child's educational provision. KCC recommends that these tutors are vetted prior to starting work with your child (DBS checked, references etc).

My child is on a school roll, what happens when I notify the school that I want to register my child to home education?

If you decide to home educate, the school will deregister your child from their school roll through Kent's Digital Front Door, sending a referral to the elective home education team. Once the referral has been received and processed by

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the home education team a welcome letter will be sent to you. This will be followed by your local EHE Support & Advice Officer making contact with you to introduce themselves and to offer advice and guidance regarding resources and local services to support you. The officer will offer an initial home visit, followed by review visits.

Where a family have settled into home education and there is evidence of a well rounded education taking place, the local EHE Support and Advice Officer will make contact once a year to offer a visit or request information that demonstrates that the family are still home educating and that contact details remain the same.

EHE Support and Advice Officers meet with large numbers of home educating families on a regular basis. They are therefore well placed to share new ideas, resources and promote good practice. The remit of the EHE Support and Advice Officers is to support families where necessary, offer advice to enable home educators to provide the best possible education for their child and satisfy the local authority's obligation to establish that a child is in receipt of suitable education.

What should I expect from the visit?

The visit will be conducted in your child's home or a mutually agreed venue, such as a library or children's centre, with the EHE Support and Advice Officer, yourself and your child. The visit will last approximately one hour. The EHE Support and Advice Officer will discuss your child's education, share samples of work completed, provide advice in relation to resources available in your district and will consider your child's opinions of their home education experience.

Do I receive a copy of the report form completed by the Elective Home Education Support and Advice Officer during the visit?

You will be provided with a copy of the report within 28 days of the visit.

Can I provide evidence of home educating my child rather than agreeing to a visit?

If you would prefer not to meet with your allocated EHE Support and Advice Officer and your child does not meet KCC policy criteria whereby a visit is recommended, you would then be asked to provide examples of the education your child is receiving. You may consider for this to be in the form of a written progress report alongside any supporting documents you wish to share to demonstrate the learning (e.g. an education plan, a diary, photographs or copies of the child's work). KCC would also accept an endorsement from a qualified professional involved in the delivery of the programme and who would be able to confirm that the education provided, in their view, is suitable.

What happens if it appears that my child's home education is unsuitable?

Under Section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996, KCC **must** act if it appears that a child or young person is not receiving a suitable education. If an EHE Support and Advice Officer visits you and is unable to establish that your child is receiving a suitable education, they will make recommendations in their report and arrange a further visit within six weeks (no longer than one school term) to review the education provision and progress. Alternatively, an EHE Support and Advice Officer will support you if you wish for your child to return to school. At the next visit if the provision is still deemed unsatisfactory, and KCC believes that there is insufficient evidence that a suitable education is being provided, a Notice will be served instructing your child to attend school, a School Attendance Order under Section 437 (3) of the Education Act 1996. If your child has an EHCP your child or young person will need to return to the provision named on their EHCP.

What information do KCC hold about my child on their home education records?

The home education team will hold your child's full name, date of birth, address, ethnicity, parent details and contact details, whether they have any special educational needs or disability or have an Education Health and Care plan. The team also save visit reports and educational and welfare information shared with us by the school and yourself regarding your child, including why you have chosen to home educate your child. The home education teams privacy notice can be found at <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/information-and-data/access-to-information/gdpr-privacy-notice/education/elective-home-education-privacy-notice>.

How will the EHE Support and Advice Officer support me?

Kent County Council has collated a wealth of information regarding educational resources and local services that home educating families may find useful. The allocated EHE Support & Advice Officer will be able to discuss

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resources and provide information during their visit. Copies of these materials and additional information can also be found on the KCC website <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/educating-your-child-at-home>.

The main sources of information and support for home educators are:

Our website – <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/educating-your-child-at-home>

There is a variety of information available including KCC's EHE policy, privacy notice and this guidance document. The resources section includes useful links and resources regarding a number of topics.

Our Facebook Page – <https://www.facebook.com/KCCEHE/>

The Elective Home Education Kent Facebook page is a platform for the home education team to provide you with up to date information regarding national and local themed days and events. It is also used to share any relevant information and resources that you may find useful, including post 16 provision.

