

Elective Home Education

Information for parents/carers

Directorate of
Children & Young People
EHE/PECS

Introduction

Kirklees Directorate of Children & Young People (Learning) has a responsibility to ensure that there is a school place available for every child, and believes that educational provision within its schools provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which promotes social development, moral and spiritual awareness and equal opportunities. However, Kirklees Directorate of Children & Young People (Learning) recognises that the responsibility for a child's education rests with their parents, and that parents may choose to educate their child otherwise than at school.

The following information attempts to answer some common questions which families ask when considering home education. The purpose of the information is to aid in coming to an informed decision. It also explains how the Local Authority keeps in touch with home educating families to offer support and advice, and also to fulfil its duty to be confident of the well being of the child and its duty to assure the quality of the education provided.

Do children have to go to school?

The 1996 Education Act states that it is the duty of parents to secure an appropriate education for their children. This can be achieved by regular attendance at school, or 'otherwise'.

For the vast majority of school aged children in Kirklees this education would be secured by regular attendance in school. Parents, in most cases, are happy with their children's education being provided by school. Schools work to a common curriculum framework and are usually successful in supporting the academic progress and personal development of children. However, for a wide variety of reasons, some parents prefer to make their own arrangements for their child's education 'otherwise' than at school, usually at home.

What is a parent's duty?

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

- *to his (or her) age, ability and aptitude, and*
- *to any special educational needs he (or she) may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.*

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act

What is 'efficient' and 'suitable' education?

These words are not defined in the Act. However, according to case law, education is seen as being 'efficient' if it "*achieves what it sets out to achieve*" and 'suitable' if it "*primarily equips a child for life within the community of which he is a member, rather than the way of life in the country as a whole, as long as it does not foreclose the child's options in later years to adopt some other form of life if he wishes to do so.*" In other words, the education should prepare the child for life and at the same time enable the child to achieve his/her full potential and support any special educational needs he/she may have.

What makes a curriculum?

Whether provided in school or at home, the curriculum consists of everything which is done in order to educate the child. It should cater for the child's physical, social, emotional and spiritual development.

The government states that a child should have a broad and balanced curriculum. In schools this means that children are taught the National Curriculum. You are not expected to teach your child the full National Curriculum. However, to enable your child to enter adult life equipped to find work and be a good citizen then you should consider carefully how you ensure good English and Maths skills, a working knowledge of IT, personal and social development, spiritual and moral understanding, physical development and some understanding of the world of work.

Opportunities to mix with other children and adults away from the home and family will also be important.

The current Department for Education (DfE) guidelines on Elective Home Education (EHE) make it clear that home educating parents are not required to:

- teach the National Curriculum
- provide a broad and balanced education
- have a timetable
- have premises equipped to any particular standard
- set hours during which education will take place
- have any specific qualifications
- make detailed plans in advance
- observe school hours, days or terms
- give formal lessons
- mark work done by their child
- formally assess progress or set development objectives
- reproduce school type peer group socialisation
- match school-based, age-specific standards.

It is clear that young children learn in many different ways. What you teach (or leave out) and how your child learns is up to you. But it is a good idea to think about your long term plans and ways in which you plan to achieve them.

It can be useful to keep a record of the work your child does. It is also worth bearing in mind that if your intention is to enter your child for formal examinations, or plan to

send your child back to school at some future date, it would be wise to be aware of, if not to broadly follow, the National Curriculum.

What should I do if I choose to de-register my child?

If your child is already enrolled at a school the first thing you will need to do is write to the Head Teacher telling them of your decision and formally requesting that his/her name be removed from the school roll. If you do not do this you may be liable for his/her non-attendance which could result in court action. (A sample letter is included in this booklet)

What is the school's responsibility?

Section 8 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) regulations 2006 prescribe the grounds on which the name of a pupil of compulsory school age shall be deleted from the admissions register. Paragraph (d) allows for the removal of a child from the school roll where written notification from the parent is provided stating that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than at school.

Under such regulations the Head Teacher has a duty to inform the LA within 2 days of receipt of written confirmation from the parent. Within the Kirklees district schools are asked to allow a period of 2 weeks for further enquiries to be made before the child's name is deleted from the school roll.

