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FREEDOM**



Tips for writing a Home Education provision and resource report for the LA (England)

**(It is possible to use this as a guide for Wales,
however check the rest of our website for EHE
rules in Wales)**

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**Please DO NOT copy
and paste our
examples.**

**This document is
meant to be read in
conjunction with our
website.**

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WRITING A HOME ED PROVISION AND RESOURCE REPORT

Local Authorities have a duty to ensure children are not missing from education. Most will ask the parents for information about the Home Education. Some will claim a right to visit the home or see reams of evidence, however it is up to you how you respond. We suggest writing a report. Doing so gives you the chance to make sure you include all relevant info.

In an ideal situation if you are new to Home Education you would be given time to settle in, but some LAs want info immediately. You can use this guide, but your response will mostly be about your philosophy, the resources available and a little about what they are currently able to do. A follow up may be done in a few months to check on progress and how you have settled in.

Most LAs will make contact once a year to ask for an update, we consider anything more to be akin to monitoring (they're not allowed to monitor).

Your report will usually be in response to the EHE person, however they often have different titles. If in doubt ask the person if they are responsible for Home Education.

For more info on how to deal with the LA, please refer to educationalfreedom.org.uk

YOUR REPORT MUST DESCRIBE HOW THE EDUCATION IS SUITABLE TO AGE, ABILITY, APTITUDE AND SEN

AGE:

Whilst it is not required to follow the national curriculum, it would be prudent to be aware of what a child the same age is learning. Workbooks and websites usually follow the same content as the NC. But there are other resources you could look at to reference how the education suits their age.

ABILITY:

Describing why the education is suitable to the child's ability is important, for example if your child is learning at an age level above or below their age the EHE could be concerned, therefore a simple explanation as to why it is suitable is advised.

APTITUDE:

If your child has a natural talent for something then it is good to explain it, but the same can be said for topics they have to work harder at or be more supported with.

SEN:

It is important to adequately describe how the education meets their SEN. Describe how you ensure their needs are met and what support you have in place.

SUGGESTED CONTENT

1. Your philosophy.
2. Style you follow and how the education is full time.
3. What your child has been learning. How numeracy and literacy are covered, plus other subjects (informal and formal learning) - Discuss how the education is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and SEN.
4. SEN provision
5. Other informal learning/hands on activities.
6. How you follow up on their learning to ensure they've achieved what you set out to.
7. Progress made in the last year (this can be included in other sections of your report or as a separate section).
8. Other activities, social, sport etc.
9. Resources your child uses
10. Disclaimer

Your report does not need to be any longer than two or three pages, it can be written in bullet points or paragraphs. And does not have to be in this order.

Do not overthink your report, the main focus should be on ensuring you have adequately described a suitable education.

A lengthy report doesn't always mean you have included adequate info, so do refer to this guide to ensure you have included everything.

1) YOUR EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

This only needs to be a couple of lines.

Describe why you think Home Education is right for your child. Doing so will help the LA understand your approach. Keep it positive and not negative about school.

Explain what you hope your child will achieve from being Home Educated. Such as ability to learn independently, improved social abilities, or academic achievements.

An educational philosophy explains your beliefs around Home Education, and should be respected by the LA when considering the suitability of your provision.

An educational philosophy alone is not adequate information, you need to continue on with a provision and resource report.

The term educational philosophy is sometimes mistaken to mean a report.

2) YOUR HOME ED STYLE and HOW THE EDUCATION IS FULL TIME

STYLE

Provide details of your style of Home Education. This could be one or a mix of: unschooling, child led, autonomous, semi structured or fully structured etc.

Explain what this means for your family (as it will be different for everyone). You will find explanations and descriptions of different styles of Home Ed on our website.

Explain why this style and why it is right for the child/family. This is a good opportunity to mention any SEN.

This only needs to be a line or two of info.

FULL-TIME

Make a reference to how the education is full time, this doesn't have to be school hours or terms.

Use examples such as doing formal work in a morning and child led topics in an afternoon, or that your child takes part in a range of educational activities throughout the week whilst usually spending the mornings researching topics (use your own suitable example).

You could say that you follow school term times, or that learning is all year round.

The LA may ask for a timetable, you do not have to have one, but a description of how the education is full time is necessary.

SETTLING IN - DESCHOOLING

If you are taking time to settle in do not use the term deschooling with the LA. They misunderstand it to mean no suitable education.

Further explanation of deschooling can be found on the website.