Home Education Groups

There are many home education groups who support home educating families. These offer educational activities, resources and provide social interaction with a network of likeminded families. There are links to some home education groups on our webpage and others can be found on social media platforms such as Facebook.

Youth Hubs - <http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/young-people/youth-hubs>

Youth Hubs are places for young people to meet friends, hang out, have fun, try new things and also get information, support and advice. They offer a wide range of activities, clubs and day trips. The staff are on hand to provide information and advice about education, training and employment.

The Kent Libraries Service - <http://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/libraries>

The Library is a valued resource and is widely and regularly used by home educating families to borrow books, access online educational materials and use printing facilities (home educated children are able to print five A4 sheets free of charge per day). Libraries also offer a number of clubs and activities. You can apply for a library card that records that your child is home educated, which will allow you to borrow more books than standard users.

Kent Children's University - <http://www.kentchildrensuniversity.co.uk/cukent/home/>

Kent Children's University believes that children can and do learn anywhere and that children learn best when they decide what they want to learn and most importantly, have FUN whilst learning. Kent Children's University organise a range of enrichment activities and events for children aged 5-14. Every child taking part in the Children's University has their own special 'Passport to Learning' which they use to collect activity stamps each time an event is attended or when a learning activity is undertaken. You can purchase a family membership. The price of annual membership is dependent upon the number of children in your family and ranges from £25 - £60 per year. Kent Children's University also have an active Facebook page that is a useful source of information regarding upcoming challenges and events <https://www.facebook.com/KentChildrensUniversity/>

DFE Guidance for parents home educating <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/elective-home-education>

Please note, KCC cannot and do not accept any responsibility for the quality or content of external websites parents may access.

Can children and young people who are home educated complete work experience?

Children can benefit greatly from experiencing a real work environment. You must be assured your child can do this safely and with the right level of support and guidance. The employer must evidence to you that they have risk assessed the role and have the appropriate level of insurance required to have your child on their premises; without this information work experience would not be recommended. KCC do not complete risk assessments nor have insurance to cover work experience carried out by home educated young people.

Are children and young people who are home educated allowed to work?

A young person is considered of compulsory school age until the last Friday in June, of the academic year in which they turn 16. Child employment legislation means that your child can only work for a set amount of hours and that work can only take place before or after school hours, at the weekends or during school holidays. This applies to all

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children including home educated young people. An employer would need to apply for a license for your child prior to employment and ensure that risk assessments and appropriate insurance is in place.

For more information about child employment (hours of work, prohibited employment etc) search <http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/activities-outside-school/child-employment>. It is important to stress that if your child has had their 16th birthday and leaves school to home educate during Year 11 they are not able to engage in full time work until the end of the academic year.

What post 16 options are available to young people who are home educated ?

Young people are required to engage in education, training, or employment with training, until the age of 18. This includes college, apprenticeships, employment with training, attending sixth form or volunteering. It will become your young person's responsibility to engage in education after the last Friday in June in the academic year in which they turn 16. However, it is expected that as parents/carers you will continue to support your young person with identifying and accessing their chosen pathway. During Year 11 all young people who are registered as EHE, receive information on how to access KentChoices, this is an online platform that can be used to search and apply for college and sixth form courses.

Can home educated pupils access post 16 college courses?

Colleges offer a range of courses for post 16 young people. Some courses do not require your young person to have any formal qualifications, however, most courses have entry requirements (GCSE's may form part of the requisite for an offer to be made) and you are advised to attend college open days/contact the college to ascertain these requirements.

The EHE Support & Advice Officers can provide guidance in relation to your young persons post 16 options and signpost the young person to the Skills and Employability team, who offer careers advice and help to find a suitable post 16 placement. The referral would usually be submitted in the later stages of academic year 11 if no onward destination has been agreed.

Young people already registered to home education can continue to be home educated until they are 18 and support will be available from KCC's partners to liaise with you with regards to their onward destination to prevent your young person from becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) in the future.