



Leicester  
City Council

## **Education and Children's Services – Learning, Quality and Performance**

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### **Additional Information about Elective Home Education**

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### What does education at home really mean?

When parents decide to take on the full responsibility for a child's education, it is known as Elective Home Education. It is called this because the parent has elected to educate their child at home rather than use the school system.

Some parents teach their children themselves, some make arrangements to plan and teach in small groups with other local families who are involved in home education. Alternatively, the family may choose to pay for a tutor for parts of the curriculum, or for all of it.

However, the education is provided, it is up to the parent(s) to demonstrate that the education provision is helping the child to learn and that the child is developing according to his or her age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have.

### Is it legal?

Home Education is legal. Parents have the right to educate their child at home. You do not need to be a teacher or have any other special qualifications. You will need, however, to provide your child with efficient full time education suitable to his or her age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs he or she may have.

### What is meant by “efficient and suitable education?”

To be considered efficient and suitable, an education provision must enable children to fulfil their potential and for adult life in their community and not prevent them from leading a full life beyond their community.

### What do I have to do to begin Elective Home Education?

If your child has never been to school, there is no action for you to take prior to starting home education. However, if your child is in school, you should formally deregister by writing to the head teacher to say that your child “is receiving education otherwise than in school”. Once you have written to the school requesting that your child's name be taken off the school roll the school is required to notify the Local Authority (LA) (ie the Education Welfare Service) that your child's name has been deleted from the school roll. If your child is at a Special school there is a different process which requests the Local Authority to agree to the deregistration.

See [Appendix 1a: Example letter for parents – deregistering from a maintained school](#)

See [Appendix 1b: Example letter for parents – deregistering from a special school](#)

The school will then contact the Education Welfare Service (EWS) and an Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will make contact to seek to discuss your intentions. EWS then notifies Elective Home Education colleagues who make contact with the family about their education provision. If it is brought to the attention of the LA that a child does not appear to be receiving education then the LA has a duty to investigate whether that child is receiving an efficient, full time education. Further information is available in the LA Policy.

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## **How often will Leicester City Council review my child's education and what will happen during the meeting?**

The process the LA follows is detailed in the Policy on our website.

## **What kind of information will help the Local Authority?**

The information could include a written programme of experience and learning and include samples of work. The evidence should "convince a reasonable person that the child is receiving efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs they may have". It is for the parent to decide what best demonstrates your child's progress and achievements.

## **Will I be given time to establish the education provision I make for my child and will I will be given time for my child to settle into home education?**

Paragraph 6.2 of the 2019 Guidance to LAs states that this practise, sometimes called de-schooling, has no basis in law. Further "...families should be aiming to offer satisfactory home education from the outset, and to have made preparations with that aim in view, as time lost in educating a child is difficult to recover."

## **Can a child with special needs be educated at home?**

Children with special needs can be educated otherwise than in school. A child's Education, Health and Care Plan has to be maintained and the Local Authority's statutory duty to undertake an annual review of this continues.

## **What teaching methods do I need to consider?**

All children learn in different ways. It is for the parent to decide on the methods for teaching and how learning might be recorded and demonstrated. This can be achieved, for example, through individual subject study, integrated topic work or following personal interests.

## **Do I need to follow a timetable?**

You do not have to follow a 'school' timetable and can plan the day to suit the learning style of your child. Families find it helpful to keep some records of what is done and how the child found it, what visits were undertaken and what was learned from them as well as what subject areas were covered. This is useful for the EHE Adviser but also in the event of the family wishing to return to mainstream school or college and wishing to provide evidence of what has been achieved.

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## **How does compulsory school age affect home educators?**

As a parent/carer, you must provide an education for your child whilst they are of "compulsory school age." The law says that this can be at home. A child is of compulsory school age on the 31 December, 31 March or 31 August (whichever occurs first when they turn 5 years of age (including on one of those days). Following the Coalition Government's change to the "participation age" a young person ceases to be of participation age once they have reached their 18th birthday.

This does not mean young people must stay in school. They will be able to choose from:

- full-time education and apprenticeship or traineeship
- part-time education or training combined with one of the following:
  - employment or self-employment for 20 hours or more a week
  - volunteering for 20 hours or more a week

## **Will I have to arrange for National Curriculum tests?**

The National Curriculum tests (SATs) are only a requirement at state schools and are therefore not relevant to home education. Your child will not be tested by the Local Authority or the Government.