Whilst EDUCATION MUST HAPPEN FROM DAY ONE and you are expected to be providing a suitable education from day one, that doesn't have to be formal learning if that doesn't suit your child right now. You can discuss how focus has needed to be on mental health, life skills etc. But you do need to demonstrate throughout the rest of the report how the provision is right for your child.

3) WHAT YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN LEARNING, HOW NUMERACY AND LITERACY ARE COVERED AND OTHER SUBJECTS (formal and informal learning)

INCLUDE HOW THE EDUCATION IS SUITABLE TO THE CHILD'S AGE AND ABILITY AND APTITUDE AND SEN

Detail which websites, workbooks and worksheets, hands on, games, discussions etc they use and how they use them (ie supervised or independent).

Include the topics currently and previously learned as well as what level they are learning at. Use this opportunity to explain why this is suitable for your child.

It is vital that in this section you include plenty of detail and examples about what your child is and has learned in literacy and numeracy. But also reference science and other subjects such as history or art for example. Give examples such as pythagorus from CGP KS2 workbook, or area and perimeter from hands on tasks, NEVER give samples such as a photo of the workbook or child doing an activity.

By including specifics about topics and skills it helps the LA understand the level the child is working at and will then see progress over the coming years. Not everyone follows the Key Stages so using them as references is not expected.

HOW TO EXPLAIN UNSTRUCTURED LEARNING

If you have no formal learning in your Home Education it is vital that you explain how what the child does is educational and how you ensure numeracy and literacy skills are incorporated, plus other subjects.

Include lots of specific examples such as what discussions, TV programmes, outings, websites, games etc they have taken part in.

Ensure you describe how all learning is suitable to their age and ability and aptitude and SEN, and how you are able to know that your child is progressing. Your description needs to be adequate to describe a full time education.

Whilst not a requirement, you could look at an online outline of learning goals for their age group and write down the things your child has done that compares to that list. Many people find their child has naturally followed the curriculum by accident.

4) SEN

Home Educators are expected to address how they meet the child's needs in the report for the EHE team.

These are sometimes detailed in an EHCP, but you are not obliged to meet school related needs.

An EHCP review should be carried out once you start Home Ed and annually after that. EHE and EHCP teams may ask to do updates together, you can choose to keep them separate, we advise this to avoid staff confusing their roles.

EXAMPLES

'X is autistic and thrives on routine so we have ensured the Home Education has a predictable routine, we are encouraging them to explore small changes once a day.'

'X is dyslexic, we have found x website and x workbooks help support the learning style that best works for them.'

You can use the EHCP if you have one as a guide but the school needs detailed could well be different at home.

5) OTHER INFORMAL LEARNING/HANDS ON ACTIVITIES.

Home Education isn't just formal learning, even the most structured of Home Educators will learn through other methods too.

A 100% formal structured education with no input from the child is most likely to be deemed unsuitable as most children need some flexibility. Ensure you give some examples of flexibility and fun.

DESCRIBE THE FUN STUFF

Describe other educational and learning activities your child does and how they add to the educational provision/skills they learn. Examples include baking, DIY, building Lego, gardening, board games, Brownies, Forrest school etc, use a few of your own examples.

6) HOW YOU FOLLOW UP

Explain how you know the learning is suitable, and how you know they are progressing.

EXAMPLE

You have discussions about the learning and you ensure your child has understood the content,

Or

You do an end of topic quiz, marking, conversation etc.

7) PROGRESS

NEW TO HOME ED:

If you are writing a report after only just deregistering you will not be expected to explain what progress has been made, but it would be prudent to explain how you will know if your child is progressing.

PROGRESS

If the LA allow you time to settle in before requesting information (or this is annual update) you will be expected to be able to describe what kind of progress your child has made, why you're happy with progress and how you establish progress is being made.

Include details of progression, such as:

'since last year's report, X has progressed through X and is now working on Y, '

or

'last year X was able to do x if I did y, they are now able to do this independently and has recently figured out how to x.'

Make sure you refer to progress made in other subjects including numeracy and literacy.

8) EVERYTHING ELSE

Include whatever else you do, and how that ensures a suitable education.

Remember learning doesn't just consist of formal learning or 'lessons', baking, playing with Lego, watching a documentary, going to the beach, discussions, outings, workshops etc all matter. Make sure to explain how your child learns from them.

Not everyone does formal learning, but you do need to demonstrate a suitable education. This can be done through a description of what your child has been learning.

Such as 'having played minecraft xx asked how you can quickly work out how many blocks to use, so we discussed basic multiplication, followed by x doubling a baking recipe, we followed that up with discussion on proportion and dividing.'

