



## **Home education – how to do it?**

There is not a set way to home educate but you may want to think about some of the following to help you home educate. You might need to try things and see if they work for you, your child and your household and change things until you find the method that works best for you.

We recognise that effective education can vary greatly, especially in the support material used by families. Therefore, any advice and support will be based on what has worked well for other family's home educating in Camden.

### **Where?**

Have you got a space where you and your child can work and sit comfortably? This could be the kitchen table, or a space where you can put a desk.

Have you got some space to store books and resources so they can be put away at the end of the day and stored safely?

Have you got access to the internet, have you got enough data on any phone and internet plans? Does your WIFI work in the area where your child will study. If you don't have the internet at home you can also use WIFI in libraries, cafes and some public buildings but remember this may not be the most secure. You do not have to have a computer, it might make life easier, but you can use phones, tablets and even public computers in libraries.

### **Structured or informal education?**

You may decide to provide education in a formal and structured manner following a traditional curriculum and using a fixed timetable that keeps to school hours and terms. There are various curriculums you can buy via the internet and via online website which may require you join a class at a certain time.

Alternatively, you may decide to make your provision more informal depending on the developing interests of your child. One approach is not necessarily any more efficient or effective than the other.

However, it is worth thinking about what times study will take place at and try and have a regular start and finish time for certain activities. Some subjects your child might find easier or more difficult at certain times of the day. You can try doing them at different times of the day to see when it is the best time. It might be not possible to work at home in the same way a child would do at school, but even at school there are breaks and children move around between subjects, areas of the classroom and the school building at different times of the day. Some families prefer an element of structure with for example, formal work in the morning and more flexibility in the afternoons. There should also be opportunities for regular physical exercise

In order to best support the learning of a young person it is a good idea to have a

happy medium between an overly structured approach (which may put the young person off learning ) and a totally hands off approach, which if too chaotic and not effective can lead to very little learning taking place. There may be a tiny percentage of mature students that can totally lead their own education, but most young people need to enjoy their work and for it to be structured and corrected at regular intervals. Without this stimulus they may lose focus.

You may also want to think about are children out of bed, dressed and ready for learning. It can be easy to slip into patterns of going to bed later and getting up later in the morning, and then not really doing anything to later in the day.

Background distractions, is music allowed and if so what type of music? Your child might be able to work to the beat of heavy metal music, but you might not or vice versa. Should the TV be on in the background, can they access social media whilst they are studying or just at certain times of the day or after completing a certain piece of work. Who else is at home during the day who might need to use the computer equipment, the internet or cook if you are using the kitchen as your classroom?

It is good to be negotiate these rules at the beginning and review and adapt them as necessary so everyone in the house is clear what is expected.

## **Record keeping**

Parents often find that the level of questions and content of a child's conversation demonstrates their level of understanding and if they are making progress. Other parents prefer to have a systematic way, through tests or other means of knowing their child is making progress at a pace appropriate to his/her ability. You may find it useful to look at the National Curriculum Guidelines and our example minimum expectations to give you some idea of what your child is expected to be able to do at different stages or to guide you when planning the next steps in learning. Not every child will be at these levels some will be in advance, some at the level expected, some are working towards the levels. Our home education advisor can also discuss this with you and make suggestions on how to support your child education.

It is desirable to record what has been learnt in order to make informed decisions about future areas of study and to be able to map progress.

However, you choose to structure your child's learning and time, it is helpful to keep some records of their progress.

Records can take any form:

- Reports and diaries
- Examples of work (it is helpful if these are dated)
- Photographs, drawings, recordings etc.
- Plans and programmes of work
- Evidence of achievements and progress made

All work would be dated within the last 12 months with correction where necessary. Any workbooks or textbooks can be placed alongside.

A reading record is excellent practice, but production of recent texts read by the pupil will suffice, especially if supported in a general discussion on likes and dislikes

regarding reading matter. Reading material does not always have to include fiction, as there are many who read illustrated reference/interest books containing much in the way of sophisticated vocabulary.

