



Learning And Cultural Services Directorate
Oldway
Torquay Road
Paignton
Devon
TQ3 2TE
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**GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS WHO MAY WISH TO
EDUCATE THEIR CHILDREN AT HOME
(ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION)**

This information is designed to help parents/carers understand what may be involved if they are considering educating their child outside the school system. This is also known as 'Elective Home Education'.

Section 7 of the Education Act, 1996 states that:

"The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him or her to receive efficient full-time education suitable (a) to his/her age, ability and aptitude and (b) to any special educational needs he/she may have either by regular attendance at school or *otherwise*".

This means that parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure that their children are educated but this does not have to be in a school.

The decision to educate your child at home is a major step and should not be entered into lightly. Educating your child at home will take a considerable amount of your time, energy and money. It is hoped that this guidance will help you decide whether you can provide the best for your child, or whether your child would benefit more from receiving his/her education at a school.

We believe that school education is best for a youngster because education should bring children into contact with a whole variety of people. Children learn as much from one another as they do from adults. Children also learn a great deal from collective activities such as team games, performances and school trips.

BEFORE DECIDING

- ❖ Think! You alone will be responsible for ensuring that your child receives a broad and balanced education that is **'suitable to his/her age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he/she may have'**.
- ❖ Plan a week's lessons before making the decision. This will give you an idea of what you are undertaking.
- ❖ Estimate the costs of providing: books, a computer, specialist equipment, visits, access to sporting activities and (possibly) specialist tutors.
- ❖ Consider whether your child will miss the social side of school. This could include group work/discussion, team games, friendships as well as access to specialised facilities and equipment.

DON'T decide to educate your child at home:

- ❖ If you have had a disagreement or an argument with the Headteacher, other staff member or a school Governor. Try to settle the matter diplomatically, or seek advice from the Pupil Services section at Oldway, Paignton (telephone 01803 208908) or Education Welfare Service at Oldway, Paignton (telephone 01803 208248).
- ❖ If you have not been ensuring that your child goes to school regularly;
- ❖ If your child is putting pressure on you because he/she doesn't want to go to school. You may seek advice from the school or the Education Welfare Officer for the school. He/She can be contacted via 01803 208908.
- ❖ If your child is not allocated a place at the school of your preference; advice can be obtained from Pupil Services Oldway (telephone 01803 208908).
- ❖ As a final once and for all decision. You may decide that you cannot teach your child as he/she get older and the work gets harder.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Does my child have to go to school?

The Education Act 1996 imposes a duty on parents to secure the education of their children who are of compulsory school age (5 - 16 years). For most children this means that they will normally attend a school, but for a variety of reasons a small number of parents/carers decide to undertake the responsibility of educating their children outside the school system, known as "otherwise than at school", or elective home education.

Do I need anyone's permission?

No, but Torbay Council as the Local Education Authority (LEA) has a duty to satisfy itself that children being educated otherwise than at school are receiving efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have. You should inform the Section Head, Pupil Services, Oldway, Paignton, in writing, of your decision to educate your child at home. If your child is already at school you must write to the Headteacher of the school your child attends to inform him/her that you intend to withdraw your child from the school and provide alternative education.

What will happen if I do not notify the school or the LEA?

If your child's name is on a school register and not attending, the absence will be investigated. It remains YOUR responsibility to notify the school and the LEA.

Do I have to follow the National Curriculum?

No, you do not have a legal duty to provide your child with the National Curriculum although you may find it useful to know what it is and to follow it if you can. It will provide you with a useful framework for the content and standards expected across the subjects. Following the national curriculum will also help your if he/she returns to school in the future.

*Currently, those subjects taught in school are English, mathematics, science, information & communication technology and religious education * (as core subjects), art and design, design & technology, geography, history, music, physical education and, after the age of 11 years, modern foreign languages.*

**Parents/carers may exercise their right to withdraw their child from religious education lessons in school.*

Do I have to work the normal school hours?

No, full-time does not mean necessarily working a normal school day. Children in school are normally taught for 22.5 hours (minimum) each week, plus homework, according to age.

How should I plan and organise the teaching?

The LEA will want to see how you are going to organise your weekly programme and be satisfied that sufficient time is spent on study each week to enable your child to have access to a broad, balanced and worthwhile curriculum.

The teaching should be systematic and organised. You should plan out the work for a period of time (not just a day or a week at a time). You may decide to provide all the teaching yourself or employ others to help you. You should set aside a quiet area for your child's study and ensure that seating and lighting are suitable.