SOCIAL & PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

Explain how your child socialises, takes part in sports or other physical activities.

For example 'x goes to a weekly Home Education group where they mix with children and adults of all ages' or 'x has a couple of close friends who he regularly spends time with, playing games or riding bikes.'

If your child is unable to socialise due to anxiety for example, explain this in a positive way 'Due to X's anxiety they are unable to attend groups, but they regularly speak with our neighbour and see their cousins weekly.'

ITS OK TO NOT WANT LOTS OF FRIENDS Remember not all children need or want to go to groups or have lots of friends. You shouldn't say anything negative here, but it is ok to say something like 'x has been working hard on their social skills and has recently been able to play alongside other children in the park'. Or whatever is right for your child.

PROTECT EVERYONE'S PRIVACY Do not give details of specific friends or groups.

9) RESOURCES

You can include resources in the body of the report or write it as a list (or a mix of the two). Include what the child currently uses and has used since your last report:

Book titles (fiction/non fiction)

Workbooks (incl. age or key stage info)

Internet (list which learning sites and fun)

Library (mention how often, what they do there etc)

Art supplies (give one or more examples of what they've made etc)

Musical instruments (lessons, or self taught)

Science equipment (give examples)

Sporting equipment (give examples) etc.

MAKE SURE TO INCLUDE SPECIFICS Give examples, ie to describe resources suitable to their age 'x has been reading the Biff and Chip level 3 books, 'X uses a KS3 numeracy workbook recently covering trigonometry' , 'x does science experiments with a chemistry kit, recently using it to create a volcano' , 'x has been exploring the night sky with his telescope' etc. You could include workshops, groups, outings etc here or elsewhere in the report.

10) DISCLAIMER

Always include this at the end of your report:

The above is not an exhaustive list and is subject to change at any time as the child's needs change. We expect this is adequate information to satisfy your informal enquiry, please confirm receipt.

WHAT NOT TO INCLUDE AND OTHER PITFALLS

REFERENCES TO SCHOOL

Do not refer to school other than 'when X left school he could do x and now can do y.' Anything else about school is irrelevant. How the education is suitable to now is the important part.

PEOPLE

Do not give specific details of clubs or people, tutor names etc as some LAs actually will, and do turn up, or contact places/people.

TERMINOLOGY

No need to use school terminology or refer to curriculum or school assessments, such as SATS or EYFS.

Try not to use words like timetable, plan, or lessons. Instead refer to your routine, your day, learning time. And never mention deschooling.

Always use the term home education and never use home schooling, as these are very different things.

YOUR OWN QUALIFICATIONS

Do not mention your own qualifications, or experience. For example some LAs will expect former teachers to be creating school at home and have issues if you don't, some will claim your educational experience is causing you not to be flexible enough etc, so don't mention it.

TEMPORARY HOME ED AND FUTURE SCHOOL PLANS

Do not say you are temporarily Home Educating, or considering school in the future as you could change your mind and the LA could see this is a failure. They could also force school on you quicker than you are ready.

HOURS

Don't mention the number of hours or days, but do make a reference to how it is full time. Most Home Educators don't have set hours and learning often takes place during most waking hours, whilst eating breakfast, in the bath, in the car etc.

FUTURE PLANS

Do not mention future plans unless they're definitely happening, if you fail to do something they could claim you're failing your child.

SHARING YOUR CONCERNS OR PERSONAL INFORMATION

Despite LA claims of offering support we are afraid to say this is very rare and often damaging.

We advise against sharing your concerns with the EHE team, instead reach out to us or other Home Educators via our Facebook group or website.

If you are going through a divorce or your beloved family dog has just died, if you are having a home ed wobble etc, we know for some people it is normal to want to share these elements of their life, but please don't include them in your report, unfortunately they could be used against you if you're in an unscrupulous LA area.

SAMPLES OF WORK

Always include examples such as 'x is using BBC bitesize to learn about circumference.' Never give samples such as photos, completed work, or worse still sharing login details. Nowhere in law are you required to show samples, your written report should be adequate. Providing samples is setting a precedent, one that is used against other families, especially those who do not create 'work'.

KEEP COMMUNICATION IN WRITING

We really wish every Local Authority behaved the same, and within the law and guidance. But they don't! Keeping things in writing protects you.

INCONSISTENCIES WITHIN LAs AND GETTING ADVICE FROM HOME EDUCATORS

It is common for different people within the same LA to be treated differently. So please do not compare reports with other families, this guide really is your best bet at ensuring you include what is necessary.