### **Learning styles**

As a home educator you can choose the best aspects of any learning approach to create a curriculum that meets the needs of your child and family. There are different ways in which people learn and three styles are commonly identified:

Visual – to see things written down, through diagrams or pictures;

Auditory – through hearing and listening to words, rhythm and music;

Kinaesthetic – being physically involved by music, touch or practical experimentation.

### **Methods of teaching can also vary:**

A direct approach, working alongside your child, teaching by instruction;

Coaching whereby you demonstrate and give advice on possible methods of completing a given task;

Autonomous learning or [deschooling](#) where once the task is set the child works with support where needed.

Or you may prefer to combine the various approaches depending on the subject. Whatever style they use, it is always important to recognise the need to emphasise the continual development of skills in literacy and numeracy. See our minimal expectations guides.

A good curriculum also includes opportunities to develop social skills. Often, the local community offers activities, courses, workshops, clubs and societies etc that may be of interest.

<https://www.progressiveeducation.org/20-things-i-learned-about-homeschooling/>

### **What Constitutes Good Practice?**

Children normally attend school for between 22 – 25 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year. However, 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” Camden suggests the equivalent of at least three hours of teaching time a day, for 200 days per year is ample time for providing a suitable education using formal means.

Commonsense dictates that young people need to be educated to enter the environment in which they will be living when they grow up.

Other features of suggested successful practice are:

- Regular planning of a variety of activities and tasks appropriate to the age, ability and aptitudes of the child
- Facilitating learning, can include teaching, listening, helping, asking questions, and encouraging progress as well as setting work
- Regular marking, correcting mistakes, giving feedback on how work can be improved, celebrating achievements, keeping a record of progress for example ticking the indexes at the back of the textbooks

Experience has shown that as the children get older and they may move to more formal qualifications and learning then the planning may have to become more structured, although this should not lessen the learning experience and the involvement of the parent. If you are thinking of taking formal exams, please contact us to talk about accessing our exam centre for home educated pupils.

As a parent you do not have to be a subject specialist in order to facilitate your child's learning in a particular area. There are many publishers, providing textbooks and workbooks following both the National Curriculum and other subjects– especially in the three Core subjects – English, science and mathematics. These provide continuity and the step by step progression.

One of the advantages of Home Education is that families can move their children along the curriculum at a pace to individually suit the child. They can forge ahead on subjects where they have strengths and consolidate with parallel material in areas that present difficulties.

### **Workbooks, textbooks, revision and study guides**

There are a variety of workbooks available from book shops and available to order online.

They can be a very effective means of delivering subjects.

- Parents and tutors often use them to bolster the exam results of pupils in mainstream schools.
- They are very clearly targeted to age groups
- They can help to ensure that the child receives a comprehensive foundation in the subject

As children get older it can be more difficult, especially in subjects such as mathematics, for parents to get on top of actually facilitating learning in a particular subject. Workbooks in and of themselves can provide valuable practice the use of a good textbook or class book can be helpful in explaining the subject.

In order to find a good textbook, it may be helpful to look at the publisher's website for a work book the parent or child particularly likes. Ask other home educators what books and resources they have found useful. It may be possible to swap resources and skills with other home educators locally.

Experience has shown that using the index of these publications effectively is a good way of planning. For instance, some workbooks or study guides, especially in subjects such as mathematics, organize the work in chapters. Within each chapter the work can be organised in degree of difficulty – easiest first.

Therefore, for instance, a student can be ploughing through the first chapter – perhaps a number of them – and getting slower and slower as the work gets progressively more difficult. If the first one or two sections from each chapter were approached in turn before returning to the first chapter then the work would be uniformly progressive, more interesting, and, most importantly of all the student is more likely to meet with greater success. Remember for example a KS3 workbook covers three years of study, Years 7, 8 & 9 –plenty of time to develop skills and experiences.