Will the LEA give me any support?

No, it is the LEA's responsibility to make a judgement about the quality of education provided and to indicate whether or not it is satisfactory. An officer of the LEA will ask to visit you in order to make that judgement.

The LEA does not offer any financial assistance to parents/carers who make the decision to educate their children outside the school system.

How often will the LEA check?

The LEA aims to meet with you and your child/children within 2 months of you notifying us of your decision to education otherwise than at school. If the LEA considers that you are providing an efficient education then further progress will be monitored every six months.

If, however, significant concerns are identified then further monitoring will take place within three months of the initial visit. If the concerns are addressed then the LEA monitoring will continue every six months; if not, the Education Welfare Service will assess whether the LEA should ask you to return your child/children to school or issue a School Attendance Order in respect of your child/children.

Similarly, if the LEA monitoring process results in the identification of serious concerns regarding your child/children's education, health, safety or welfare then the Education Welfare Service will be asked to make an assessment of the situation to inform decisions about appropriate LEA action.

Can I change my mind?

Yes, you can seek a place in a school at any time and inform the LEA of your intention to send your child to school. However, this is likely to prove difficult during the last two years of compulsory schooling once your child has started examination courses.

You may also find difficulty in returning your child to the school he/she last attended, since there may not be a place available.

What should I do if I decide to educate my child at home?

If after considering your situation you decide to educate your child at home, you are asked to complete and return the attached form to the Section Head, Pupil Services, Oldway, Paignton. If you have not returned the attached form within 15 school days, you are asked to inform the LEA of the school your child is attending.

FINAL CHECK LIST

- ❖ Have you the necessary expertise to teach your child effectively?
- ❖ Can you provide a suitable working environment for your child?
- ❖ Do you have the time and energy to devote to your child's education on a regular basis?
- ❖ Are there opportunities for physical exercise?
- ❖ Are you prepared to purchase the necessary resources, or gain access to them Do you have support available?
- ❖ Is your child positive about the suggestion?
- ❖ Will your child have the opportunity to mix socially with other children?

Deciding to educate your child at home is a major step that will commit you to spend considerable time, energy and money. For your child's sake make the decision that is right for both of you before you start. Please do not make a hasty decision only to find you have chosen the wrong course of action. Always seek advice from those who are already educating their children otherwise than at school.

Addresses of organisations which may be of help to you:

'Home Education Advisory' Service PO Box 98, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL8 6AN
Tel: 01707 371854

'Education Otherwise' (Send SAE to PO Box 7420, London N9 9SG)
Tel: 0870 730 0074 / 0891 518303.

'Mercers College' 14 Baldock Street, Ware, Hertfordshire SG12 9AD
Tel: 01920 465927.

'Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)', 1b Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove,
London N5 2DQ (Tel: 020 7354 8318).

'Tyger Tyger', Torbay Library Services:

Torquay Library Tel: 01803 208300.

Paignton Library Tel: 01803 208321.

Churston Library Tel: 01803 843757.

Brixham Library Tel: 01803 853870.

Torbay Council cannot take responsibility for the advice and guidance offered to parents by these voluntary organisations.

Elective Home Education - Statement of Intent form

Reply to:

Kay Bailey
Pupil Services
Learning and Cultural Services Oldway Mansion
Paignton, Devon
TO32TE

EITHER

Please complete as appropriate:

Statement of Intent to Home Educate

Name of Pupil and DOB School attended

I confirm my intention to educateat home.

I have read the recent letter sent to me about home educating and I understand that in taking this step I am no longer entitled to any of the support of Torbay Learning and Cultural Services and the school place given up now cannot be reserved.

(Tick)

I also understand that in the event that this arrangement is not satisfactory I must seek to gain readmission for my child to a mainstream school, and that my application will be considered as a casual admission by the procedures described in the booklet TIPS and that at that time there may be few places available.

(Tick)

I enclose a proposed programme of study for my child.

(Tick)

I will send a proposed programme of study within 2 weeks.

(Tick)

OR Complete below:

Name of Pupil and DOB

School attended

Statement of Intent to return my child to school

I have reconsidered my decision to educate at home and wish his/her name to remain on roll at his/her present school.

(Tick)

I wish to see an Education Welfare Officer about resolving difficulties.

(Tick)

Signed.....(parent)

Date.....