

Home Education Handbook



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Education is important

Most of a young child's learning and development happens at home. As they grow, most parents choose school but other parents home educate.

We respect this decision and want to support all parents.



This booklet is for parents:

- thinking about home education
- already educating at home

It answers some of the questions parents ask about home education.

The Welsh Government wants every child to have opportunities to learn, grow and develop.

Rights

In Wales we protect the rights of children and young people.

Their rights are set out in the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Article 28: Children have the right to an education.

Article 12: Children have the right to be involved in decisions that affect their lives.

Parents decide how education happens. When they choose, they should consider how their child feels and involve them.

About home education

What are my rights as a parent?

You have the right to choose the type of education you think is best for your child.

What is my responsibility as a parent?

The Education Act says parents of school-age children must make sure they get an efficient, full-time education. It has to be right for:

- their age, ability, aptitude
- any special needs they have

This can happen by attending school or otherwise.

Do I need permission to home educate?

No, only if your child goes to a special school. If they do, you need permission from the local authority first. The local authority will check how your child is doing each year until their statement ends.

Do I need to be a teacher to home educate?

No, and you don't need any specific qualifications.

What is home education (HE)?

Home education is when a parent decides to educate their child at home instead of sending them to school.

You are taking on responsibility for your child's education.

Do I need a classroom in my house?

No, you don't have to have a specific room or equipment.

Do I have to follow the same dates as a school calendar?

No, you can set your own calendar and timetable.





What do I need to think about?

Home educating your child is a big decision. Think about:

- Do you have the time it will take?
- How does your child feel about the idea?
- What support do you have?
- Can you find opportunities for social activities and groups?
- Can you find opportunities for physical exercise and other things?

If I decide to home educate, what should I do?

If your child is in school, **you must write to the head teacher.** Tell them you're taking responsibility for your child's education. Ask them to remove your child's name from the register. The head teacher will tell the local authority.

If you don't let them know, you can get prosecuted for non-attendance.

If your child isn't in school, you don't have to tell anyone. But we recommend telling the local authority.

Will my child miss the social part of school?

Home educated children often meet and socialise with other people of all ages. But you may have to create the opportunities.


There are home education groups and other local clubs and groups your child can join.

Will I get any funding?

Local authorities have no legal responsibility to fund home education. You take full responsibility for everything including books, materials, courses and exam fees.

Can my child go back to school if they want to?

Yes, contact the local authority. It isn't guaranteed they will get a place at the school they left or the school of your choice.



If I'm feeling pressured to home educate by a school, what should I do?

Schools should never pressure anyone to home educate. It's not acceptable.

If this happens, you should talk to the local authority. They should work with you to deal with any issues.

If you are having problems with a school, then talk to your local authority. They can look at Education Other Than at School (EOTAS) like a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU).

What to teach

Do I have to follow the National Curriculum?

No, but it is a useful reference. How your child learns is up to you.

What education should I provide?

Your teaching should help your child:

- gain knowledge
- make progress
- increase understanding
- develop skills
- help them think and learn for themselves

What does 'full time' education mean?

There is no legal definition of full time.

It can be difficult to run home educating to set times. Home education is often mixed into everyday life.

What does 'suitable' and 'efficient' education mean?

Suitable – it prepares children for life and helps them achieve their full potential.

Efficient – it works and achieves its goals.

How to educate

How do I educate?

There are different styles and approaches to education. Some people have a structured timetable and curriculum. Some let their child learn through experience. Some approach it like a journey of discovery following their child's interests.

Whatever you choose, you need to plan to make sure your child develops basic skills like language, literacy and numeracy.

What is seen as a good education?

A good education is:

- **broad** – with a wide range of knowledge, understanding and skills
- **balanced** – with enough time to learn a subject but not push out other parts of learning
- **relevant** – with learning that gives opportunities now and prepares them for adult life
- **evolving** – with activities that fit your child's abilities and aptitude

Can I hire a private tutor?

Yes, it's up to you how you educate your child. If you hire a tutor, we recommend you:

- interview them
- check references
- see their Enhanced DBS police check
- don't leave them alone with your child
- never use a bedroom as a place to study

What is flexi-schooling?

Flexi-schooling is when a child spends some days in school, and others educated at home. You can arrange this with a school, but the decision is up to the head teacher.

It isn't the same as home education because the child's name is still on the school register.



Exams and further education

What do I do about further education?

At 16, if your child wants to go on with full-time education they can:

- Return to a school with a sixth form. You need to contact the college or school as early as possible.
- Go to a College of Further Education. Get a prospectus from your local FE College to apply.
- Get a work based training or modern apprenticeship. Contact Careers Wales to find out about opportunities.

There are many other courses and qualifications available too.

There are links to courses at the end of this handbook.

Will my child be able to sit examinations?

Yes. But you will have to enter your child for examinations and pay the costs.

Before starting a course, think about your options:

- school or college might let your child take GCSEs and assess their coursework
- some examination boards offer GCSE qualifications with different syllabuses
- IGCSEs are the same level as GCSEs but without coursework



The local authority

What responsibility does my local authority have?

The Education Act 1996 means local authorities must know about children in their area.

Can the local authority check the suitability of my child's education?

Yes. Local authorities can ask you for details about your child's education. You don't have to give it to them, but without it, they can't decide if your child is getting a suitable education.

In order for a local authority to satisfy itself of the suitability of education provided, it is reasonable for the local authority to see and speak with the child. They should work with the individual circumstances of each family to decide when to see a child.

What happens if the local authority think I'm not providing a suitable education?

They will give you notice in writing and ask for information about the education your child is getting.

If they still have concerns, they can issue a School Attendance Order (SAO). A SAO means your child must become a registered full-time pupil at the school named on the Order.

You have time to accept the SAO or give the local authority more information and challenge the order.

What can I show the local authority about our home education?

Giving them details is simple. You can send:

- written work
- photographs
- art work or scrapbooks
- certificates
- a blog or diary
- digital media
- a link to a website you've created
- a written report



Thanks for reading this


We want to support home educated children as much as possible.

Please let us know what you think of this handbook by 21 October 2019. Send your answers to:

 WELLBEINGshare@gov.wales

Please put

The Home Education consultation – WG35754
in the subject line.

 The Home Education Guidance Consultation
Pupil Wellbeing Team
Support for Learners Division
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

You can read the full
handbook here:
[link...](#)



Is the handbook clear?

Yes No Don't know

Is this handbook useful?

Yes No Don't know

Although flexi-schooling is not home education, are we right to include it in this handbook?

Yes No Don't know

Is there anything else you think we should include?

Yes No Don't know

Is there anything else you want to tell us?