

Elective Home Education
Coventry City Council
Guidance for Schools January 2026



Introduction

All children have the right to an education. It is a legal requirement that a child receives **a suitable, full time, efficient education**. How that education is delivered is the decision of the parent/carer with parental responsibility. This can be done by placing a child in a school, or otherwise e.g. home education.

This guidance outlines what schools should do should parents decide to home educate using a question/answer format based on the most common scenarios we have seen in the city of Coventry.

A parent has said that they are going to remove the child from roll to home educate? What do I do first?

Firstly, try to talk to the parent. This is not a legal requirement and some parents may reject this. Establish what has prompted this thinking and whether there is something that school and parents can work on together to keep the child in school if this is what is wanted by parents.

This may not always be the case as some families will choose to home educate to fit their lifestyle or educational philosophy.

When talking to the parent, try to establish that they have a firm understanding of what home education entails (see [website](#) for details).

Prosecutions for non attendance can still go ahead even if the child comes off roll. Exclusions will also remain on the child's record. Opting to home educate whilst waiting for a place at another school may appear to be a short term solution but parents need to understand that if they do not live in catchment or have siblings on roll in the school they wish to attend, they potentially face a slim chance of succeeding in getting a place—particularly where schools are oversubscribed and have a high number of applicants. Only where places are available will they be able to go straight into a school. Irrespective of this, **if removed for home education a suitable, full time, efficient education MUST be being delivered. EHE can not be used as a holding space until a place is secured and no or an unsuitable education be taking place in the interim.**

We have set up a website with a downloadable booklet which details the need to know things to help parents make informed decisions. You may also wish to direct parents to the LA to speak with the Elective Home Education (EHE) Coordinator who will be able to talk through the considerations and requirements.*

*please be mindful of flexible working of the EHE team and this is over 3 days a week. A response may not be immediate. Much of what will be discussed is on the website.

Below are useful links for staff to understand EHE. These can also be shared with parents to aid their research into home education:

Website: https://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/400/elective_home_education

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/coventrycchomeeducation/>

Referral: https://myaccount.coventry.gov.uk/en/service/elective_home_education_referral

DfE Guidance for parents click [here](#).

The parents are separated and one parent does not want their child to be home educated? What advice do I give?

The parent/carers with PR where the child resides is normally considered in charge of their education. However, parents who are not in agreement of EHE should look to try to resolve the issue amicably. Failing this, the parent not in agreement has the right to seek legal recourse via the family court. Please see section 10.3 (p.33) in the [DfE guidance](#) for further details.

I have concerns that this child is not safe to be home educated, what do I do?

Ensure you report your concerns via the MASH. Home education alone is not a safeguarding red flag. Please use your knowledge of the family and current concerns that you have. Please ensure you report these concerns on the online EHE referral form and if you wish to speak to the EHE Coordinator, please use the contact details.

The parent is going ahead with home education, what paperwork do I fill out?

Schools have a responsibility to notify the LA of any children who come off their roll to be home educated. This is done by providing a copy of the deregistration email/letter from parent and completing the online EHE referral [Elective Home Education referral - Privacy statement - Coventry City Council](#)

As per section 9 of the Schools Regulation (2024) schools must delete a child's name from the school roll if *'(f)a parent of the pupil has told the proprietor in writing that the pupil will no longer attend the school after a certain day and will receive education otherwise than at school and—(i)that day has passed;'*

This means that the parent **MUST** confirm the onward destination for their child and the date from which it begins i.e. a parent stating their child will stay at home or that they are not coming back is **NOT** sufficient. Equally if a parent is stating they are home educating, please ensure that you are clear from at what date this begins. A parent must be clear in order for their child's name to be deleted from the schools roll.

Schools should also:

- **NEVER** ask leading questions such as 'can you confirm you are home educating?' 'are you home educating?' 'Can you put it in writing that you are home educating?' This can be pressure to deregister.
- Use ambiguous language 'can you confirm your educational intentions for your child?' 'please can you confirm your child's educational status in writing to us and from which date?'
- **NEVER** Create written proformas for parents to sign—a notice of deregistration **MUST** come from the parent/guardian with PR only.
- Refer back to the person with PR in any discussion regarding a removal from roll—we cannot accept deregistration's from siblings or other family members unless they have PR.
- Where a parent has verbally told you—please request that the parent state their intentions in writing to ensure that there is clear knowledge of their situation and from what date. Until this is in place, please keep the child on roll. This ensures that there is no ambiguity and that there is a clear trail. Please refer back to section 9 of the Schools Regulation above.

Any further information or requests for a discussion—please contact

ehecoventry@coventry.gov.uk

Please then remove from the roll **AFTER** you have completed the online EHE referral form.

The child has an EHCP and is in mainstream school, what happens to the EHCP?

Whilst not statutory for children in a mainstream school, we still recommend that schools hold an annual review **BEFORE** removing from roll. The review should be an opportunity to discuss the reasons for home education but also ensure parents understand their role in fulfilling the outcomes of the EHCP and the LA's role in reviewing this (please see further details in this guide). They will need to understand which services and programmes they will have to fund and provide themselves and which community services they can still access. There is no funding attached to EHE. When organising this review please invite your schools linked EHCP Coordinator and the EHE Coordinator. Where work patterns allow they will attend.

Once the review is concluded please send EHCP paperwork to the Statutory Assessment and Review Service at sen@coventry.gov.uk. Please also complete an online EHE referral if parents go ahead with EHE. ([Elective Home Education referral - Privacy statement - Coventry City Council](#))

The child has an EHCP and is in special school, what happens to the EHCP?

