

---

# Home Education

Official Newsletter From Educational Freedom

April 2024

Building relationships between LAs and Home Educators.

---



## Leading the way

Educational Freedom are an established home education support and information service. We never charge home educators, nor hide our services behind a paywall.

We have an excellent track record for giving accurate information and advice, and those who use our template letters and report writing guide have positive outcomes.

We are great advocates of educating and helping yourself, we encourage home educators to understand the legalities and their duty, as well as all of the ins and outs of home education.

## GHEX - Global Home Education Conference

We previously wrote to you to tell you all about this years global conference, it will be held in Manchester on the 11th-13th July, many of you responded showing an interest.

This is a really significant landmark event for the UK, coming at a time when home education is under constant threat of increased government interference. This event aims to attract home

educating families from around the globe, as well as researchers and leaders, and of course Local Authority staff.

It is an amazing opportunity for Local Authorities to come and meet support organisations, to talk to home educators from a wide area, and to learn about different ways that home education works. With the theme of the event being 'home education works' we think it will be an interesting and exciting event.

We are privileged to have access to a unique discount for 10% off entry costs, which if booked alongside the early bird registration (before 26th April) it will be a substantial saving.

Register [HERE](#) using our discount code: EDUFREE

We are not the organisers of the event, so please direct any questions to GHEX.

## **DOORSTEPPING, WHY IS IT STILL COMMON PRACTICE?**

Imagine you're in the midst of enjoying quality time with your children, perhaps playing with play-doh or demonstrating how to crack eggs into a cake batter. Maybe you're just about to head out, or the teenagers are finally seeking your company without bickering. Suddenly, there's a knock at the door. You open it to find someone without any form of identification, launching into a tirade about how you're legally obligated to answer their questions or face legal action. While not every unexpected LA visitor is confrontational, many can be, and even those who politely explain their purpose are still encroaching on precious family time.

Showing up unannounced is incredibly intrusive and unprofessional. Even if you believe you're being helpful, the reality is quite the opposite. You possess the family's address, therefore a more respectful way to reach out would be through written correspondence.

Consider how your sudden appearance is perceived. To many, you represent authority, and even if you politely request entry or information, most families feel compelled to comply, fearing potential repercussions if they refuse. Many do not wish to invite you in but do so reluctantly. This creates a negative relationship from the get go. Those who muster the courage to decline answering questions at the doorstep or refuse entry often do so out of concern for consequences. However, many are fortunate to be connected with support services like ours, providing a safety net in case of any adverse outcomes.

Is this really the image you wish to create? An overbearing, intrusive and untrustworthy LA? Families that have been doorstepped tell us they are less likely to choose to communicate with their LA, even if they are struggling.

Please reconsider whether doorstepping should play a part in your process.

Similarly, unannounced phone calls put people on the spot, especially when information for a full years learning is demanded in that call, these calls often result in the education being deemed unsuitable as the family hadn't had adequate chance to collate the information.

## WHAT WENT WELL THIS MONTH?

We really wanted to write a comprehensive section here, all about what LAs did well this month, stories of an EHE person doing something to help a family, or an LA that provides useful information, unfortunately there were very few examples given when we asked our social media following.

A common theme amongst the responses was that their LA accepted their provision and resource report without being over demanding, or their LA were honest in their communications.

We find it really worrisome that the majority of the positives were that the LA is being honest.

ID 46: recently circulated the school nursing team introduction letter with contact details and information about drop in clinics to known home educators.

ID 52: send a regular newsletter with library events and other useful info.

ID 195: send a regular newsletter, the tone is friendly and supportive, it shares positive stories and signposts to lots of useful resources.

ID 188: have recently added a note to their forms that the form is just one way information can be provided and that a provision report is another option.

ID 38: off the back of our previous newsletters this LA have reached out for support in rewording their documentation and website, they have a positive attitude towards improving their language and therefore their service.

ID 138: within one day of deregistration the EHCP team made contact with the family to put in place a personal budget for Special Educational Provision not discharged under s42(5). This was swift and exceptionally good practice.

## LAs RESPONDING IN A TIMELY MANNER

'You must respond within x days'

'We expect your response by x date'

Both common themes in informal enquiry letters and emails, expecting the home educator to respond swiftly. However a growing number of LAs do not respond within a similar timeframe, shockingly a large number of LAs do not respond at all, not even acknowledging the reply from the family.

We understand the need to provide timescales, but common courtesy would be to reply within a similar timescale.

This growing trend is extremely unprofessional, no response leaves the family in limbo, constantly worried whether their reply was received or deemed acceptable. This last month alone we have seen families receive communication from reports sent in November last year and many from January and February this year.

A simple acknowledgment of the correspondence and an apology that there will be a delay in replying should surely be common practice if you are unable to reply at length.

## A QUESTION FOR YOU

**What would you like to see us cover in these newsletters?**

**email us [support@educationalfreedom.org.uk](mailto:support@educationalfreedom.org.uk)**

**[www.educationalfreedom.org.uk](http://www.educationalfreedom.org.uk)**

**Educational Freedom**

Whilst we have to give you the option to unsubscribe, we really hope that you don't. We promise not to spam you, instead we will keep you updated on any trends or important information we think you should know about.

[Unsubscribe](#)