What is the duty of the Directorate of Children & Young People (Learning)?

Section 437 of the Education Act 1996 states that it is the Local Authority's duty to ensure children of school age are receiving a suitable education.

The Local Authority must also satisfy itself that parents are fulfilling their duties.

What will Kirklees Directorate of Children & Young People (Learning) do?

Shortly after they have been informed of a child's de-registration from school a designated Attendance & Pupil Support Officer will contact you. You will be offered a meeting to discuss your plans. A questionnaire is used to guide this meeting (a copy is included in this booklet).

At a later date an EHE Support Teacher from the authority's Pupil Referral Service will contact you to arrange a mutually agreed visit, usually, but not necessarily, at your home. You may or may not wish to have your child(ren) present at these meetings.

The Support Teacher will be aware that most parents need time to put their plans into action, but he/she will be seeking evidence that there is a serious intent to educate your child. This might be gained by talking to you and your child, looking at samples of work and looking at the programme of work you have planned. The teacher's role

is not to tell you how to teach your child but to support and ensure that a suitable education is planned. It is your responsibility to plan, finance and carry out your child's education.

What if I don't wish to have a home visit?

There are a number of ways other than a home visit that you might choose to provide evidence that your child is receiving a suitable education. You might, for example, prefer to

- provide a written report
- provide samples of work
- arrange a meeting elsewhere, with or without your child(ren) being present
- have the educational provision endorsed by a recognised third party (e.g. a private tutor)

You would need to discuss your preference with the LA.

What happens if the EHE teacher is not satisfied?

If you choose not to provide any evidence that you are fulfilling your duties either in written form or in discussions with the Service's Support Teacher, the LA may conclude that your child is not being effectively educated. Although parents are under no duty to respond to requests for further information, according to case law it would be 'sensible for them to do so': Phillips v Brown (1980). If, after further opportunities, you choose not to respond to requests for information, steps may be taken to ensure that the child is registered at a school and that parents ensure regular attendance.

Provision for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

You are within your rights to educate a child with Special Educational Needs otherwise than at school. However, if you are concerned about your child's progress please write or phone the SEN Assessment & Commissioning Team. They will put you in touch with the relevant specialist service that will be able to advise you further.

There is no law prohibiting the home education of a child with a statement of SEN provided they are not attending a special school. However, you will be required to show that you are making provision for these special needs, and the LA statutory duty to undertake an annual review continues. At such a review an assessment would be made as to whether the statement is still appropriate, depending on the circumstances and the provision being made.

A child who is placed in a Special School by the LA cannot be deregistered on demand. The permission of the directorate must be sought (Regulation 9 (2) of the 1996 Education Act). This restriction is there to protect the interests of more vulnerable children to ensure that their special needs continue to be met.

What if there are concerns about the home education programme?

If there are serious concerns about the education you are providing you will be given some time to rectify the situation. However, if following further visits the education provided is still deemed to be unsatisfactory, the LA may make a School Attendance Order requiring your child to attend a named school. This would be a last resort and one which would only be taken after careful consideration and detailed discussion with you.

School Attendance Orders

The legal position is that:

1. If it appears to a Local Authority that a child of compulsory school age in their area is not receiving suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, they shall serve a 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.
2. That period shall not be less than 15 days beginning with the day on which the notice is served.
3. If –
 - a) 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
 - b) 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.

Can my child still take exams?

(See **Appendix 4** for further, more detailed information.)

Yes, you can arrange for your child to take exams as an external (private) candidate at a registered examination centre. The authority’s Key Stage 4 Pupil Referral Service is now registered to take such candidates and in summer 2011 EHE students took examinations here. Parents of those Year 10 and 11 pupils registered with the authority will be contacted during the autumn term to give details of who, and how, to contact to discuss such entries.

You can take exams through other centres but you will, however, need to contact the centre yourself to make sure they will accept private candidates.

Wherever you choose make sure you do so in good time as there will be deadlines. You will also need to check that what your child has been studying is compatible with the syllabus/specifications of the examination board being used. Many syllabuses have coursework assignments and/or controlled assessments. Some do not have such elements and what exam to take is something you need to research carefully for yourself.

