Advice for parents considering educating their child at home

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1. **INTRODUCTION**

Southampton City Council believes that for the majority of children the best place to educate a child is in school, but supports the right of parents to home educate and aims to support parents in whichever educational choices the parent believes to be best for the child.'

The intention of this booklet is to help you understand what may be involved if you are thinking of educating your child. We hope it will help you to consider all the implications, explain the law as it applies to you and the local authority and give you some advice to assist you in making a decision that is right for your child.

We would recommend that, before reaching a final decision you:

- Consider the points raised in this document.
- Carry out further research via some of the independent websites listed at the end of this booklet.
- Contact local home education groups to meet other home educating parents and discuss their experiences.
- Speak with your child’s school if they are currently on roll.
- Contact the Lead Officer Pupil Services at Southampton City Council if you feel you need further advice, support or require mediation with your child’s school.

The Lead Officer Pupil Services, on behalf of Southampton City Council, will seek to establish respectful and effective working relationships with parents and offer as much support and advice as possible.

2. **LOCAL HOME EDUCATION GROUPS**

Southampton currently has a number of parents who home educate their children and meet regularly as groups. These groups can be a valuable resource for home educating parents, giving access to support and advice from other parents doing the same. Details can be found via Facebook Groups and on the Education Otherwise website.

2.1 **SEEDS**

SEEDS are home educators from Southampton and the surrounding area who, during term time, meet up regularly for sports/play/adult-chat and tuition across a range of subjects. Details of how to find out more can be found at:

https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/SEEDS1/info

2.2 **Faregos**

Faregos home education group covers Fareham, Gosport and South Hampshire. They have an exam centre and are principally an exam tuition group, running classes for KS3 and slightly younger across a range of subjects. Details of how to find out more can be found at:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FareGosHE/
2.3 Southampton Area Home Ed

“Southampton Area Home Ed” Facebook group can also provide links to other home education groups.

3. GUIDANCE ON THE LAW - PARENTS’ RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The parents’ legal duty is set out in Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act as follows:

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

1. to his/her age, ability and aptitude.
2. to any special educational needs he/she may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Home education is “education otherwise.”

Parents choose to educate their children at home for a variety of reasons, often because they feel it offers their child an advantage to an education in school. It is a decision not to be taken lightly because it means that parents take back responsibility for the delivery of their child’s education and facilitating their learning.

There are many different ways to home educate your child such as deschooling, unschooling/autonomous learning, distance learning, classical learning, Montessori. You should research and choose the educational method that is best for your child. It might be influenced by your philosophical, spiritual or religious outlook or by your child’s specific needs. There is a vast variety and potential within home education with no particular method being better than another.

You might decide to teach your child yourself or hope to find a small group with other home educators. In future such groups may have to register.

Irrespective of who actually teaches your child, you will retain responsibility. There is no funding for home education. What is suitable for one child may not be for another, but all children should be involved in a learning process.

If your child is currently attending school, and you want to home educate, you need to send a letter to the Headteacher advising them of your decision and stating that your child’s name should be removed from the school roll. If you simply stop sending your child to school without putting this in writing the school you could be prosecuted for non-attendance.

We would urge you to talk to the Headteacher before taking this step. You can also contact the Lead Officer Pupil Services at Southampton City Council 023 8083 3889 or e-mail home.education@southampton.gov.uk if you feel you need further advice, support or require mediation with your child’s school.

After receiving your deregistration letter, the school must then inform the local authority before deleting your child’s name from the school roll.
The only exceptions are where your child attends a special school or is subject to a School Attendance Order or Education Supervision Order.

We will make contact with you when we hear from the school.

4. GUIDANCE ON THE LAW - THE LOCAL AUTHORITY’S RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996

“If it appears to a Local Authority that a child of school age in their area is not receiving suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise they shall serve notice in writing on the parent requiring him/her to satisfy them within the period specified in the notice that the child is receiving such education.”

Government Guidelines on Home Education encourage local authorities to address any issues in an informal and collaborative manner before taking formal action. Further information about the education being provided would be requested so that appropriate action can be agreed.