### **As they get older.**

Experience has shown that when the young person gets towards Year 10 (15 years or older), families need to think to the future.

There is a growing tendency to wish for entry into formal education at either Sixth Form Level or Post 16 Colleges.

In Camden entry for “A” level Courses without GCSE Grades seems difficult. Entry for an NVQ may be slightly easier.

Experience has shown that obtaining a prospectus two years before entry (when the child is 14 years old) is good practice, as knowing what is required for entry at this point means the parent and the child can plan effectively.

Before applying for a place in a sixth form or post 16 college we recommend that the parent writes to the Principal or Head of Faculty to ask what about admissions requirements. This is because there could be minimum qualification requirements. The Home Education Advisor may be able to provide a reference for the child which may assist with their enrolment.

There are several private colleges that offer tuition and or exam only facilities (GCSE) for Home Educators. There is a cost for exams. Parents can search for these online using a key word search such as “colleges” and “private candidates”. Camden has an exam centre where home education pupils can sit exams. Parents are responsible for any costs of exams including any late fees. If you are considering sitting an exam please email [ehe@camden.gov.uk](mailto:ehe@camden.gov.uk) with the name of the course, the exam board and also when you would like to sit the exam. We will contact the exam centre to see if it is possible for them to allow the pupil to do this exam at their centre. Some courses may not be available, or there be additional costs for invigilation. We recommend that you speak with us at least a year before any exam to avoid late fees that can be costly. If we are unable to offer the exam centre within Camden we can advise if it is possible to do this exam at another venue.

There are Correspondence or Tutorial organisations that offer complete packages of courses leading to the sitting of GCSE's. These have a high success rate – but can be expensive. Parents can search for these online using a key word search such as “correspondence courses” and “tutorial colleges”.

### Reading for younger children

Some of you are lucky enough to have a wealth of books at home. Picture books are brilliant for this younger age group. They use repetition and rhyme that enables the child to pick up the flow and structure of story. The characters are often animals, mystical creatures or cartoons they relate to - so:

- Read together and act out the story – use props you have at home, dress up! This enables the children to recognise familiar stories, sequencing and retelling.
- Performance poetry – use different tones in your voice – loud, soft – surprising, gently use hand actions and facial expression – they love this!
- If you have puppets at home, use them as characters
- Phonics work - it is only a part of learning how to read. CBBC have a schedule running on TV, which is good. You could also try Mr Thorne & Geraldine Giraffe on YouTube for phonics
- Singing songs and rhymes – so important! Make up actions to songs – head shoulders knees and toes, knees and toes – remember that!! Listen to music and make up some songs to sing!

For older readers have a look at Twinkl who had brilliant book suggestions and The Reading Agency or ask at your local library.

Make time for reading during the day and in the evening. You can also use audio books via Camden library online provision.

Encourage reading for pleasure.

Compare the book to the film or tv programme, what was good about the adaptation, what was different, the script writer change roles, leave characters out or even change the ending or even all the story. Some books have been made in films many times which version is the best?

Read other books by authors you like and compare them.

Swap from fiction to non-fiction

Reading strategies and how to develop critical reading skills

<http://academic.shu.edu/english/1201/Reading/critical-reading-strategies.htm>

Is it fact or is it fiction? BBC bitesize has some advice and tips on how to spot what is fake news / facts, what are reliable sources to research information.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/tags/zr2yscw/fact-or-fake/1>

Visit your local library, book shops as they may activities for children.