Funding

The LA, unfortunately, is unable to provide funding for children voluntarily educated at home.

Further considerations

Deciding to educate your child at home is a major step that, as you know, not only involves commitment but also a tremendous investment in time and energy. It is well worth talking to someone who has experience of the highs and lows of home education before finally making a decision. Independent support agency addresses are provided at the end of this leaflet (**Appendix 3**).

It is always a good idea to get in touch with other parents/carers in the area who are educating their children at home. There are various groups that meet to support each other. Kirklees Pupil Referral Service have facilitated one such meet. To date (Sept 2011) there have been 2 meets at Books Plus where EHE families have come together to view and use the loans facilities at Books Plus via the PRS. At present (academic year 2011-2012) there is no charge to EHE families for the loan of resources via Books Plus however this will be monitored and may have to be reviewed in future years.

Education at home is usually a happy and constructive experience for both you and your child. If you do decide to take this on the LAs Directorate of Children & Young People wishes you well and will do what it can to ensure that a suitable education is provided.

What if we decide to return our child to school?

Many parents and their children find home education an exhilarating and stimulating experience. However some parents, for a variety of reasons, will choose to reintroduce their child to school. If this is your choice then the local authority would be glad to talk to you about your child's entry into one of our schools.

Kirklees Education Attendance & Pupil Support Service will be happy to assist in helping your child's entry into one of our schools.

Further, more detailed, advice is available in **Appendix 4**.

LEGISLATION

Section 7 Education Act 1996 (<http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1996/96056--a.htm#7>)

Section 437 (1) Education Act 1996 (<http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1996/96056-bu.htm#437>)

Children Act 1989 (http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1989UKpga/9_19890041_en_1.htm)

Useful additional information can be obtained from:
Butterworth's Education Law Manual [BELM *issue 0* Page A/476 – A/484]
(<http://www.butterworths.co.uk>)

APPENDIX 1:

SAMPLE LETTER

Dear (Headteacher's name),

Name of Child/Date of Birth

!We are 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 in accordance with Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act.

Please delete his/her name from the school register in accordance with Education (Pupil Registration) Regulation 9 (1) (c) 1995, as he/she is now receiving education otherwise than at school.

Yours sincerely etc.

Elective Home Education questionnaire for initial meeting between Attendance & Pupil Support Officer and parent(s) & child(ren)

You may find this questionnaire helpful in preparing for the visit of the Attendance & Pupil Support Officer or Support Teacher. The questionnaire also includes a space for jotting down any questions you may have.

1	Why have you decided to educate your child at home?
2	What is your child's opinion of being educated at home?
3	Who have you spoken to about home education and what information have you gathered?
4	If your child is the age equivalent of a year 9, 10, or 11 student what plans have you made for when they cease to be of compulsory school age?

5	Please give a brief outline of how you will educate your child. (This might include the subject areas you plan to cover, the approximate number of daily hours spent on educational tasks, and the opportunities for leisure, social and recreational activities, etc.)
6	What resources do you think you will need?
7	Are you planning for additional support for you or your child in order to successfully educate from home? If so, please give brief details.

Questions for the meeting :

APPENDIX 2: BOOKLIST

School Is Not Compulsory 6th Edition. (Education Otherwise, £5.50 for non-members)

Alternative Approaches to Education (2003); Fiona Carnie (RoutledgeFalmer, £17.99)

One to One: A practical Guide to Learning at home age 0-11 (2003); Gareth Lewis (Nezert books: New Ed Edition)

Unqualified Education: A practical Guide to Learning at home age 11-18 (2003); Gareth Lewis (Nezert books: New Ed Edition)

In Place of Schools (1994); John Adcock (AMS Educational, £5.95. Tel: 0113 258 0309)

Teaching Tomorrow (2000); John Adcock (Education Now Publishing, £9.95. Tel: 0115 925 7261)

Learning Unlimited (2001); Roland Meighan (Educational Heretics Press, £7.95. Tel: 0115 925 7261)

Those Unschooled Minds (1999); Julie Webb (Educational Heretics Press, £9.95)

The Next Learning System (1997); Roland Meighan (Educational Heretics Press, £7.95)

