**Education Inclusion Service**

 **ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION PARENTS GUIDANCE**

**Revised September 2023**



**ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION POLICY**

INTRODUCTION

The definition of a parent or carer for the purpose of this document includes any person who has parental responsibility for a child and a person who has care of a child.

Elective home education is when parents decide to provide home-based education for their child rather than sending them to school. Elective Home educated children are therefore not registered at mainstream or special schools.

The law requires a child to be educated from the start of the term following their fifth birthday until the last Friday in June in the school year they are 16.

The decision to home educate should never be taken lightly. Before parents decide to make such a commitment, they need to talk and listen to their child and consider the time and energy they will need to invest. Parents should be aware that if they choose to home educate, they assume financial responsibility for their child’s education, including the costs for equipment, visits, books and tutors, as well as the cost of any public examinations.

The aim of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is to provide guidance for parents who are considering or have decided to Elective Home Educate (EHE) their child. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council respects and accepts the right of parents to educate their child at home.

The Elective Home Education Advisor will seek to develop positive working relationships with home education networks and will work co-operatively with EHE parents to enable children to have the best life choices available to them, and will endeavour to support children and families by ensuring that children access their right to education.

The information in this document aims to set out the legal position of parents taking on the responsibility of a child’s education, as well as the duties of the Local Authority (LA).

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

The law states that all parents have a duty to ensure that their child receives an efficient, full time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any additional learning needs they may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. In most cases parents are happy for their child’s education to be provided by a school. Occasionally, parents prefer to arrange their child’s education otherwise’ than at school. (Section 7 Education Act 1996)

When a child is educated at home it is the decision of the parent as to what and how the child learns. Education can be provided in a variety of ways, by the parents, by family members, small groups of home-educating families or private tutors. Your responsibility as a parent is to make sure that what is taught is helping your child to learn. Education is considered efficient and suitable if it allows a child to achieve their potential and prepares them for adult life.

Where a child is enrolled at school and the parent wishes to home educate, the parent must write to the school and request that their child’s name is taken off the school roll. The school will then inform the Local Authority (LA)

If your child is of pre-school age (below 5 years) then you do not have to do anything. However, if you do not intend to send your child to school once they reach compulsory school age, we would appreciate notification of your intention to continue with home education without enrolling at any school.

To maintain accurate records we would be grateful if you would advise us of this by contacting EducationWelfareService@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk or telephone 01495 311556 (This will prevent the child being considered as missing).

WHAT IF MY CHILD HAS ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS

The same procedure applies if your child has a statement of SEN or an Individual Development Plan and goes to a mainstream school.

However, if your child goes to a special school, you will need to get permission from the local authority before removing them from school.

It is important that you write into the local authority, making them aware of your decision to home educate. This will enable them to offer advice in meeting the aims of the statement.

In either case, the education you provide must meet the aims of the statement of SEN/objectives of the IDP. The local authority will continue to carry out a review each year for the length of time for which the statement/IDP applies. This will include whether the wording of the statement/IDP is still appropriate and whether it needs to stay in place.

You still have a right to appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales (SENTW)

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY (LA)

The LA has a statutory obligation to ensure that all children of school age in the LA receive a suitable education at school or otherwise and that they are not a child missing education (CME).

A school or local authority should never encourage you to remove your child from the school register to avoid your child from being excluded or you being prosecuted.

The LA has a duty to make arrangements to identify children of compulsory school age who are not receiving a suitable education. As parents educating your children otherwise than at school, we will ask you to provide information about the education your child is receiving.

It is recommended that an initial meeting takes place with EHE families to discuss their provision and any advice or support they may need.

The parent will be contacted by email / letter to arrange a meeting for this purpose. Meetings will take place at mutually agreed locations. Thereafter the LA EHE Advisor will contact home-educating families at least once a year. This will provide an opportunity to offer information, support and advice, and listen and respond to the views of the child and family.

In line with WG guidelines, the LA request that you respond to our contact. If parents choose not to provide the LA with information about the education provided at home, then the LA will have to consider whether it appears that the parents are fulfilling their duties.

Under section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996, local authorities have a duty to take action if it appears that parents are not providing a suitable education.

If it appears that a child of compulsory school age is not receiving a suitable education, the LA is able to serve a notice in writing requiring the parent to provide evidence that the child is receiving a suitable education. If no response is received within 15 days, the LA is able to issue a school attendance order to ensure a suitable education

If at any stage the parents provide information which satisfies the LA that a suitable education is being provided then no further action would be taken.