4.2 Section 437(3) of the Education Act 1996 says:

A parent on whom a notice has been served under subsection (1) fails to satisfy the local education authority, within the period specified in the notice, that the child is receiving suitable education, and in the opinion of the authority it is expedient that the child should attend school, the authority shall serve on the parent an order (referred to in this Act as a "school attendance order"), in such form as may be prescribed, requiring him to cause the child to become a registered pupil at a school named in the order.

If the Local Authority becomes aware of a child of statutory school age who is not attending school and is not known to us as being electively home educated, we will make enquiries about their educational provision.

4.3 Section 436A Education & Inspections Act 2006

Duty to make arrangements to identify children not receiving education (CME).

A local education authority must make arrangements to enable them to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children in their area who are of compulsory school age but—

(a) are not registered pupils at a school, and
(b) are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.

As there is no duty for home educating parents to notify the local authority, we may make contact as a requirement of our CME responsibilities. These visits would only take place, however, if the child was not already recorded as home educated on the local authority education management system.
Once schools receive a signed parental letter indicating that they intend to take back personal responsibility for their child's education, a copy should be passed to the Lead Officer Pupil Services. If a dialogue has not already taken place, parents should be offered a voluntary meeting with the school to explore any underlying issues that could be resolved. The Lead Officer Pupil services is also available to provide mediation if required, 023 8083 3889 or e-mail home.education@southampton.gov.uk

Schools are required to notify the local authority before deleting the pupil's name from the register. It is our aim to establish good working relationships with families and, at this stage, the Lead Officer Pupil Services will telephone parents to ensure that there was no pressure applied on them to reach this decision. A voluntary home visit will also be offered to offer advice and complete an EHE Visit Form.

Where a home educated child has never been enrolled in a Southampton school e.g. you have recently moved to the city, or your child has just become of statutory school age, there is no legal requirement to obtain permission from or notify the Local Authority if you do not intend to enrol your child in a school. However, we would very much appreciate a phone call to advise us on 023 8083 3889. If you do not tell us you are home educating, we will have to follow Children Missing Education procedures if we become aware that your child is not attending school but we have no other details of educational arrangements in place.

6. HELPFUL POINTS FOR PARENTS TO CONSIDER ABOUT HOME EDUCATION

- Your child should be positive about the suggestion of home education.
- You should believe that it is the best course of action for your child.
- You should have the time to devote to your child's education on a regular basis.
- Depending upon your approach, you should have the ability to teach your child effectively or to facilitate and support their learning journey.
- You should be able to ensure that your child is educated to the required level if they wish to take GCSE examinations.
- You will need to plan ahead if you want your child to sit public examinations in terms of curriculum, exam centres and funding.
- You should be prepared to source any materials you require, if you do not already have access to them.
- It is advisable for you to have some support available and this can be delivered by family, friends or local home education groups.
- It may be helpful for you to have the space to create a quiet working area and somewhere to store any resources you will use.
- Joint activities, interaction with others and developing communication skills are also an important part of child development so you should consider how the individual needs of your child can be met. Depending on the interests of your child some examples of how social interaction with peers could be achieved are:
• Joining activities or sessions with other home educating families.
• Joining youth organisations such as the Scouts or Girl Guides.
• Participation in clubs or activities relating to art, music, dance, drama or sports.
• The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.
• Getting involved in community activities such as becoming a Junior Neighbourhood Warden.

Other suggestions can be found at:

**Southampton Information Directory**


**Young Southampton**


**Discover Southampton**

[http://www.discoversouthampton.co.uk/living/things-to-do](http://www.discoversouthampton.co.uk/living/things-to-do)

Dissatisfaction with your child’s current school is not the best reason for considering elective home education. Schools do vary and we may well be able to find an alternative school that you feel is better suited to your child’s needs.

**7. HOW DO I KNOW WHERE TO START THE LEARNING PROCESS?**

There is no one style or approach that can be recommended and your child may need a period of adjustment if they were previously on roll at a school, referred to as deschooling. They may initially find the change confusing. Examples of different parental approaches to learning are:

- Education that is provided in a formal and structured manner in the home.
- Child-led learning, where parents can also explore and learn topics with their child, working with them on their journey like a peer.
- Informal learning that is responsive to the existing or developing interests of the child.
- Learning as part of a small group with other home educators.
- Formal lessons delivered by a tutor funded by a group of home educators.
- The use of private tutors for 1:1 tuition.
- Regular participation in activities organised by home education groups.
- Studies of non-traditional areas of interest.