Free Range Education (2000); Terri Dowty (Hawthorne Press, £12.99)

Doing It Their Way (2000); Jan Fortune-Wood (Educational Heretics Press, £11.95)

Compulsory Schooling Disease (1993); Chris Shute (Educational Heretics Press, £6.95)

Educating Children at Home (2000); Alan Thomas (Cassell)

The Unschooling Handbook (1998); Mary Griffith (Prima)

Home Educating our Autistic Spectrum Children (2005); Terry Dowty & Kitt Cowlshaw (Jessica Kingsley, £15.95)

Getting Started in Home Education (2000); Mary Ann Rose & Paul Stanbrook (Education Now)

Flexischooling: education for tomorrow, starting yesterday (1988); Roland Meighan (Education Now)

APPENDIX 3: USEFUL CONTACTS

KIRKLEES Children & Young People Service	
<p>Pupil Referral Service The Deighton Centre Deighton Road Deighton Huddersfield, HD2 1JP Tel: 01484 456842</p>	<p>Clare Davies, Referrals Manager clare.davies@kirklees.gov.uk</p>
<p>Elective Home Education Support Teacher The Deighton Centre Deighton Road Huddersfield HD2 1JP Tel: 01484 456801/ 07976 497843</p>	<p>Marilyn Islip, Support Teacher marilyn.islip@kirklees.gov.uk</p>
<p>Attendance & Pupil Support (South Team) Upperhead Row Huddersfield HD1 2JL Tel: 01484 221919</p>	<p>Alastair Megahy, Team Manager alastair.megahy@kirklees.gov.uk</p>
<p>Attendance & Pupil Support (North Team) Town Hall Annexe, Brunswick Street, Batley WF17 5DT Tel: 01924 326004/5</p>	
<p>Booksplus Red Doles Lane Huddersfield HD7 1YF Tel: 01484 226376</p>	<p>Alison Brumwell, Librarian Alison.brumwell@kirklees.gov.uk</p>
<p>School Admissions & Information 2nd Floor High Street Buildings Huddersfield HD1 2NF Tel: 01484 225007/8/9</p>	<p>Juliet Stott, Admissions Manager juliet.stott@kirklees.gov.uk</p>
<p>SEN Assessment & Commissioning Team G/F Civic Centre 1</p>	<p>Susan Taylor-Brier, Admin Officer</p>

Huddersfield HD1 2NF Tel: 01484 225057	
Psychology and Specialist Outreach Service (North Kirklees) Child & Family Consultation Centre Temple Road Dewsbury WF13 3QD Tel: 01924 324850	Jayne Whitton, Education Psychologist

GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS	
Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) 83 Piccadilly London W1J 8QA Tel: 0207 509 555 http://www.qca.org.uk	Information about National Curriculum, including tests and assessment arrangements.
Department for Education (DfE) Social Inclusion Division Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith St London SW1 P3BT Tel: 0171 925 5000 www.education.gov.uk	
DfE Pupil Wellbeing and Transport Team Mowden Hall Staindrop Rd Darlington Co Durham DL3 9BG Email: pwtt.well-being@dfes.qsi.gov.uk	Provides an information handout for home educators.
www.dfes.gov.uk/qualifications/mainsection.cmf?sld=1	Information about access to GCSE, and about qualifications for schools and colleges.
Connexions Service www.connexions.gov.uk/	For children and young people aged 13-19 living in England - services and responsibilities cover those being educated at home.

