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| **ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION 2023/2024****Information for parents of children enrolled in school** | scc294square-A3 (002) |
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| **According to Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents have a duty to ensure their child receives a suitable and efficient full-time education, whether in school or otherwise. You may choose to fulfil this duty by educating your child at home. This is known as Elective Home Education (EHE) and is legally equal in status to school education.****The aim of this leaflet is to ensure that parents are deciding to home educate their child freely, making fully informed decisions with access to relevant sources of information.** |
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| **Making the decision to electively home educate your child**Home education should be a happy, fulfilling and successful experience for your child. Before making a final decision, you should:* **Talk to your child’s school**. They have in depth knowledge of your child and should work with you to resolve any issues or concerns you have about your child’s education provision or school life. If you believe your child has Special Educational Needs (SEN), the school SEN Coordinator (SENCO) may be able to suggest support, assessments and accommodations that will help.
* **Research thoroughly.** The government does not expect a significant break between the end of schooling and the provision of good education at home.
* Talk to other home educators, research online and find out as much as possible.
* Look into the various styles of home education to find the one that best fits your child’s educational needs and strengths.
* Plan how you can provide a safe and suitable learning environment for your child at home.
* Talk with your child to identify their long term goals so you can plan their education accordingly, especially if these will require public examinations or further education.
* Read through our guidance document for parents:

<http://www.southampton.gov.uk/schools-learning/support-education/home-education.aspx>* **Consider the implications for both you and your child.**
* Consider the costs involved. For some parents this may include examinations, equipment, educational visits, tutors, on-line subscriptions.
* Discuss plans and expectations with your child and take their concerns and feelings into consideration.
* Consider whether you have the time and energy required to ensure effective full-time provision is in place and what support you have from others.
* Consider any specialist support your child receives in school that you may not be able to provide as part of home education.
* Consider how you will avoid isolation by creating social opportunities for your child which could include accessing those available for home educated children in Southampton and the surrounding areas.

Parents should also understand that if they later decide to re-enrol their child, they may not be able to return to their previous school or a school of their choice. There is also no national or local funding available for EHE families; therefore, the local authority is unable to provide tutors, educational materials, a curriculum or any programmes of learning to follow or financial assistance towards the cost of public examinations. |
| **Local process – Schools:*** Should ensure that there are no underlying issues that could be addressed by inviting parents to a meeting. Local authority mediation is available if required and can be requested using the e-mail address below.
* Must not pressurise parents into EHE, suggest home education to parents, write deregistration letters or provide template letters.
* Should encourage parents to complete an Overview of Home Education which will help the local authority to be satisfied that suitable full-time education is being planned.
* Must liaise with any professionals known to be working with the family.
* Should, if parents choose not to discuss their decision in school, attempt to make contact by telephone or in writing to ensure off-rolling has not taken place and there are no issues that could be addressed.
* Should issue this leaflet to parents.
* Send an acknowledgement letter confirming when the pupil has been removed from roll.
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| **Local process – Southampton City Council:**The local authority must establish whether a family is genuinely providing education or whether parents may be avoiding engagement with the school system. In the latter case, LA Officers must consider both educational and safeguarding issues and respond accordingly within the legal frameworks in place.Initially, we will contact families in writing:* To acknowledge EHE and to confirm that our records have been updated in cases where a suitable Overview of Home Education form has been received that enables us to discharge our duty.
* Or, to request a completed Overview of Home Education form if we do not have one or an educational report to help us ensure that suitable full-time education is being planned.
* To help us understand why parents have chosen to EHE so that we can be aware of any underlying issues that we should take steps to address.
* To provide advice and support to ensure that education provision is suitable; this may include making recommendations and providing links to resources and local community groups.
* To fulfil the local authority’s duty to establish whether a child is in receipt of suitable education.

After 1 year, we will contact families in writing to:* Request an Educational Report or completed Annual Contact Update Form.
* Fulfil the local authority’s duty to establish whether a child is in receipt of suitable education.

There are also circumstances where we will be proactive in offering to visit families and further information on these circumstances can be found in our Policy on the council website.  |
| **When is elective home education less advisable?**We understand that children can thrive in a positive home education environment with parents who are committed to their child achieving their full potential, but we would advise caution in circumstances such as:* When you are being pressurised to remove your child from the school roll and take responsibility for their education provision, but you do but do not feel able to do so. ***Request mediation from a Home Education Family Support Worker using the e‑mail address below*.**
* When there has been a relationship breakdown with your child’s school. ***Consider******other options first and request advice or mediation from a Home Education Family Support Worker using the e‑mail address below.***
* To avoid an attendance prosecution. ***It could******still go ahead****.*
* To prevent ongoing intervention from Children’s Services. ***Intervention would continue****.*
* When your school of choice is full. ***It’s impossible to predict when places will become available so it is not always the best option in such circumstances. Carry out further enquiries first about waiting list******positions****.*
* To avoid suspension from school or if your child is in the midst of the permanent exclusion process. ***Work with your child’s school to try and address issues in relation to suspension. The permanent exclusion process will continue to its conclusion if you withdraw your child.***
* Whenyour child has health needs, whether temporary or permanent, that you consider are not being met in school. ***Raise your concerns with the school and if necessary follow the formal complaints procedure, or request mediation from a Home Education Family Support Worker using the e‑mail address below.***
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| **Further resources**[Elective home education (southampton.gov.uk)](https://www.southampton.gov.uk/schools-learning/support-education/elective-home-education/) [Elective home education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/elective-home-education)[Resources Portal - Education Otherwise](https://www.educationotherwise.org/resources/) [Elective Home Education Southampton | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/SouthamptonEHE/)[Southampton area home ed | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/groups/sotonareahomeed)[SEEDS (Southampton Home education Public) | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/groups/539361213253356)Please consider speaking to a Home Education Family Support Worker before withdrawing your child from school. They can be contacted by e-mail at: [home.education@southampton.gov.uk](http://home.education@southampton.gov.uk) or by telephone at 023 8083 4779. If you decide to proceed with elective home education you must write a letter to the school stating that you wish to de-register your child in order to take responsibility for their full-time education provision. Schools are unable to remove pupils from roll without written confirmation. |