You must hold an annual review before the child can be removed from the roll of the school. The review should be an opportunity to discuss the reasons for home education but also ensure parents understand their role in fulfilling the outcomes of the EHCP and the LA's role in reviewing this. They will need to understand which services and programmes they will have to fund and provide themselves and which community services they can still access. There is no funding attached to EHE. When organising this review please invite your schools linked EHCP Coordinator and the EHE Coordinator. Where work patterns allow they will attend.

Once the review is concluded please send EHCP paperwork to the Statutory Assessment and Review Service at sen@coventry.gov.uk. Please also complete an online EHE referral form [Elective Home Education referral - Privacy statement - Coventry City Council](#) .

What are the key messages to those with an EHCP to know before making the decision to home educate a child with an EHCP?

- Moving to home educate will **NOT** secure a place at a special school any quicker than if they were on roll at a school. EHE is considered a legitimate way to educate a child so is treated no differently to those in school settings.
- A special school will only be considered if the evidence demonstrates that it is appropriate—moving to home educate alone will not demonstrate this. Evidence presented at an annual review can be used to build a picture of a child's needs and update the EHCP.
- If on roll at a special school—the place will be lost immediately and will be allocated to another awaiting a space. Should you wish for your child to return to a special school—the nearest appropriate school with available places will be considered. This is NOT a guarantee that a place will be available. The parent/child will likely be waiting for a significant period to go back.
- Parents have the responsibility of securing the provision within the plan.
- LA's have the responsibility of ensuring provision is being secured only.
- Parents should take time to read through the plan, ensure it is up to date and that they are able to secure the provision within it **BEFORE** moving to home education. This can be discussed at an annual review prior to EHE (mandatory for Special Schools, recommended for mainstream).
- Any provision within the plan secured through traded services e.g. Educational Psychologists, Specialist SEN Teachers such as SEMHL, Complex Communications Team (CCT), Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) will need to be sourced and funded privately as these services are not commissioned to work with home educated families. Parents will need to determine if they are able to fund these.
- Specialist equipment from OT and programmes of physiotherapy are still available—however, any element of these services provision delivered in school by school staff would need to be sourced/provided by parents/guardians.
- The LA will not provide funding to secure any of the provision in the plan—parents take on this responsibility.
- Any free school meals will no longer be available.
- Funding from pupil premium will not be available.
- The plan will be reviewed annually (or earlier if requested or if evidence suggests that this is needed) where an EHCP Coordinator from the SEN Service will discuss with you how things are going and how your child is making progress towards the outcomes stated within the plan.

- Should the provision not be being secured and the outcomes being worked towards the SEN service will identify an appropriate setting in section I.
- If any point, a parent feels that they cannot continue to home educate their child, they should get in touch with the SEN Service via sen@coventry.gov.uk to organise a review. It is not guaranteed that a place will be available at their preferred setting or that their preferred setting is considered appropriate by the school and/or LA.

What can a school not do?

Schools cannot pressure parents to home educate or use leading language to suggest that they do so. They cannot suggest home education as an option to those with parental responsibility. This will be perceived as pressurising parents to remove their children off the school roll—particularly where a pupil displays challenging behaviour or has low levels of attendance. Where the LA is concerned that this is happening or it has been reported by parents, it will be challenged directly with school leaders.

In summary...

When a parent expresses an interest in home education do:

- Try to talk to the family to find out what lies behind their decision
- Review your graduated response with your SENDCo where there is a potential for or there are SEND
- Direct families to the LA and DfE websites to find out more about their rights and responsibilities.
- Ensure families have an awareness of the local context in respect of school places if relevant
- Make it clear what is and is not available for home educated pupils e.g. flexibility but no funding, bespoke but no specialist services available.
- Ensure parents understand their responsibilities regarding safeguarding
- Don't lead them to it or pressure families to make decisions by certain times/dates. EHE if being considered will need significant planning and research by the families to be ready from the start.

Parents have asked me about flexi schooling. What is this and what do we do?

Flexi schooling is a bespoke arrangement between a Head and parents of a child on roll at the school. It is where the school agree to parents request to have their child in school part time and home educated the remainder of the time. Examples in Coventry include 3 days in school and 2 EHE; all mornings in school, EHE afternoon; Work Related Learning, Core subjects in school and home education. It is more common at primary than secondary due to the restrictions of timetabling.

Any request for flexi schooling should be put in writing by the parent where they explain the rationale for the request. You may wish to speak to the EHE Coordinator, your Governors, SEND-Co, Safeguarding Coordinator etc to determine whether this is something you are prepared to agree to based on your understanding of the family.

Key things to consider;

1. The child still takes up 1 whole place. You will need to consider whether this is a fair use of the space on a case by case basis.
2. It is not a dual placement. The child would need to be coded 'C' on registers when not in school.
3. Put in place a timeline for review - identify an initial trial period if you are going ahead and determine clear review dates for the arrangement and what your expectations are at these reviews.
4. Ensure that parent understand that discretion is needed and that the school reserve the right to withdraw any arrangements should they not feel it is working or it is being abused.
5. Determine what will happen on school trips, visits, special events in school that take place on days when the child is not in school.
6. We advise you put in place a 'contract' document which outlines the expectations of both parties and your arrangements to all of the above considerations. Both parties should sign and have a copy for their records. There are a number of schools in the city who have done this and may be able to share their experiences and best practice.
7. If a child becomes flexi schooled, please notify the LA in the same way that there is a child being home educated as previously stated in this document.

Phone: 024 7697 8416

Email: ehecoventry@coventry.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/elective-home-education>