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

<p>Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) Ltd 1B Aberdeen Studios 22-24 Highbury grove London N5 2DQ Tel: 020 7704 3370 www.ace-ed.org.uk</p>	<p>National independent education watchdog.</p>
<p>Education Otherwise PO Box 7420 London N9 9SG Tel: 01283 532547 www.education-otherwise.org.uk</p>	<p>Provides support and information for home-educating families. Very useful website. Books, newsletters, videos available.</p>
<p>Home Education UK www.home-education.org.uk</p>	<p>A good range of information, including a list of other support groups and mailing lists.</p>
<p>Home Education Advisory Service PO Box 98 Welwyn Garden City Hertfordshire AL8 6AN Tel: 01707 371854 http://www.heas.org.uk Email: admin@heas.org.uk</p>	<p>An independent support network. Very good on resources and teaching materials, & how to help home-learners sit external exams.</p>
<p>http://www.homeeducationresearch.org</p>	<p>Details of research into the benefits & implications of home education. Also a round-up of existing research.</p>
<p>Education Now 113 Arundel Drive Bramcote Hills Nottingham NG9 3FQ http://educationnow.gn.apc.org/</p>	<p>Range of books can be ordered through website. Devoted to developing more flexible forms of education and more educational diversity.</p>
<p>Local Home Education Group Contact: Jane Wood: 01484 645034</p>	<p>Meetings held in Civic Centre 1, Huddersfield, on the last Thursday of the month, 11.00am - 1.45pm</p>
<p>Choice in Education PO Box 20284</p>	<p>General information.</p>

London NW1 3WY	
<p><i>Please note that Kirklees Directorate of Children & Young People (Learning) is not in a position to recommend any of these organisations. Addresses and telephone numbers are current and we have done our best to provide accurate information. The list is compiled from information from home educators and other Local Authorities.</i></p>	

CURRICULUM ADVICE/RESOURCES	
<p>The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) Devas Street Manchester M15 6EX Tel: 0161 953 1180 Fax: 0161 273 7572 Website: www.aqa.org.uk Email: mailbox@aca.org.uk</p>	Examining board
<p>Oxford Cambridge & RSA (OCR) OCR Information Bureau 1 Hills Road Cambridge CB1 2EU Tel: 01223 553998 Fax: 01223 552627 Website: www.ocr.org.uk Email: helpdesk@ocr.org.uk</p>	Examining board
<p>Edexcel Stewart House 32 Russell Square London WC1B 5DN Tel: 0870 240 9800 Fax: 020 7758 6920 Website: www.edexcel.org.uk Email: enquiries@edexcel.org.uk</p>	Examining board
<p>International GCSE I GCSE Office UCLES Cambridge CB1 2EU Tel: 01223 553311</p>	
<p>National Association of Gifted Children Elder House Milton Keynes MK9 1LR</p>	General advice.
<p>Open and Distance Learning Quality Council (ODLQC) 16 Park Crescent London W1B 1AH Tel: 020 7612 7090 Fax: 020 7612 7092 Website: www.odlqc.org.uk Email: info@odlqc.org.uk</p>	An independent body which accredits open and distance learning courses. Free information leaflet listing all approved organisations &

	courses.
Council for the Accreditation of Correspondence Colleges 27 Marylebone Rd London NW1 5JS Tel: 0171 9355391	Publishes free list of Accredited Correspondence Colleges.
<i>Please note that Kirklees Directorate of Children & Young People (Learning) is not in a position to recommend any of these organisations. Addresses and phone numbers are current and we have done our best to provide accurate information. The list is compiled from information from home educators and other Local Authorities.</i>	
Association of British Correspondence Courses (ABCC) PO Box 17926 London SW19 3WB Tel: 020 8544 9559 Fax: 020 8540 7657 Website: www.nationline.co.uk/abcc Email: abcc@msn.com	Voluntary association of colleges which comply with a code of ethics.
British Association for Open Learning (BAOL) Suite 12, Pixmore House Pixmore Avenue Letchworth Hertfordshire SG6 1JG Tel: 01426 485 588 Fax: 01462 485 633 Website: www.british-learning.com Email: info@british-learning.com	Promotes quality and best practice in open, flexible and distance forms of learning.
National Extension College The Michael Young Centre Purbeck Rd Cambridge CB2 2HN Tel: 01223 450300	Correspondence college
Rapid Results College Tuition House 27/37 Georges Rd London SW19 4DS Tel: 0181 947 2211	Correspondence college
<i>Please note that Kirklees Directorate of Children & Young People is not in a position to recommend any of these organisations. Addresses and phone numbers are current and we have done our best to provide accurate information. The list is compiled from information from home educators and other Local Authorities.</i>	

APPENDIX 4: 16+ QUALIFICATIONS & CHOICES

Where can we get advice about qualifications and careers?

The Connexions Service will give you free advice about the qualifications needed for any chosen career.