LA LEGAL DUTY

The LA has a legal duty to ensure children are not missing education, they do that by asking for information about the Home Education. The EHE guidance gives little detail about how this communication should happen, except that LAs should create positive relationships, and if no concerns are known communication should be brief. These initial enquiries shouldn't be demanding but they usually are. If concerns become known, the EHE guidance..... CONTINUED

CONTINUED... says LAs can ask to meet you and the child, see work, etc but if a parent chooses to provide info in another way it should not be disregarded. At the initial enquiries stage we believe a simple (no more than 3 typed A4 pages) provision and resource report is adequate to satisfy them. Anything more validates their ultra vires (beyond their legal power) request and will bolster their harassment of you and other families. If the LA have questions after receiving your report they will write to you and explain their concerns, at which point you can check our website and EHE guidance to ensure their request is within their remit. And of course contact us if you need support.

Any work your child has done is their property, and you can say as such if the LA push.

A refusal to accept a report is akin to calling you a liar. In fact providing copies of work or photos of your child proves nothing, they could be photoshopped, or taken from the internet, real photos would only show a tiny proportion of what your child is doing and will likely lead to the LA demanding more evidence. A line often used is 'Most families have a visit' or 'but x let's us see everything the child has done'. These are usually lies, but all it takes is one person to give a little and the LA will take a mile with everyone. Never believe the 'nice' LA person, always read our website and EHE guidance to check their communication is inline with the law.

SAMPLE REPORT

Home Educational update of provision and resources for Lorelai aged 12.

Our educational philosophy.

We believe Home Education allows Lorelai the opportunity to go completely nuts, it is best suited to them because of the freedom to bang their own drum along with suitable guidance when required.

Our style of Home Education.

We follow a mostly clown style, which means Lorelai can take charge of her clown car, whilst also being guided by the elephants to ensure core learning takes place and ensuring she can blow up balloons without them going pop! This suits Lorelai at present as they enjoy the freedom and challenges.

A full-time education.

Lorelai is at circus camp every morning and in the afternoons practices at home or with friends. They are also interested in JCB driving, so will spend many an hour digging up the back garden and uncovering interesting things that they then spend time researching or asking about.

What they have been learning.

Literacy: Clown.com online and Circus workbooks for level 3. She has recently covered the topics in tightrope walking, juggling and clown expressions.

These are then supported with in person clown workshops.

Lorelai will choose to read manuals on how to erect a circus tent and has been reading up on becoming a lion tamer, she has chosen these herself.

Maths: Lorelai has been working on juggling 4 balls, which is amazing progress from being able to do 2 last year.

She has learned how to calculate how many clowns will fit in a car at level 4 as well as making good progress through the workbooks for circus maths level 4

Maths is incorporated into her normal daily life with experiences such as custard pie making, having to calculate the ingredient proportions for the perfect consistency to cause the biggest splat!

Other subjects

Lorelai uses the internet for research on the items they find whilst digging, as well as many family and friends who they phone/visit to ask questions.

Lorelai has access to and regularly uses mud for painting, a tool kit for exploring how the JCB engine works, juggling balls, fire sticks and wigs.

Age, ability, aptitude and SEN

Lorelai has an aptitude and natural ability with counting clowns and therefore is learning at a level advanced for her age.

Learning to paint with mud has not been so easy, with lots of support she is now able to work at a level suitable to her ability and SEN. Being a non clown means she has to work harder to achieve the same as her peers, but she is well supported and determined to succeed.

How we ensure progress and the learning is suitable.

As mentioned, Lorelai is progressing well, we are able to see their progress as they improve their skills and move onto harder levels. A year ago she could not juggle without support, and has moved on from walking the tightrope a foot from the floor to being up high. Lorelai is confident in Literacy and maths, but is given extra support with mud work.

Social

As a family we attend regular circus outings with other families where Lorelai will engage with children and adults. She has many friends who she sees a few times a week sometimes as part of the clown sessions, and also to go skydiving or causing riots together. She engages confidently with those she knows and with our support is starting to be able to laugh with people she has not met before.

The above is not an exhaustive list and is subject to change at any time as their needs change. We expect this is adequate information to satisfy your informal enquiry, please confirm receipt.

Read our website

IT IS VITAL YOU PROTECT YOUR
RIGHT TO HOME EDUCATE BY
KNOWING WHAT YOU MUST DO AS
A HOME EDUCATOR AND WHAT THE
LA CAN DO

Our site includes:
how to deregister
where to start
what to expect from the LA
styles of Home Education
template letters and reports
blogs
resources
groups
and much more

WEBSITE

www.educationfreedom.org.uk