It is not necessary to decide upon one approach and stick with it, learning can be provided by a mixture of the above approaches depending on child’s age and ability.

A feature of home education for many families is regular outdoor activities, trips and visits. These learning experiences allow children to learn about the world outside of a classroom situation. This can improve engagement in learning by make learning
concepts real and relevant because they are in a realistic context, nurturing creativity and imagination, regardless of a child's age or ability.

For parents who opt for a structured approach there are text books and resources that will give ideas about how to make learning interesting and meaningful. Many families use publications from publishers such as Letts, Nelson-Thornes, Collins Schofield and Sims or CGP. Think how you can help your child grasp the ideas in the book, make it seem a game and don’t be surprised if you child needs to try the same idea in a variety of ways. There are also a lot of internet based learning programs and resources. Parents who take this approach may find planning useful.

Don’t be afraid to let your child use toys to work out maths skills, or to inspire writing. Make full use of everyday equipment that you already have in the home and create learning opportunities from routine tasks.

Enrichment opportunities, such as visits to museums and exhibitions, can also inspire creative writing and involving your child in the planning of such activities can also be learning opportunity.

Some parents find planning useful.

Use resources within the family, friends, neighbours, home educators and the wider community to contribute towards your child’s learning.

8. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEND)

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act also applies to parents of children with special educational needs. A Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health & Care Plan is a legal document. It names the school that will be providing education for your child. You can, however, elect to de-register your child from the school to home educate, unless the child is a pupil at a special school, in which case you will need Local Authority consent which should not be unreasonably withheld.

If you are considering home educating a child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health & Care Plan, it would be advisable to discuss your intention with SEND Team. If your child has a statement and attends a special school, you should contact an officer from Special Educational Needs Services to discuss fully the implications of this decision before you take any action.

It remains the Local Authority’s duty to ensure that the child’s needs are met and the LA remains under a duty to maintain the child’s statement or Plan and to review it annually. The review will include considering whether the wording of the Statement/Plan is still appropriate, what the child has achieved as well as on any difficulties that need to be resolved and whether the Statement/Plan needs to remain in place. You will still have the right of appeal to the relevant SEN Tribunal.

When a child is ‘educated otherwise than at school’ the general timetable and arrangements for the annual review will remain the same as for children in schools. However, in these circumstances the Local Authority will convene the review meeting and the range of professionals involved may be wider and in some respects different from those involved in a school-based review. The child’s parents must always be invited to the review meeting. The review meeting should take place in the most
appropriate location, such as Local Authority offices, a hospital or the parents’ home, and should normally be chaired by an officer of the Local Authority. At a pre-arranged time, the transfer review will take place from a Statement to a Plan.

9. **RAISED PARTICIPATION AGE**

The government increased the age to which all young people in England must continue in education or training, requiring them to continue until the end of the academic year in which they reach age 18. Home education is a legal option and parents retain responsibility for their child’s education until the end of Year 11.

10. **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM THINKING ABOUT EDUCATING MY CHILD AT HOME WHO IS ALREADY ON ROLL?**

- We would urge you to discuss the situation with the school if there are unresolved issues, before making a final decision. Please contact the Lead Officer Pupil Services on 023 8083 3889 if you would like mediation or support at this stage.

- Carry out further research via the independent websites listed at the end of this booklet.

- Contact local home educators/home education groups to meet other home educating parents and discuss their experiences.

- Research different methods such as child led learning unschooling and read up about deschooling.

Once your decision to home educate has been made you must, by law, inform the Head Teacher in writing that you have decided to de-register your child and educate him or her at home. If you simply remove your child from school without informing them in writing (verbally is not sufficient) you could be prosecuted for non-attendance.

The school are required to inform the local authority before removal from roll and provide us with a copy of your letter. The Lead Officer Pupil Services will then make contact with you.

Please note that:

- You will need local authority consent to remove your child’s name from the school roll if he or she attends a special school or is subject to a School Attendance Order.

- If your child is the subject of an Education Supervision Order which names a particular school, your child cannot be withdrawn from the school without the Order being discharged or varied.

11. **USEFUL EDUCATION PROVIDERS**

Colleges can claim funding from the Education Funding Agency for home educated 14-16s. It is entirely at the discretion of the college whether to take such students.
11.1 **Southampton City College**

City College are able to offer a 15 hour per week Programme of Study which covers English and maths with vocational elements (e.g. taster sessions in hair & beauty, hospitality, construction, motor vehicles, engineering or early years).

Mid-year admissions are possible but the college believe that it is better for the student to join them at the start of the academic year along with other students.

Young people entitled to free schools meals in mainstream education are granted a breakfast and lunch allowance but the college is unable to provide financial assistance towards transport costs.

For further enquiries about courses and the application process, contact should be made with:

Bridget Denney
14-19 Recruitment Co-ordinator
023 8057 7482

11.2 **Other local colleges**

Other local colleges who do not have a rolling programme but who will consider applications on a case by case basis are:

- Totton College - Southampton
- Eastleigh College
- Sparsholt College - Winchester
- Brockenhurst College

11.3 **Correspondence courses and professional tutors**

Some home educating parents buy correspondence courses or employ professional tutors. These methods are expensive, but may be a solution where parents do not feel confident to teach particular topics themselves.

There are a number of correspondence courses available and we strongly advise that parents satisfy themselves that any course purchased accords with their own philosophical and educational aims.

**We would strongly recommend that you speak with other home educators before enrolling your child on a correspondence course as home educators can experience problems with examinations at the end of a course.**

Please note that Southampton City Council **cannot** recommend particular tutors; as to do so would imply approval. If employing a private tutor, it is vital to protect your child’s welfare and ensure their progress by satisfying yourself the tutor is a fit person to be with your child and they have the appropriate qualifications for the subject and level for which you are employing them.
Ideally you might find a tutor through personal recommendation however, failing this, there are a number of agencies offering the services of tutors. Advertisements can be found in most local newspapers. You should ensure that any tutor you use has been fully checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), formerly known as Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). Further information can be found at:


We would also recommend that you seek references before employing a tutor.

11.4 Southampton Music Services

Southampton Music Services is delighted to inform you that they can offer instrumental lessons at your home, subject to teacher availability, should your children wish to learn an instrument. They can also offer lessons where the parent can learn alongside the child.

The current cost of lessons per child is £100 per term, for this the child will receive 10 x 30 minute lessons a term and the loan of an appropriate instrument. This offer will remain in place until July 31st 2016. Prices for parent/child lessons are available on request.

If your child is interested in having instrumental lessons, or if you would like to explore proposals for group sessions, then please email graham.hesp@southampton.gov.uk or call 023 8083 4532 for further information.

11.5 The Prince’s Trust Fairbridge Programme

Fairbridge (to be re-branded as “Achieve” in September 2016) is an individually tailored, personal and social development programme for 13-16 year olds which aims to re-engage young people with their education. It empowers disengaged young people through a combination of group based activities, opportunities, experiences and 1:1 support to help them gain the personal, social and life skills needed to stabilise their life circumstances.

An information leaflet is available on the Southampton City Council home education page.

12. FLEXI-SCHOOLING

Flexi-schooling is where a child is registered at a school and attends part of the time and is home educated for the rest of the time. The school register must be mark the child as authorised absence for the sessions when they are home educated. It is entirely at the discretion of the Headteacher.

13. PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING SERVICE FOR CHILDREN EDUCATED AT HOME

Solent NHS Trust provide a Public Health Nursing service for home educated children which covers a range of services and they can also signpost parents to other services.

You can contact the Public Health Nurse by calling 023 8053 8738.
14. **USEFUL SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND SUPPORT**

14.1 **Home Education Advisory Service (HEAS)**
Tel: 01707 371854  
E-mail: enquiries@heas.org.uk  
www.heas.org.uk

A national charity dedicated to the provision of advice and practical support for families who wish to educate their children at home.

14.2 **Education Otherwise**
Helpline – 0845 478 6345  
www.educationotherwise.net

A registered charity providing information and resources for home educating families.

14.3 **ACE Education**
Advice Line: 0808 800 5793 (freephone)  
enquiries@ace-ed.org.uk  
www.ace-ed.org.uk

Independent advice for parents/carers of children in state-funded schools who are experiencing difficulties in the following areas; bullying, SEN, admissions, exclusions and attendance.