Connexions Customer Freephone: 0800 9755111

Connexions Head Office: 01566 777672

Connexions/Careers South Kirklees: 01484 226800

Connexions/Careers North Kirklees: 01924 324200

Website: www.connexions-cd.org.uk

Can my daughter/son take GCSE examinations if they are home-educated?

Children can take GCSE (and other) exams as external candidates. You need to discuss and plan for this as early as possible. All examination boards offer exams for external candidates, but it is essential to find an accredited centre where your child can sit the exams. The Pupil Referral Service Key Stage 4 centre now offers this facility within the authority. Letters are sent during the autumn term to Year 10 and 11 pupils who are registered as Electively Home Educated pupils. The EHE support teacher will also have discussed the exams at monitoring visits. Parents/carers are required to pay the entry fees for the exams and may, dependent upon numbers, be required to cover administration costs and contribute to invigilation costs.

If the exam centre is a school or college, you may have to use the same syllabus/exam board as the centre. You need to find out how much the centre will charge, as you will also have to pay the exam board fees and there may be a charge for invigilation. (Examination boards do offer their own venue for external candidates, but this is often a long way away.)

You will need to contact the examination board to request a syllabus/specification for each exam, and they will need to know when (which year) your child is going to sit the exams. You may have to pay for the syllabus, and it is also possible to purchase other relevant materials such as assignment requirements and examples of good course work assignments.

The main examination boards are:

- **AQA** (incorporating NEAB & SEG)
 Devas Street
 Manchester M15 6EX
 Tel: 0161 953 1180 Fax: 0161 273 7572
 Website: www.aqa.org.uk

- **Edexcel** (incorporating ULEAC)
 Stuart House
 32 Russell Square
 London WC1B 5DN
 Tel: 0870 240 9800 Fax: 020 7758 6920
 Website: www.edexcel.org.uk

- **OCR** (incorporating MEG & RSA)
 1 Hills Road
 Cambridge CB1 2EU
 Tel: 01223 553998 Fax: 01223 552627
 Website: www.ocr.org.uk

What about coursework?

Many syllabuses have coursework assignments. The exam boards determine who can mark coursework. Depending on how your child is learning there are three options:

- through study at an accredited centre. If your child has been accepted on an adult GCSE class then the teacher should mark all the coursework.

- through study with a teacher/tutor. If a teacher is tutoring your child then the teacher will mark the coursework but you will still have to arrange where your child sits the final exam. If your child is using distance learning packs then the assignments are marked by the tutor. Most distance learning organisations suggest places where the final exam can be taken, or you can arrange your own venue. The same applies for 'on-line' courses.

- through independent study. If your child has no tutor or teacher then the work may be sent to the exam board for marking.

Where will we get information about distance learning/correspondence courses?

These contacts can provide a useful start in finding a suitable course and organisation:

- The Open and Distance Learning Quality Council
 16 Park Crescent
 London W1B 1AH
 Tel: 020 7612 7090 Fax: 020 7612 7092
 Website: www.odlqc.org.uk Email: info@odlqc.org.uk

- The Association of British Correspondence Colleges (ABCC)

PO Box 17926
London SW19 3WB
Tel: 020 8544 9559 Fax: 020 8540 7657
Website: www.nationline.co.uk/abcc Email: abcc@msn.com

- The British Association for Open Learning (BAOL)
Suite 12, Pixmore House
Pixmore Avenue
Letchworth
Hertfordshire SG6 1JG
Tel: 01462 485 588 Fax: 01462 485 633
Website: www.british-learning.com Email: info@british-learning.com

What about funding?

The LA, unfortunately, is unable to provide funding for children voluntarily educated at home. The DfEs EHE Guidelines for Local Authorities state that 'parents who choose to educate their children at home must be prepared to assume full financial responsibility, including bearing the cost of any public examinations.'

It may be an option to join a local Adult Education class, usually in Year 11. The fee will include marking of course work, and usually the exam entry fee is reasonable. However, you would need to check with the centre whether they are willing to accept someone below 16.

Children can take a limited number of GCSEs if they attend a Further Education or Sixth Form College. When they are 17+ the exams are free if they are in full-time education.

Does my child have to take GCSEs?