## **Do I have to teach the National Curriculum?**

No. As a home educator it is up to you and your child what, how and when you study. However, Case Law has established that an education provision that does not include English and Maths at an age or aptitude appropriate level cannot be seen as suitable.

## **Can my child still take exams?**

Yes. You can arrange for children to take exams as external candidates at various exam centres. (See the section Key Stage Four and beyond to see a list of local Exam Centres.) There are no grants available to cover the costs.

## **What happens if the Local Authority is not satisfied with the educational provision?**

If the Local Authority is concerned about any aspects of the provision for your child, the EHE Adviser will contact you about these concerns. Further visits and or consultations may be offered with the aim of helping you to overcome the difficulties within a specified timescale. If the LA continues to be dissatisfied with the educational provision, the case is closed to Raising Achievement and is referred back to the Education Welfare Service.

## **Can my child ever return to school?**

Children are educated at home for varying lengths of time: sometimes for the whole of their compulsory participation age, sometimes for a few weeks until a place in the preferred school can be found. If you take your child out of one school for a period of time, you can re-apply for admission. You must bear in mind that you may not get a place in the school of your choice when you re-apply; it depends on school numbers.

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## Key Stage Four and Beyond

During the last 2 years of compulsory education when young people become 15/16 years of age), young people in schools often carry out work experience placements and usually follow GCSE courses which lead to formal qualifications. Qualifications can also be gained at FE College when young people are over 16.

## College Courses are now available to 14-16 year olds

Following a change in how college places are funded, Leicester College and South Leics College at South Wigston are now able to offer courses to home educated learners. This means that home educated learners aged 14- 16 can now be enrolled to study a range of Entry Level qualifications.

For more information contact the colleges on the contacts page of their websites stating that you are interested in 14-16 year old education:

- [Leicester College website](#)
- [South Leicestershire College \(Wigston campus\) website](#)

## Examinations

Parents who wish their children to take exams as home educated students may enter them as an **external candidate** (also called private candidate). However, before any decisions are made about courses and content it is vital to:

- find an exam centre (that is, the place to sit the exam/s).
- find out from the exam centres which awarding bodies (also known as exam boards) they offer - the awarding body sets the exam paper/s.

Parents do need to discuss any plans with an exam centre in good time and it is advisable to do this at least a year before the student plans to sit the exam/s in order to ensure that the young person revises the correct work.

Finding an appropriate exam centre can be a challenge depending on which exam/s a young person wishes to take but there are a variety of independent schools and centres that offer places to external candidates.

It should be noted that many exams have a coursework element that will need to be authenticated, potentially by a distance learning provider or the exam centre. Contacting the exam centre well before the course begins is essential to ensure that all these aspects of the qualification process are understood.

Home Educated students often take IGCSE (International GCSEs) as there is no course work component.

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## Exam Centres

Parents who wish to make arrangements for their children to take exams are advised to contact exam centres before their child starts studying for a particular exam; there are different exam boards and each exam centre facilitates exams from specific exam boards. It is important to know which exam board the centre offers as this will dictate the details of the courses e.g. the books the child needs.

There have been some recent closures of exam centres. The latest information is that the following centres continue to operate and they may be able to support home educated children to take exams:

### **Tutors and Exams in Coventry**

Coventry Exam Centre (HQ)

Website: [tutorsandexams.uk](http://tutorsandexams.uk)

### **Nottingham College**

Email: [enquiries@nottinghamcollege.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@nottinghamcollege.ac.uk)

Website: [nottinghamcollege.ac.uk](http://nottinghamcollege.ac.uk)

Please note that the local authority is not responsible for these exam centres in any way; parents are advised to obtain full information on the centres and ensure they are satisfied with the arrangements on offer before proceeding.

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## Awarding Bodies

It is possible that home educated children may be able to access other qualifications at other locations. Organisations that offer accredited examinations are listed below. Many provide guidance to private candidates and they may be able to help you find an alternative local examination centre to the ones above.

Please note that although these awarding bodies may provide lists of Exam Centres that are registered to offer their qualifications, they may not guarantee that they offer your chosen subject, nor that they will accept private candidates.

