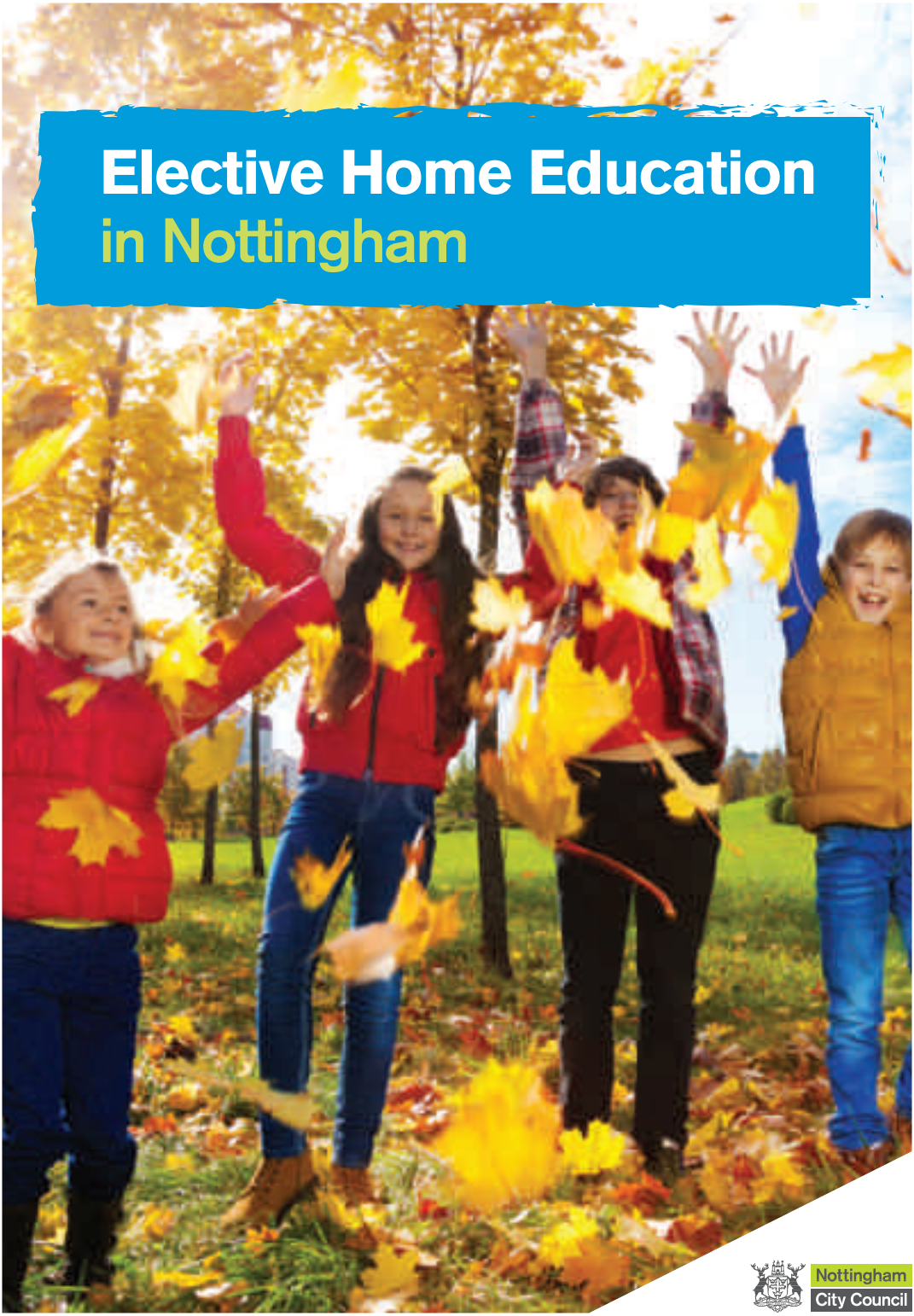
Elective Home Education
in Nottingham



Nottingham City Council



"Elective" means "chosen": the parents take direct responsibility for organising their child's education, rather than leaving it to a school. (It's not the same as when a school child is ill for a long time and the Council provides a tutor, although this is confusingly also known as "home education".)

Useful contacts and further information

Nottingham City Council
EHE Department

Elective Home Education
Access and Inclusion
Children & Adults,
Loxley House LH Box 6,
Station Street,
Nottingham NG2 3NG

Tel: **0115 876 4685/876 5946**

Email: **electivehomeeducation@nottinghamcity.gov.uk**

Web: **www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/ehe**

Local, online

East Midlands Home Education (EMHE) email list: Local parents swap information on meet-ups, events and resources, share advice and support, organise group discounts, etc. Open to all home educating parents and those beginning to consider it. At the end of 2017 there were approximately 1200 members on the EMHE Yahoo group **https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/emhe/info**

On **Facebook**, there are a couple of Nottingham/Nottinghamshire groups sharing info similar to EMHE - but the Facebook groups are invitation-only, so EMHE is a good place to start.