Your child does not have to gain any qualifications but it would be sensible to check with Connexions to make sure this option does not affect their future career choices.

Can my child take GNVQs?

Pupils in school can take GNVQs (General National Vocational Qualifications) instead of GCSEs for some subjects. Since GNVQs are continuously assessed by teachers it may be a difficult option to combine with a home education programme.

What are the options 'Post 16'?

If your child wishes to take part in full-time education or training Post 16 there are three choices:

- Sixth Form study at school, or Sixth Form College: You will need to contact the college or school early in Year 11 and make an appointment to see the Principal/ Head Teacher. Most colleges/schools have Open Evenings in the Autumn term.
- College of Further Education: FE Colleges offer a wide variety of courses and training options. It might be useful to request a prospectus when your child is Y10 to look at these options and check the qualifications your child may need. Again, it would be sensible to contact the Admissions Tutor at the college and make an

appointment to discuss the situation. Connexions may be able to help with any negotiations.

- Work-Based Training/Modern Apprenticeships: This is an excellent route if your child wishes to start work but gain some work-based qualifications. Applications are usually completed via the Connexions Service, so you will need to contact them early in Year 11. Connexions may be able to help find an appropriate work placement with a firm prepared to take on a trainee.

APPENDIX 5: Return to Formal Education

The age of the child and the length of time outside formal education will clearly have some bearing on their needs when entering or re-entering the state system. Therefore, the following points will not be applicable to all but nevertheless will highlight difficulties which may be experienced, and areas for consideration by both parents and schools.

1. If there is a possibility that a child who is being home educated will, at some point, return to formal education, then it is advised that the parents are broadly aware of the content of the National Curriculum at an early stage as this is what all government funded schools will be following.

It is critical that those studying for public examinations make certain that school has entered them and that they are fully conversant with the syllabuses their school is following as this may differ in some subjects. This would be dependent on which examining board has been chosen and decisions made at school level.

2. School uniform, travel, PE equipment, and lunchtime arrangements should be resolved on offer of a place but before entry.
3. Some assistance, particularly at Secondary level, will be needed to introduce a new pupil to the geography of the school. This could be done in several ways – by producing a classroom plan to follow – by an escorted tour of the building at initial interview – or by assigning a fellow pupil as a ‘buddy’ to take him/her to class for a short period.
4. The routine of school may be totally alien to some children previously educated at home. Neither parents nor school should assume that the discipline associated with school will just fall into place. It is a joint responsibility, that of school and home, to make the new pupil aware of the expectations of school. The school prospectus, which outlines the above and covers ethos and policy, should be very helpful for parents and children considering a return to formal schooling. Any problems arising at entry should be monitored and dealt with sensitively by school, in consultation with parents.
5. Younger children will generally find it easier to make new friends. However, a child’s personality and confidence or lack of it in social situations often determines their success or failure in making new friends quickly. School should be alert to possible problems in this area and might perhaps provide a

mentor or assign a suitable pupil to introduce the pupil to members of his/her year group.

6. A planned, gradual introduction to school may be a desirable option for some. However this would be dependent upon the Head Teacher. Not all are happy to consider such arrangements and would insist on full-time education from day one. Some Head Teachers familiar with and sympathetic to flexi-schooling may be more likely to be amenable.
7. Children who have been home educated may be ahead of their school peers in some areas. This may cause frustration and boredom which could lead to problems if it is not recognised and dealt with appropriately by teachers.
8. Lack of knowledge - if that be the case - in certain curriculum areas should not be seen as indicative of lack of either general or specific ability or form the basis of any criticism of past instruction. The school should apply their usual criteria to test for strengths and weaknesses.
9. Children who are being home educated are not generally familiar with being subject to testing or with the language associated with this (e.g. SATs, concepts of 'being behind', or 'ahead', 'levels of attainment', etc.). The concept of competition is also not usually part of home education. Explanations and awareness of possible misunderstandings will be necessary.
10. With some exceptions, the home educating environment is relaxed and the child is used to working in calm and well-defined surroundings, either individually or in a small group. Bearing this in mind, the young person may work best as part of a group of well motivated students, with a teacher who has clear expectations and can recognise that the pupil may have well-developed independent learning skills.