- [AQA](#)
- [OCR \(Oxford Cambridge and RSA\)](#)
- [Pearson Qualifications](#)
- [CIE \(Cambridge Assessment International Education\)](#)
- [NOCN \(National Open College Network\) – Birmingham office](#)

## Distance Learning Packages

There are a number of distance learning packages that offer, at a price, a set of resources and marked assignments as well as email or telephone support. In the main they cover Key Stage three up to GCSE.

These include:

- [National Extension College](#)
- [Oxford Home Schooling](#)
- [Oxford Open Learning](#)

Please note that there are more organisations that advertise on the internet.

Please be aware that should you follow opt to use one of these packages, you still have to find the Exam Centre yourself.

## Private Tutors

Leicester City Council is aware that many home-educating families find it helpful to use private tutors to support their education provision. The council is unable to recommend tutors. Tutors can be found through internet searches, telephone directories, local papers, possibly local libraries and, most importantly, by word of mouth.

We strongly advise that parents who seek to use the services of tutors should satisfy themselves that the person is able to provide an up to date Disclosure and Barring Service certificate (formerly known as the CRB certificate). You should read this carefully to ensure that the dates prove that it is a current certificate.

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## Work Experience

For young people and families who wish to access work experience, it may be helpful to discuss any plans with an outside body which is able to verify that appropriate checks have been undertaken for the companies and staff involved in any placements; for example that the correct health and safety regimes are operating, that insurance is in place, identify relevant staff who may need Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks (formerly known as Criminal Record Bureau – CRB); and that the placement provides appropriate educational activity.

Parents who wish their children to access work experience may wish to contact:

### **Leicester Education Business Company**

0116 240 7270

[LEBC: work experience placements](#)

The LEBC manages the biggest work experience programme across the city and county and can help you to set up and manage work related learning opportunities for children and young people so that they learn more about the world of work.

The cost of sourcing a work experience placement starts from £80 for a 1 or 2 week placement and you can find more information by contacting the Work Experience Team at LEBC on: 0116 240 7270 or email [contactus@leics-ebc.org.uk](mailto:contactus@leics-ebc.org.uk)

## Options for young people over compulsory school age

Connexions is the careers service for young people in Leicester aged 16-19 (up to 25 for those with an Education, Health and Care Plan) who are not in employment, education or training.

- [Connexions for young people – Leicester Employment Hub website](#)

Year 11 students looking to apply for post-16 education or training can do so at Positive Steps@16 – [register for a new account](#). If you are not on a school roll, choose the *out of area/not listed* option.

Many providers have a deadline for receipt of applications and therefore please submit your application by the last day of January. Applications for a place on courses received by this time are considered with all applications whether the student has been in school or not.

After the last day in January applications *are* considered but you may not get the place on your preferred course if it is full.

If you have any queries about the application process, please contact Connexions on 0116 454 1770.

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## **Appendix 1a: Example letter for parents – deregistering from a maintained school**

Your address

The Date

Head teacher's Name  
School name and address

Dear (Head's name)

**Name of child      Date of birth**

I am writing to inform you that I/we have decided to withdraw our son/daughter from school in order to take personal responsibility for his/her education. Please delete his/her name from the register in accordance with Education (Pupil Registration) Regulation 8 (1) (d) 2006, as he/she is now receiving education otherwise than at school.

Yours sincerely

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## **Appendix 1b: Example letter for parents – deregistering from a special school**

Ms Sue Welford  
Principal Education Officer  
Social Care & Education  
Leicester City Council  
115 Charles Street Leicester  
LE1 1FZ

Dear Ms Welford

### **Re - (insert your child's name - date of birth - special school attending)**

We are writing as the parents of the above named child, who is a child for whom the LA currently maintains an Education Health and Care Plan, and who is a registered pupil at (name) Special School, (address).

After very careful consideration, and following discussions with staff and teachers from the above named school, we have now decided to take full responsibility for providing for our child's education, 'otherwise than at school' in accordance with section 7 of the 1996 Education Act.

We therefore seek the consent of the Local Authority to allow (insert your child's name) name to be deleted from the admission register of the school, in accordance with Regulation 8(2) of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006.

Once consent has been given we will provide our son /daughter with an efficient full- time education suitable to his age, ability, aptitude and to his special educational needs.

We look forward to consent for (insert your child's name) name to be deleted from the admission register of (insert name of Special School) in the very near future and request that confirmation of such action be forwarded to us within the next 14 days.

Yours sincerely

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