14.4 **Ed Yourself**
www.edyourself.org

This website is the work of Fiona Nicholson who has given evidence to Government Committees on the subject of elective home education and can provide you with a clear up-to-date analysis of the key areas of elective home education practice and policy in England and Wales.

14.5 **Child Law Advice**
childlawadvice.org.uk

Provides legal information and advice on education law in England. The information ranges from the law on bullying, transport and home education to school admissions, exclusions and the duties of schools and local authorities to children with Special Educational Needs.

14.6 **Home Education UK**
www.home-education.org.uk

Offers a wide range of advice and support. It also has hyperlinks into other home education websites.

14.7 **Aidis Trust**
0808 800 0009 (Freephone)  
www.aidis.org
The Aidis Trust is a Charity specialising in computer technology to help disabled people.

14.8 **HE Special**  
www.he-special.org.uk

The website of the HE-Special-UK mailing list. Run by a group of families who Home Educate children with Special Educational Needs and disabilities.

14.9 **The National Curriculum**  
https://www.gov.uk/national-curriculum/overview

14.10 **Learndirect**  
Call free on 0800 101 901.  
www.learndirect.co.uk  
Write to: FREEPOST learndirect

The UK’s largest provider of skills, training and employment services.

14.11 **Department for Education (DfE)**  
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education

14.12 **Dyslexia Action**  
www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk  
For information if you suspect your child may have these difficulties.

14.13 **Catholic Home-Schooling Network (CHSN)**  
www.catholichomeschool.org

Information for Catholic families considering homeschooling or new to homeschooling. There are links for Catholic curriculum providers, Catholic resources and most importantly, contact information for local catholic support groups.

14.14 **Christian Home Education Support Service (CHESS)**  
www.thehomeservice.org/

Founded in 1992 by a group of parents, who were themselves involved in Christian home education in the UK, to provide help and advice for those who were treading the same road or thinking of doing so.

14.15 **The Resources of Islamic Homeschool in the UK**  
http://www.rahmahmuslimhomeschool.co.uk/index/

A website dedicated to Muslim parents especially mothers who homeschool their children or who are considering homeschooling. Provides free worksheets and other materials.

14.16 **Southampton City Council**  
Lead Officer Pupil Services  
023 8083 3889  
home.education@southampton.gov.uk
15. **USEFUL WEBSITES TO SUPPORT LEARNING AT HOME**

Please note: Southampton City Council does not endorse any of the organisations listed below by including the contact details in the following list.

Our strong recommendation would be to contact other home educators to find out their experiences.

- www.bbc.co.uk/schools
- www.bbc.co.uk/learning
- www.bbc.co.uk/education (Bitesize)
- www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise
- www.kidzone.ws
- www.channel4learning.com
- www.primaryresources.co.uk
- www.primaryworksheets.co.uk
- www.teachingandlearningresources.co.uk
- www.playkidsgames.com
- www.firstschoolyears.com
- www.reading_eggs.com
- www.khanacademy.org
- www.he-resources.co.uk
- www.aquila.co.uk
- www.muddlepuddle.co.uk
- www.cgpbooks.co.uk

A subscription magazine for children who enjoy challenges.
Resources and information for home educating families.

Providers of educational books.
www.nrich.maths.org.uk  Provide free and interesting mathematical games, problems and articles.

www.structuredhomelearning.com  Offer timetabled plans personalised to a child's specific needs and abilities plus the educational materials. Birth to Year 9.

www.physics.org  Our aim is to inspire people of all ages about physics.

www.theschoolrun.com  National curriculum resources. Download English, maths and science worksheets. Download free SATs past papers. Get to grips with new educational techniques and get free homework help and information.


https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page  Some home educators use “reading eggs” to teach reading and “ness” to teach reading to dyslexic children.

16.  EXAMINING BOARDS

The main examining boards in the UK are listed below and they will be able to provide advice on how to obtain syllabuses for external examinations, exams that can be taken which do not require coursework, and how to enter for examinations as a private candidate. A good starting point for home educators would be http://www.home-education-exams.org.uk/

www.aqa.org.uk
www.cie.org.uk
www.ocr.org.uk

17.  CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

Southampton City Council does not endorse any providers and we would strongly recommend that you speak with other home educators before enrolling your child on a correspondence course because they are best placed to give you feedback.

National Extension College
www.nec.ac.uk
0800 389 2839

An educational charity, NEC offers educational opportunities and second-chance learning to people for whom attending regular classes at a school or college would not
be possible. Offers a range of GCSE, IGCSE, A-level and vocational correspondence courses.

**Association of British Correspondence Colleges (ABCC)**

[www.homestudy.org.uk](http://www.homestudy.org.uk)

PO Box 17926, London, SW19 3WB

Tel: 0208 544 9559

e-mail: info@homestudy.org.uk

18. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

18.1 Is home education legal?

Yes, education is compulsory but not enrolment at school.

The legal duty placed upon parents under Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that:

> "The parent of every child of compulsory school age has a legal duty to ensure that he receives efficient full-time education suitable:
>  
>  - to his age, ability and aptitude, and
>  - to any special educational needs he may have
>  
> either by regular attendance at school or otherwise."

18.2 Do I need to be a qualified teacher to educate my child at home?

No. You need no formal qualifications, nor do you have to employ a qualified teacher to educate your child.

18.3 What is classed as full-time education?

Parents don't have to provide home education for the same number of hours as a school and school hours don't apply to children being educated at home. If you are stopped because you are out and about "during school hours" you can explain that you are home educating. Some families do formal "lessons" for a few hours in the morning but you are free to arrange whatever you find works best for your own family, which may vary at different times. There is no legal definition of "full-time" for home education.

18.4 What is efficient and suitable education?

An efficient and suitable education is not defined in the Education Act. Education should be efficient which means it is successful in achieving its aims. For children in school, it is the Government which sets the pace. When children are home educated, it is up to the parents to decide what is important and what they are trying to achieve in their home education. It may look like school or may be completely different.
At what age is it compulsory for my child to receive full time education?

A child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday.

- If they turn 5 between 1 January and 31 March they are of compulsory school age on 31 March.
- If they turn 5 between 1 April and 31 August they are of compulsory school age on 31 August.
- If they turn 5 between 1 September and 31 December, then they are of compulsory school age on 31 December.

A child continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June in the school year that they reach sixteen.

Will my child’s views be taken into account?

The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Article 2 of Protocol No 1 states:

No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions, which it assumes in relation to education and teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching is in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.

The DfE Elective Home Education Guidance for Local Authorities recommends that the child should be given the opportunity to express his or her views. Depending upon the age and understanding of the child and the circumstances, the local authority may explore those views.

Do I need anyone’s permission to educate my child from home?

If your child has never attended school, no permission or notification is required, although we prefer to know that this is your choice to avoid any CME (children missing education) action being instigated.

If your child already attends school you must inform the Headteacher of your decision in writing to take your child off the school register in order to home educate them. This should be by means of a signed letter rather than e-mail. The school will inform the local authority of your decision. Non-attendance at school, without permission and whilst still registered at the school, is regarded as truancy and may result in legal proceedings against you.

Local authority permission is required however if your child attends a Special School or has been subject to a School Attendance Order.

Can I educate my child at home whilst I wait for a place at my preferred school?

Your child does not get a school place more quickly by being out of school and you will have to fulfill your legal obligation to provide your child with suitable full time education whilst waiting for a school place.
You should also be aware that names on a waiting list are not necessarily carried over
at the end of one academic year into the next, so parents should e-mail
school.admissions@southampton.gov.uk in July if your child is on waiting list and you
wish their name to be carried forward.

18.9  **Will the local authority visit my home?**

The local authority has no statutory duty in relation to monitoring the quality of home
education on a routine basis, however, we want to build effective relationships with
our home educating families. We are, therefore, hoping to be able to meet with
parents to provide advice and support at the start of their home education journey.
This does not have to be in the family home, it could be at any mutually convenient
location.

Parents should be aware, however, that the local authority has a duty, for all children
in the city, to act:

- If it appears to a Local Authority that a child of compulsory age in their area is not
  receiving suitable education either by regular attendance or otherwise.
- If there are grounds for concern for the safety of a child.

18.10  **What if the Local Authority is not satisfied that suitable education provision is in place?**

Section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996 requires local authorities to intervene if it
appears that parents are not providing a suitable education.

We will be in contact with you if this is the case and we will discuss what the issues
are and a means of addressing them, giving you a reasonable period of time to make
the improvements considered to be necessary. As part of this process we will ask for
evidence that a suitable education is being provided.

It is only if we are unable to ensure the suitable education of your child that the local
authority will request that you apply for a school place to return your child to school.
We stress that this will only happen if we believe that you are not educating according
to your child’s age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. We
hope that by detailed discussion, we will be able to show you why this is so.

In these circumstances if you are unwilling to apply for a school place the local
authority would apply for a School Attendance Order which would name the school
that the child must attend.

At any stage following the issue of a School Attendance Order, parents may present
evidence to the local authority to demonstrate the provision of a suitable education
and apply to have the order revoked.

18.11  **What will it cost to educate my child at home?**

There is no funding from the council or the Government for parents to educate their
children at home. Families do, however, successfully home educate on any budget by
making good use of public libraries and resources around the home. If you are part of a home education group(s) you will be able to take advantage of a range of activities, discounts, opportunities and also gain access to equipment.

Southampton City Council provides no financial support to home educators so, depending upon your arrangements, expenses may be incurred. Please consider costs involved in providing books, materials or resources, educational trips/visits, organised physical activities, examination fees, tutors or distance learning courses, work experience or transportation.

18.12 **Will my child miss the social aspect of school?**

We would recommend that you consider the social development of your child, which would be enhanced through sharing activities with other children. Joining a variety of clubs, home education groups, special interest societies, for example, can prove enriching, as can mixing and sharing skills with other people of all ages.

18.13 **Do I need to follow the national curriculum or teach specific subjects?**

No specific curriculum is laid down and you do not have to follow the National Curriculum or teach any specific subjects. You will, however, need to ensure that the education you provide for your child prepares him or her for their future life.

Some parents introduce or re-introduce their children to school after a period of home education. If, at the outset, parents feel that this might be a possibility it may be helpful to follow a curriculum broadly similar to the national curriculum followed in schools.

It may also be important to consider whether your child will need to study specific subjects to enable them to access further education courses.

18.14 **Would my child still be able to take exams?**

If you would like your child to take public examinations such as GCSEs or IGCSEs, your child must follow the relevant curriculum and must be entered as a PRIVATE CANDIDATE. We have listed examination boards in the ‘Useful contacts’ section.

You will also need to arrange for your child to be entered for and take exams at an examination centre. Local exam centres are:

- Wessex Tutors
  - 44 Shirley Road, SO15 3EU
  - 023 8033 4719

- Faregos
  - Fareham
  - exams@faregos.org

- Regents Pk Community College
  - King Edward Ave, SO16 4GW
  - 023 8032 5444

- The Compass School
  - Green Lane, SO16 9FQ
  - 023 8021 5320

18.15 **What if I want to return my child to school?**

You child can be returned to mainstream education at any time but you should note that it may not always be possible to get a place at your child’s previous, or catchment school. If you reach this decision you should contact the Local Authority on 023 8083 3004 to request an application form which should be completed and returned to the School Admissions Team.
If you feel at the onset that this may be a possibility, it may be helpful to follow a curriculum broadly similar to the national curriculum followed in schools.

Depending upon the age of your child and how long they have been home educated an application for a school place may have to be considered by our monthly In Year Fair Access Panel.

18.16 **What should I do if I do not want to home educate my child but am being encouraged or pressurised to do so by my child’s school?**

DfE guidance on Elective Home education states that schools must not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding an exclusion or because the child has a poor attendance record.

In the event that parents are being induced to home educate by their child’s school they should contact the Lead Officer Pupil Services on 023 8083 3004 [OR EMAIL] for support.

18.17 **What is the school leaving age?**

The school leaving age is the end of the academic year when the child turns 16. However, the government has now increased the age to which all young people in England must participate in education or training up to age 18. The raised participation age as it is called is not the same as the school leaving age or compulsory schooling. Home education is a legal option.

18.18 **Do I have to keep records?**

No, but some parents find it useful to keep records of their child’s education. Notes become reminders of something that went well (so you can return to it and take it further) or something that didn’t go so well that may need more practise. Records can include photographs, tape recordings, drawings etc.

19. **Complaints**

Details of the Southampton City Council complaints procedure can be found at:

[https://www.southampton.gov.uk/council-democracy/have-your-say/comments-complaints/complaints.aspx](https://www.southampton.gov.uk/council-democracy/have-your-say/comments-complaints/complaints.aspx)