Non-School Nottingham website: Gives overview of local meet-ups and can be seen without "joining" or "subscribing to" anything. Some groups welcome visiting parents who are still making up their minds. **www.non-school-nottingham.org.uk**

Local, by phone

Education Otherwise **https://educationotherwise.org** has a helpline on **0845 478 6345**. They should be able to put you in touch with a parent volunteer in the Nottingham area who is happy to chat on the phone about home education in general, and tell you about local events and meet-ups.





National, online

Home Education UK: English law and lots of useful links. **www.home-education.org.uk**

Ed Yourself: Includes updates on government plans and regulations, related not only to home education itself, but exams, college funding etc. **edyourself.org**

Education Otherwise: Well-known organisation for home educating families, run as a charity; annual membership fee. **https://educationotherwise.org**

HE-Special: Emailing list for parents home educating a child with Special Educational Needs. **www.he-special.org.uk**

HE-Exams: Emailing list for home educating families organising GCSEs or other exams. **http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/HE-Exams-GCSE-A_AS_Levels-OU-Others/info**

HESFES, Home Educating Families' Festival: festivals for home educating families and all who support home education **https://hefestivals.co.uk**

Department for Education: www.gov.uk/government/publications/elective-home-education
DfE guidelines for local authorities on Elective Home Education

The above list is just a selection of many resources online.

Books recommended by local home educators

Authors include: Sandra Dodd, Pam Laricchia, John Holt, John Taylor Gatto, Alan Thomas & Harriet Pattison, Jan Fortune-Wood, Mike Fortune-Wood, Roland Meighan, Naomi Aldort, Mary Griffith.

Some books on learning outside school can be found in the Nottingham/ Nottinghamshire library system, e.g. at the Central Library on Angel Row in Nottingham City Centre. On the library shelves they can be found at or near the number 371.042. Alternatively, you can put in a request to get a particular book sent to your local library. A good start is “Free Range Education”, edited by Terri Dowty.

Useful search terms on the web

“Home education”, “home education Nottingham”, “free education resources”, “deregistration letter”, “educational philosophy”, “ed phil”, “deschooling”, “unschooling”, “autonomous education”.

The phrase “home schooling” will find mainly sites from the USA.



Elective Home Education - The Law

Parents' legal duties

The responsibility for a child's education rests with their parents. In England, education is compulsory, but school is not.

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 provides that:

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

a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and

b) to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise."

Choosing to educate your child outside of school is the 'or otherwise' part in the law. In England this has always been legal.

The legal meaning of "suitable" is primarily given within the law's own words: "suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and any special needs".

There is currently no legal definition of "full-time". Children normally attend school for between 22 and 25 hours a week for 39 weeks of the year, but this measurement of "contact time" is not relevant to elective home education where there is often almost continuous one-to-one contact and education may take place outside normal "school hours".

"Elective Home Education: Guidelines for Local Authorities", from the Government (link given above), illustrates with the following:

3.13 (from DfE guidelines for LAs) The type of educational activity can be varied and flexible. 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

The Council's legal duties

Nottingham City Council, like all local authorities in England, is entitled to make informal enquiries to home educating parents, such as writing a letter to ask about the education which is being provided. It is not the Council's responsibility to "approve" parents to educate their own children, or routinely to monitor the quality of the education.

However, under Section 437(1) of the Education Act 1996, local authorities shall intervene if it appears that parents are not providing a suitable education. This section states that:

"If it appears to a local education 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 to satisfy them within the period specified in the notice that the child is receiving such education."

Although the Council has no duty to regularly review your child's education, **you can ask for help if you would like it**. For example, if you would like an officer to visit or write a short report with advice on the educational provision, Council staff will be able to do this.

In Elective Home Education, the Council does not supply tutors, "homework" for the children, or extra money for the child's education. (However, most parents find they can get some informal support from local grass-roots networks. See local contacts info above.)

Guidelines for local authorities say that:

In their consideration of parents' provision of education at home, local authorities may reasonably expect the provision to include the following characteristics:

- consistent involvement of parents or other significant carers - it is expected that parents or significant carers would play a substantial role, although not necessarily constantly or actively involved in providing education
- recognition of the child's needs, attitudes and aspirations
- opportunities for the child to be stimulated by their learning experiences
- access to resources/materials required to provide home education for the child - such as paper and pens, books and libraries, arts and crafts materials, physical activity, ICT and the opportunity for appropriate interaction with other children and other adults.

Schools' legal duties

When a parent (or guardian) notifies the school in writing that they will now educate their own child, the school must take the child's name off the register. This is only different when either (a) there is a School Attendance Order relating to this child due to attendance issues, or (b) when the child is at a Special School. Such a letter to the school is known as a "deregistration letter". The school must also inform the Council.

However, a school **must never push parents to home educate** on the grounds that the child is "difficult" or that the school can't cope with them. This is sometimes known as "off-rolling".

3.12 (from DfE guidelines for LAs) 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 case of exclusion, they must follow the statutory guidance. If the pupil has a poor attendance record, the school and local authority must address the issues behind the absenteeism and use the other remedies available to them.

If you feel you are being pressured by the school in this way, and you don't want to home educate, please use the school's complaints procedures, or contact the Council's EHE team for help.







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Children & Adults, Loxley House LH Box 6, Station Street, Nottingham NG2 3NG

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