<https://theconversation.com/five-ways-to-help-your-child-develop-a-love-for-reading-150669>

#### WRITING:

- Reading underpins everything! It is important that children are read too. Let them retell the stories in their own words – don't over correct them, use probing questions to prompt them and get them back on track if they miss out a chunk!! Why did the Billy Goat Gruff cross the bridge? I wonder how he felt when he was walking across the bridge. Can you tell me how you think he might have felt? Shall we both think about it, let's go back a step, what did his brother say? Shall we take another look? – building characters!
- Modelling stories, they dictate you write enables the child to visualise the story, sequence and develop characters. You can also make some suggestions to add adjectives, e.g. the, big, scary wolf etc. Use adjectives to describe the noun.
- Acting out and retelling familiar stories is imperative for children to become confident writers. Young children have brilliant imaginations! Use storyboards to help sequencing the story. Check out Twinkl that has various writing frames / templates you can use. Use the boxes for them to draw a picture and write a short sentence if they can, if not model.
- Children must have the opportunity to access good quality writing examples.
- Use Newspapers (Pressreader), leaflets, extracts from stories, real books, auditory books, pictures and photos to stimulate their imagination, short clips from films, PowerPoints and class readers.
- Talk for writing is imperative – if they can't say it, they can't write it!
- Hot seating, drama activities, read aloud their stories, discuss plans and ideas.
- Planning story mind maps, story boards!

Some extracts about how to improve children's writing.

#### READING FOR WRITING:

- Read together a range of fiction and non-fiction books, Reading underpins everything!
- Allow your child to retell the story to you. Discuss the characters, how do you think they felt under certain circumstances – anxious, disappointed, happy, excited – use a range of adjectives for this to build on their vocabulary.

- Make predictions with new stories – what do you think might happen next? How did you come up with that - it's brilliant! I love your version; how could we write this and change it? Encourage the child if they are reluctant by offering your views, they will take them on then let them take over.
- Act out stories, dress up, use puppets if you have them, perform –it is fun for children and adults!! Do some hot seating. One of you sit on a chair and they pretend to be a character in the book you have just read. Ask them questions and let the child answer. Swap over and let them ask you questions. It's a fun role play activity.
- Talk for writing is imperative – if they can't talk about it, how do you expect them to write about it? Retell stories in their own words. Acting out and hot seating are all good to help plan the story. Use story boards for sequencing events, draw pictures and write sentences, depending on ability. Model writing, you listen then write what they say. Templates and ideas are attached.
- Create some character profiles – print off a picture, place it in the middle of a blank page. In the surrounding area, write what they look like: long, dark brown hair, brown eyes, a beautiful smile, etc. encourage description and use of adjectives. Use speech bubbles to see what they have to say, introduction to direct speech! Let them draw the character and repeat as above. You know our child, differentiate accordingly.

#### Different Writing Genres for all ages

- Write up a set of instructions – How to Make a sandwich.
- Write a non-chronological report on a topic of their choice.
- Poetry – make up poems and act them out in a performance poetry performance – use different tones, loud, soft, excited etc. use facial and hand gestures!
- Diary entries – My Lockdown Days! Take photos, place them in a book with some simple sentences about their day. Today we made cupcakes. They were delicious – I ate three! My favorite was ....!
- Write up a science experiment
- Write a letter / email to their grandparents, family members or friends.
- Write a script for a tv or radio play based on a book or a news story

#### Maths

- Government Site: Oak Academy and Whiterose EYFS for mathematics videos and workshops.
- Mathematics in the environment – when walking what shapes can you see? Look at the roof tops, brick work, paving stones, and railings, count them, look at the size, shape and patterns. Gather items from the house, cereal packets, crisp tubes, kitchen roll tubes etc., sort the shapes – then use them for a DT project!!



- Use buttons, anything concrete so they can see how many spoons, buttons, cups etc. they can count. Use this for addition and subtraction. Make some number lines, just cut up a strip of card or paper and write 0 -10 on.
- Learn to count in a foreign language.
- Use a revision guide or work or textbook with the answers in the back.

## **Remember**

Elective Home education does not mean you have to recreate a school in your house. You might need to try various methods to discover what works for you and for your child. You may need to adapt things over time. There is lots of advice and guidance available via the LA and via elective home education organisations and forums. If you need help don't be afraid to reach out and ask for some support.

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April 2021