Parents may need some help and support and the LA needs to give parents the opportunity to present evidence of the learning experience which a child is receiving.

To achieve the aim of ensuring that every elective home educated child of compulsory school age receives an efficient and suitable education we would encourage working together and communicate on a reasonably regular basis.

The LA’s first objective is to help parents to succeed in what they are setting out to do.

CAN MY CHILD RETURN TO SCHOOL

You can apply for a place at school at any time. However, there is no guarantee that there will be a place at the school your child previously went to.

Information regarding a school place request can be obtained from: schooladmissions@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

WORK EXPERIENCE

Parents are responsible for organising and arranging the insurance for any work experience placements they wish the child to experience. This can only take place in years 10 and 11.

WORK EXPERIENCE

CHILD EMPLOYMENT

Any elective home educated child requires a work permit in the same way that a child that attends school would. If a parent of a home educated learner requests a work permit, the LA will ask for details of the child’s education, what is being provided, times of sessions and how any proposed part time working would complement their home education as part of the issuing of the work permit.

EXAMINATIONS

Parents who choose to home educate their children must be prepared to assume full financial responsibility for the cost of examinations.

Parents will also need to find an exam centre willing to take private candidates, or approach the LA to establish a school that is prepared to enter the child for the exams. The parent may then also have to pay the registration fees and for an assessment of coursework by an accredited person.

Some Home Education groups normally have small GCSE study groups and are affiliated with examination centres so that costs are kept to a minimum.

SAFEGUARDING

Parents’ electing to educate their child(ren) at home does not mitigate the responsibility of the LA to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

The welfare and protection of all children, both those who attend school and those who are educated by other means, are a paramount concern and are the responsibility of the whole community. As with school educated children, child protection issues may arise in relation to home educated children. If any child protection concerns come to light in the course of engagement with children and families, these concerns will be referred to the appropriate services using established protocols.

Our partner agencies, including Health, Education, Child and Family Services, Housing, Careers Wales and Police, may be notified that you are educating your child(ren) outside the school system.

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council have adopted and embedded the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) as the basis for all its work for children and young people.

ACCESS TO SUPPORT SERVICES

An EHE child is still able to access universal services such as Careers Wales, Youth services, Counselling and Health Immunisation and Screening.

If a parent contacts the EHE email on EducationWelfareService@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk they can be signposted on how to access information and support on the above and other support services specific to the needs of the family.

USEFUL CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

Information on Elective Home education can also be found at:

Careers Wales: [www.careerswales.com](http://www.careerswales.com)

Welsh Government: [www.gov.wales](http://www.gov.wales)

Ed Yourself: [www.edyourself.org](http://www.edyourself.org)

Education begins at home: [www.facebook.com/beginsathome](http://www.facebook.com/beginsathome)

Education Otherwise: [www.educationotherwise.net](http://www.educationotherwise.net)

Learn and Revise: [Home - BBC Bitesize](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize)

Friends, Families and Travellers: [www.gypsy-traveller.org/education](http://www.gypsy-traveller.org/education)

Home Education UK: [www.home-education.org.uk](http://www.home-education.org.uk)

Home Education Advisory Service: [www.heas.org.uk](http://www.heas.org.uk)

Learning Wales: [www.gov.wales/learning](http://www.gov.wales/learning)

Dewis Cymru: [Home schooling - Dewis Wales](https://www.dewis.wales/home-schooling-cyp)

Oak Academy: [www.thenational.academy](http://www.thenational.academy)

Khan Academy: [www.Khanacademy.org](http://www.Khanacademy.org)

Free Home schooling Resources: <https://education.rspca.org.uk/education/home-resources>

**Emotional Health and Wellbeing**

Tidy Minds: [Home page - Tidy Minds](https://tidyminds.org.uk/)

Kooth: <https://www.kooth.com>

Emotional Wellbeing Barnardos: <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/support-hub/emotional-wellbeing>

National Autistic Society (NAS) [WWW.autism.org.uk](http://WWW.autism.org.uk)

The Hyperactive Children's Support Group: [Active or Hyperactive? (hacsg.org.uk)](https://hacsg.org.uk/active-or-hyperactive/)

Dyslexia Demystified: [www.dyslexics.org.uk](http://www.dyslexics.org.uk)

**Online Safety**

Childnet: [Childnet — Online safety for young people](https://www.childnet.com/)

Action for Children: <https://parents.actionforchildren.org.uk/mental-health-wellbeing/online-safety-wellbeing>

UK Internet Centre: [Parents and Carers - UK Safer Internet Centre](https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers)