



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Home education



Draft handbook for home educators

Home education: Draft handbook for home educators

Audience

Home educators, those thinking of home educating and other interested parties.

Overview

This document provides advice and guidance to those who are educating or are considering educating their child(ren) at home.

Action required

None – for information only.

Further information

Enquiries about this document should be directed to:

Pupil Well-being Branch
Support for Learners Division
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

e-mail: WellbeingSHARE@gov.wales

[@WG_Education](#)

[Facebook/EducationWales](#)

Additional copies

This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at <https://gov.wales/pupil-inclusion-well-being-behaviour-and-attendance>

Related documents

Draft statutory guidance for local authorities on home education (2019).

Contents

Home education	2
What is home education?	2
'Full-time', 'sufficient' and 'suitable education'	2
Why home educate?	2
Support if you feel pressured to home educate	3
Questions to consider before deciding to home educate	3
I've decided to educate my child at home. What should I do?	4
What should I do if my child has a statement of special educational needs (SEN)?	4
What if I would like a flexi-schooling arrangement?	4
Rights and responsibilities	6
Rights of the child	6
Rights and responsibilities of the parent/carer	6
Responsibilities of the local authority	7
What will happen if it appears that I'm not providing a suitable education?	8
How do I evidence satisfactory education provision?	9
Frequently asked questions	11
Do I need to be a teacher to home educate?	11
Do I need to follow a curriculum?	11
In what ways can I educate my child?	11
What would be seen as a good education?	12
Will I receive any funding or support?	12
Can my child return to school?	12
Will my child miss the social aspect of school?	13
My child wants to go into further education. What do I do?	13
Can I hire a private tutor?	14
Educational support	16
How can I access Welsh language support?	16
Will my child still be entitled to careers advice?	16
Can I use Hwb?	17
Educational trips	17
Volunteering opportunities	18
More able and talented provision	18
Libraries	19
Sexual health education	19
Youth services	20
Play and leisure	20

Examination support	21
Will my child be able to sit examinations?	21
How can I prepare my child for their examinations?	21
What are IGCSEs?	22
Alternatives to GCESs	22
Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Families	23
Safety on the internet	24
Advocacy/mediation	25
Children's advocacy	25
The Children's Commissioner for Wales	25
Mediation between parent/carer/child	26
Mediation between parent/carer/school	26
Accessing support services	27
Health services	27
Immunisations	27
Screening programmes	27
Eye tests	28
Dental health	28
Healthy Child Wales	28
Health visiting and school-age nursing services	29
Speech and language therapy	29
Complaints or concerns about NHS Wales care and treatment	29
Special educational needs (SEN) support	30
Statutory assessments	30
Annual review	30
Right of appeal	31
The Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018	31
SNAP Cymru	32
Neurodevelopment services	32
Independent counselling	33
Family Information Services (FIS)	33
Families First	33
Useful information	34
Useful contacts and resources	34
Online educational resources	34
Universal services contacts	36

Annex A: Model letter of notification of home education	39
Annex B: SEN request	40
Annex C: SEN assessment timeline	41

Home education

- 1.1 This guide provides information for parents/carers¹ who are considering educating their child at home and those who are already doing so².

What is home education?

- 1.2 Home education is a term used to describe when parents/carers educate their children at home instead of sending them to school. In Wales, as with the rest of the UK, education is compulsory but school is not.
- 1.3 You do not need permission to home educate (unless your child is registered at a special school). You do not have to follow a curriculum, although it may be a useful reference. What learning opportunities you provide and how your child learns are up to you providing that the education you provide is 'full-time', 'suitable', and 'efficient'.

'Full-time', 'suitable', and 'efficient' education?

- 1.4 The courts have provided guidance on what is considered 'suitable' and 'efficient' education. Education is 'efficient' if it is 'achieving that which it sets out to achieve' and it is 'suitable' if it 'prepares the child for life in a modern civilised society and enables the child to achieve their full potential'³. This means that education should aim at enabling the child, when grown up, to function as an independent citizen beyond the community in which they were brought up, if that is the choice made in later life by the child. Education must be suitable to the age, ability and aptitudes of the child, and any special educational needs they may have.
- 1.5 There is currently no legal definition of what 'full-time' education is. For home educating families, there can be almost continuous one-to-one or small group contact and education may take place outside normal 'school hours'. The question of whether education for a specific child is full-time will depend on the circumstances of each case; but as parents/carers you should at least be able to quantify and demonstrate the amount of time for which your child is being educated. Education which is clearly not occupying a significant proportion of a child's life will probably not meet the 'full-time' requirement.

Why home educate?

- 1.6 A parent's decision to home educate their child may be influenced by a number of reasons including their philosophical, spiritual or religious beliefs. Parents/carers may also feel that they are better able to meet their children's individual needs and learning style than a school.

¹ The definition of a parent or carer for the purposes of this guide includes any person who is the natural parent of the child, any person who has parental responsibility or any person who has care of the child (S.576 Education Act 1996).

² This guidance contains hyperlinks. The Welsh Government is not responsible for, and cannot guarantee the accuracy of, information on sites that it does not manage; nor should the inclusion of a hyperlink be taken in itself to mean endorsement by the Welsh Government of the site, the site owner, or any specific content to which it points.

³ Harrison and Harrison v Stevenson [1981]

Support if you feel pressured to home educate

- 1.7 It is essential that deciding to home educate is **your choice**. You should never be encouraged by the school to home educate because of poor behaviour, poor attainment or poor attendance. This is especially so if you are influenced to home educate to avoid exclusion or prosecution.
- 1.8 A headteacher who believes that exclusion is necessary should use the mandatory procedures or discuss the possibility of a 'managed move' to another school with you. When facing exclusion, it is also open to the local authority to arrange education other than at school (EOTAS) such as education in a pupil referral unit (PRU) if full-time mainstream school is not suitable for your child. For more information, please see guidance at www.beta.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/are-you-being-excluded-from-school.pdf
- 1.9 This practice – sometimes called 'off-rolling' – is unacceptable, and if pressure of this sort is put on you by any school to home educate you should inform the local authority.
- 1.10 If you genuinely believe that your child's current school is not suitable, then you should also discuss with the local authority what alternatives might be available before taking any decision as to home educate your child.
- 1.11 You can also contact The Children's Commissioner for Wales' Investigation and Advice Service. This service is free and confidential. It's there as a source of help and support if children and young people or those who care for them feel that a child's been treated unfairly. This service offers individual advice and investigates individual cases. Find out more at www.childcomwales.org.uk/about-us/investigation-advice.
- 1.12 If you have exhausted all other routes, you may also wish to get in touch with Estyn, who can help direct you to the relevant complaints process. You can contact Estyn at www.estyn.gov.wales/about-us/contact-us.

Questions to consider before deciding to home educate

- 1.13 Home educating your child is a decision which should not be taken lightly. It will mean a major commitment of your time, energy and money. It is especially important that you consider the nature of the education you intend to provide for your child before you begin to educate them at home. For example, you should think about the subjects you will provide, and whether it will allow your child to reach their potential now and in the future, including whether your child wishes to sit public examinations such as GCSEs. It is important to consider questions such as:
 - Is your child positive about the suggestion of home education?
 - Are you are convinced it is best option for your child?
 - Do you have the time to devote to your child's education on a full-time basis?
 - Do you have the ability to help your child learn effectively?
 - Will you be able to educate your child to the required level if they want to take examinations?
 - Are you able to provide the necessary resources?
 - Do you have other support available?
 - Are there opportunities for physical exercise?

- Will social experiences with other children be available?
- Are you sure home education is your choice?

I've decided to educate my child at home. What should I do?

- 1.14 If your child is in school, you should write to the headteacher notifying them of your intention to take responsibility for your child's education and to remove them from the register. If you simply remove your child from school without informing them in writing (verbally informing the school is not enough), you could be prosecuted for their non-attendance. The headteacher will then remove your child's name from the register and notify the local authority. See Annex A for a model letter to use.
- 1.15 If your child has never attended school, no notification is required (unless your child attends a special school, see section 1.16). However, we strongly recommend contacting your local authority to let them know you are educating your child at home so they can get in touch and offer you support.

What should I do if my child has a statement of special educational needs (SEN)⁴?

- 1.16 The same procedure applies if your child has a statement of special educational needs and attends a mainstream school. However, if your child attends a special school, you will need to obtain permission from the local authority before removing them from school.
- 1.17 The local authority will continue to hold an annual review for the duration of the statement, which will include whether the wording of the statement is still appropriate and whether it needs to remain in place. The right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales still applies. For more information on making an appeal, visit www.sentw.gov.wales.
- 1.18 Parents/carers of a home educated child who does not have a statement of SEN may ask the local authority to conduct a statutory assessment of the child's educational needs⁵. The local authority shall make and maintain a statement of SEN if necessary following such an assessment.
- 1.19 For information on accessing SEN services, see section 9.17.

What if I would like a flexi-schooling arrangement?

- 1.20 Flexi-schooling is an arrangement where, following a formal request from you and with the approval of the school, a child spends some part of the week attending school and the rest of it being educated at home. It is important to note that flexi-schooling is not home education. In such arrangements, the child will always continue to remain on the school roll. This may be a better alternative to home education if you wish to educate their child at home but cannot or do not want to do so full-time.

⁴The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 will come into force in September 2020.

⁵ Sections 328 and 329 of the Education Act 1996.

1.21 You are fully entitled to ask schools about possible arrangements for flexi-schooling. There is, however, no entitlement to flexi-schooling and the decision to agree it, or not, rests entirely with the headteacher. If a school decides not to agree such an arrangement, there is no formal appeal process.

Rights and responsibilities

Rights of the child

- 2.1 Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) provides that children and young people have the right to education no matter who they are.
- 2.2 The Children Act 2004 is clear in its expectation that children and young people will be involved in decisions about them and that age-appropriate weight will be given to their views. Where they are of sufficient age and mental ability it is important that they should have the opportunity to have their views heard and taken into account in decisions affecting their health, education and welfare.
- 2.3 Article 12 of the UNCRC requires states to provide a right for children to express their views and for due weight to be given to those views, in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. This does not give children authority over you, and a decision to educate a child at home is a matter for you. You should, however, consider whether home education is realistically possible in your family's particular circumstances, and if your child is happy to be educated in this way.

Rights and responsibilities of the parent/carer

- 2.4 You have a right to educate your child(ren) from your own philosophical, spiritual or religious standpoint. The Human Rights Act 1998, Article 2 (Protocol 1) states that:

'No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.'

- 2.5 This means you can choose whether to educate your child at home or send them to school. Most parents/carers choose to educate their children by sending them to school, where the state will take on financial responsibility for the child's education. Others choose to home educate instead. Parents/carers who do so must therefore be prepared to assume full financial responsibility for their child's education. However, the right to home-education is not absolute – it is conditional on you providing your child with a full-time, 'efficient' and 'suitable' education (see Section 1.4 of this document) as per section 7 of the Education Act 1996.

'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable
a) to his age, ability, aptitude, and
b) to any special educational needs he may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.'

- 2.6 A child becomes of compulsory school age from the first of the following dates (31 August, 31 December or 31 March) which occurs after they become five years old (or if the fifth birthday falls on one of those dates, on that day). The child remains so until the last Friday of June in the academic year in which they become sixteen. Children

may also be educated at home in order to participate in education and training until the age of 18.

Responsibilities of the local authority

2.7 Section 436A of the Education Act 1996 provides that:

A local authority must make arrangements to enable them to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children in their area who are of compulsory school age but—
(a) are not registered pupils at a school, and
(b) are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.

- 2.8 This means local authorities must make arrangements to identify children not receiving a suitable education.
- 2.9 The courts have established that local authorities can make informal enquiries of parents/carers for details of the educational provision for their child⁶. While you are under no duty to comply with these enquiries, it would be sensible to do so. In the absence of any information about the education provided, the local authority will have to consider whether it appears that you are in breach of your responsibility to cause your child to receive a suitable, full-time and efficient education.
- 2.10 Draft statutory guidance has been developed to assist local authorities to carry out their duty to ensure children receive a suitable education. The guidance represents a significant shift in current expectations of local authorities. In addition to providing clarification on the characteristics of a suitable education, the statutory guidance reinforces the levers available to local authorities to use when a suitable education is not being provided. The statutory guidance also clarifies the support local authorities could make available to home educators in their area.
- 2.11 In order for a local authority to satisfy itself of the suitability of education provided by the parents/carers it is not unreasonable for the local authority to see and speak with the child. Local authorities will need to bear in mind that parents/carers will have detailed knowledge of how their child is progressing, and their views and opinion on the progress of their child(children) should be sought and given sufficient weight when assessing the suitability of education. The views of the child about their education should also be sought and given appropriate weight in local authorities' considerations.
- 2.12 The individual circumstances of each child and their family should inform decisions about when to see a child. Such a meeting does not have to take place in the home; it can take place in a mutually agreed location. The local authority is expected to make every reasonable effort and to be accommodating when arranging these meetings, which are an opportunity for local authorities to discuss the education provided and any support the family may need.

⁶ Phillips v Brown [1980]

What will happen if it appears that I'm not providing a suitable education?

2.13 Section 437(1) Education Act 1996 states that:

If it appears to a local education authority that a child of compulsory school age in their area is not receiving suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, they shall serve a notice in writing on the parent requiring him to satisfy them within the period specified in the notice⁷ that the child is receiving such education.

2.14 This means if the local authority continues to have concerns, and therefore considers it necessary that the child should attend school, it must serve a School Attendance Order (SAO) on the parent/carer.

2.15 A SAO is an order issued on behalf of the local authority requiring the child to become a registered full-time pupil at the school named on the SAO. If you wish, you can choose a different school to the one named in the SAO letter. However, the school must be suitable to the child's needs and must have agreed to offer your child a place. In this case, the SAO will be changed to name the school chosen by you.

2.16 A SAO must be served after all reasonable steps have been taken to try to resolve the situation. At any stage following the issue of the SAO, parents/carers may present evidence to the local authority that they are now providing an appropriate education and apply to have the SAO revoked. If the local authority refuses to revoke the SAO, parents/carers can choose to refer the matter to the Welsh Ministers. If the local authority prosecutes the parents/carers for not complying with the SAO, then it will be for a court to decide whether or not the education being provided is suitable and efficient. The court can revoke the SAO if it is satisfied that the parent is fulfilling their duty. It can also revoke the SAO where it imposes an Education Supervision Order (ESO) (see the diagram below at Section 2.15 for more information).

2.17 For more information on SAOs please see the All Wales Attendance Framework at www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/all-wales-attendance-framework.pdf

2.18 The diagram below shows how the SAO process should look.

1. Local authority issue a notice informing the parents/carers that it appears that their child is not receiving a suitable education, either because of the education itself or because of lack of information about the home education being provided.

2. If the family decides not to challenge the authority, there should be sufficient time for the family to address the authority's concerns⁸, either by changing the delivery of home education or by providing additional information about the home education programme.

3. If the family does not address the authority's concerns, they must serve a notice of intention to issue a School Attendance Order (SAO).

⁷ S.437(2) of the Act states that the period set out in the notice must be at least 15 days, beginning with the day the notice was served.

⁸ This will be 15 days from the date the notice is served.

4. After receiving the notice of intention, the family can either provide information about home education, or challenge the authority's view that education is not taking place.

5. If the authority is still concerned, it may proceed to issue a SAO. At any point in the proceedings, the family can cause the SAO to be halted by giving evidence or otherwise demonstrating to the local authority that the child is receiving education at home.

6. Once the SAO has been issued, if the parents/carers do not register the child at the named school, the authority may choose to prosecute.

7. The case will then go to the magistrates' court, where the parents/carers are no longer dealing with the local authority. This is another chance to show that education is being provided. The parent may be convicted or acquitted. If the former, the parent will be liable for a fine (maximum £1,000 per parent for each absent child). The local authority must also consider whether it would be appropriate to apply for an Education Supervision Order (ESO) (see section 2.17) in respect of the child.

- 2.19 If a parent fails to comply with a SAO, a local authority must consider whether it would be appropriate to apply for an Education Supervision Order (ESO) in respect of the child⁹.
- 2.20 An ESO is an order granted in the Family Proceedings Court requiring you and your child to follow directions made in the ESO. An ESO makes the local authority responsible for advising, supporting and giving 'directions' to the supervised child and their parents/carers in such a way as to ensure the child is suitably educated.
- 2.21 Once the ESO is served you have a duty to comply with the directions. If you fail to comply the Supervising Officer will issue a warning and discuss the directions fully with you again. If you still fail to comply you may be prosecuted in the magistrates' court, and may incur a fine or other penalty.

How do I evidence satisfactory education provision?

- 2.22 The local authority has to be satisfied that the education that is being provided is suitable for the 'age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs that your child may have'. The evidence you present is looked at in this light. There are many different approaches to providing home education. For example, some parents/carers feel that their child will learn through experience, with the educator as a helper and guide, using the child's experience as a basis for learning. Other parents/carers choose to educate their children in a way that mirrors a school timetable, with subjects taught in a more formal way and with a clear syllabus which may include targets for their children to achieve.
- 2.23 The choice of philosophy is for you to make and may change over time. It is your responsibility to provide examples which clearly demonstrate the suitability of your

⁹ Section 447 of the Education Act 1996.

child's education provision.

2.24 In evidencing the suitability of educational provision you may, for example, provide this information in the following ways:

- information sent by e-mail as an attachment
- your child showing some of their work or talking about their learning
- original work
- photocopies of written work
- photographs
- art work
- scrapbooks
- musical and sporting achievements (certificates)
- diary of events
- CDs recordings
- using digital media
- websites contributed to/created by your family
- a written report.

Frequently asked questions

Do I need to be a teacher to home educate?

3.1 No, you don't need to be a teacher and you do not need any specific qualifications.

Do I need to follow a curriculum?

3.2 There is no obligation to follow a curriculum or the same topics as a school, but you might find it helpful to use it as a framework to decide what subjects to include and how to assess your child's achievement. For example, the Curriculum for Wales 2022 seeks to allow for a broadening of learning and to promote a more flexible approach to prepare children and young people to thrive in the future. This may be a helpful framework to use when planning your child's education. You can find out more at <https://hwb.gov.wales/draft-curriculum-for-wales-2022/>

3.3 There is also no obligation to have rooms or premises equipped to a particular standard and the school day/terms do not need to match mainstream school (but the education provided must be 'full-time'). Likewise, there is no need to be registered with the Welsh Government or to be inspected by Estyn.

3.4 However local authorities can expect to see:

- consistent involvement of parents/carers
- a recognition of the child's needs, attitudes and aspirations
- opportunities for the child to be stimulated by their learning experiences
- access to resources/materials required to provide home education for the child.

3.5 Equally, the education you provide should:

- enable your child to acquire new knowledge and make progress according to their ability to increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught
- foster your child's intellectual, physical and creative skills and the ability to think and learn for themselves
- demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding of subject matter being taught
- put in place a framework to measure your child's progress regularly and thoroughly to be able to plan your education provision suitably.

In what ways can I educate my child?

3.6 Home education may reflect a wide range of approaches, depending on what works best for the child. Equally, education can vary over time and subject. Over the course of a year, home education may be more structured throughout winter and more responsive to the weather or local opportunities during the summer. Some subjects like mathematics may be delivered with a structured approach, while others like history by autonomous project.

3.7 When children are educated at home, less formal planning than that normally associated with mainstream schools is to be expected. The greater flexibility of home education means that a parent may develop learning activities in accordance with the progress their child is making and their individual needs. However, some planning will be needed to address issues such as:

- the learning needs of the child and how these may be addressed
- how the child's abilities will be developed
- how basic skills (oral language, literacy, and numeracy) will be acquired and developed
- the range of topics or areas of learning available to the child
- how these learning experiences are to be provided
- the time to be devoted to this learning, enabling time to relax and play
- how further assistance can be obtained if needed.

What would be seen as a good education?

3.8 A good education would be one which is:

- **broad:** it should introduce learner to a wide range of knowledge, understanding and skills
- **balanced:** each part should be allotted sufficient time to make its special contribution but not such that it pushes out other essential parts of the learning
- **relevant:** topics should be used so as to bring out their application to the learner's own experience, to adult life, and to give due emphasis to practical aspects
- **differentiated:** how you educate your child needs to be matched to the child's abilities and aptitude; it should also be sufficiently challenging so that a child can show that some progress is being made.

3.9 A good education should give your child experience in the following areas:

- linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education
- appropriate careers guidance for learners aged 11 years old and above (see 4.10 below for more information)
- skills in speaking and listening, literacy, numeracy and digital
- appropriate preparation of learners for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life
- enable the learner to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
- enable the learner to distinguish right from wrong.

Will I receive any funding or support?

3.10 Local authorities have no legal responsibility or obligation to fund parents/carers who choose to home educate. As a result, parents/carers who choose to educate their children at home must be prepared to assume full financial responsibility, including books and all other resources as well as meeting the cost of any public examinations and course fees.

Can my child return to school?

3.11 Yes, your child can return to school at any time. However, your child may require additional support when they return to school if the relevant curriculum has not been followed during the period of home education.

3.12 You must contact your local admission authority to apply for a school place. It cannot be guaranteed that there will be a place at the school your child previously attended.

Find and compare local schools at www.gov.wales/my-local-school-guide.

- 3.13 Where an admission application has been rejected, the letter of rejection admission authority must inform you of your right to appeal in that letter of rejection. The admissions authority are also required to maintain a waiting list for oversubscribed schools, details of which must be set in out in their published admissions arrangements. Following the allocation of places during the normal admissions round, children must remain on the waiting list until 30 September in the school year for which they have applied. Thereafter, you are expected to make a new application for admission.
- 3.14 If you are home educating whilst your child is on a waiting list for an oversubscribed school, you should note that being on a waiting list does not guarantee your child a place at that school. If additional places become available while the waiting list is in operation they must be allocated to children on the waiting list on the basis of the published oversubscription criteria. Waiting lists must not give priority to children based on the date the application was added to the list. For example, if a child moves to an area outside the normal admissions round and has higher priority under the oversubscription criteria, they must be ranked above those with lower priority already on the list.
- 3.15 If you are unsure about this process, you should get in touch with your local authority who can help.

Will my child miss the social aspect of school?

- 3.16 When a child attends a school, there are daily opportunities to meet with and interact with other children and adults. There is no reason why home educated children cannot meet with and interact with other children and adults, or maintain friendships from school. The only difference is that you will have to create the opportunities yourself. Thousands of children are home educated. Many formal and informal groups exist that meet together, for both social and educational activities. These groups network and share ideas and resources. Joining a variety of clubs and special interest groups etc. can prove very enriching, as can mixing and sharing skills with other people of all ages.

My child wants to go into further education. What do I do?

- 3.17 Whatever your child wants to do after the age of 16 it would be sensible to make early preparations and be aware of any entry requirements.
- 3.18 If they wish to go on with full-time education or training there are three choices as detailed below:
- Return to a school with a sixth form if there is one in your area – you need to contact the college/school as early as possible and make an appointment to see the head teacher. Schools offer a range of courses including Advanced and A/S level courses and your child may also be able to take GCSEs and Welsh Baccalaureate.
 - College of further education – when your child is 15+ (Year 10) ask for a prospectus from your local further education college and check through the qualifications they may need and the courses on offer.

- Work-based training/modern apprenticeships – this is an excellent route if your child wishes to start work and to gain some work-based qualifications. Apprenticeship vacancies can be found at www.careerswales.com.

3.19 Careers Wales can provide impartial information advice and guidance on all of the options available to your child (see Section 4.9 below for more information).

Can I hire a private tutor?

3.20 It is your decision how to educate your child, including hiring a private tutor. However, it is not guaranteed that a private tutor would be an appropriately trained and verified professional.

3.21 While at school, any adult working with your child would have undergone an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check. This is a police check that is run on an individual and would have given some assurances that the adult had not been identified as posing a risk to children.

3.22 When hiring a private tutor, you should request to see their current enhanced DBS check. Some tutors may show you their current DBS check but this is not sufficient. Where a person has been working closely with children and vulnerable adults, they should have an enhanced DBS check. If a tutor shows you their DBS check but they haven't worked for three months then it is no longer valid.

3.23 As a parent/carer you will not have any additional information that might have been given to a school when they undertook a DBS check as to whether there have been some concerns about an individual. Equally, as a parent/carer you are unable to undertake a DBS.

3.24 DBS checks can only tell you information up to the time the check was done. It does not tell you about anything the person might have done after the check was made.

3.25 Therefore, it is extremely important that you always interview any potential candidate, and ask to see their career résumé. You should always ask for and check professional references from someone who knows the tutor now. If the tutor is currently, or has recently been employed in a school, ask for a reference from the head teacher, and if a qualified teacher, ask to see a copy of the tutor's EWC certification.

3.26 Private tuition should never take place on a one-to-one basis without a second adult being present as this may pose a risk to both the professional and the child. While tuition is best undertaken in a space suitable for study, a bedroom is never appropriate. In addition, it is essential that you (or another trusted adult) remain on the premises. Any chaperone arrangement offered by the tutor should be refused. It is important that you have access to the teaching area and can observe and hear activity at any time you wish. Intervening doors should be kept open, even if it may curtail your own activities.

3.27 Any tutor who is mindful and aware of current expectations of professional staff should have no objection to these requests.

- 3.28 If you choose to employ a tutor or send your child to a tuition group full-time¹⁰, you should note that if your child is learning alongside four or more other children OR a child with a statement of SEN, then this provision may be considered an independent school.
- 3.29 Any provision that meets the definition of an independent school, that is, provides a full-time education for:
- five or more learners of compulsory school age
 - one or more learners of compulsory school age with a statement of special educational needs
 - must be registered with the Welsh Government - anyone who conducts an independent school that is not registered is breaking the law and may be liable to a fine and/or imprisonment.

¹⁰ Whilst there is no legal definition of a full time education, it would be considered 'full-time' if it is all of substantially all of the child's education.

Educational support

How can I access Welsh language support?

- 4.1 Learning Welsh can be an enriching experience both for your child and your whole family.
- 4.2 If you are thinking about using Welsh before your child is of compulsory school age (0–5) there are a number of resources available to you. For example, Clwb Cwtsh is an eight-week Welsh language taster course for adults to develop the language you'll use with your child. These are free to access, with free entertainment for toddlers too. Find out more at www.meithrin.cymru/clwb-cwtsh and www.learnwelsh.cymru/learning/clwb-cwtsh.
- 4.3 Equally, a wide range of Welsh courses for adults can be found at www.learnwelsh.cymru/learning/find-a-course. Fees vary across courses, however some are free and financial support is available at www.learnwelsh.cymru/support/financial-support.
- 4.4 National Museum Cardiff hosts Taith Iaith sessions once a month. They are run by museum staff that speak Welsh or have learnt Welsh and cover an array of topics. They are aimed at learners of all levels and are open to the public. The full programme can be found at www.amgueddfa.cymru/caerdydd/digwyddiadau.
- 4.5 Welsh learners will also have the opportunity to socialise and use Welsh at the Ar Lafar festival that is run by National Museum Wales. Find out more at www.learnwelsh.cymru/learning/ar-lafar.
- 4.6 Notably, all exhibitions at National Museum Wales are bilingual and will usually have accompanying learning materials in Welsh. For example, a resource pack for St Fagan's National Museum has been developed in conjunction with the National Centre for Learning Welsh and is aimed at Welsh learners of all levels. This resource supports visits to some of the museums iconic buildings while practicing Welsh. Find out more at www.museum.wales/stfagans/learning/resources.
- 4.7 There are numerous opportunities across Wales for you and your child to practice speaking Welsh. A directory of Welsh-speaking clubs can be found at www.cymraeg.gov.wales/events/Societies/Clubs-and-Organisations/?lang=en.
- 4.8 Urdd Gobaith Cymru is an organisation which aims to give children and young people the chance to learn and socialise in the Welsh language. There are magazines as well as thousands of Urdd activities on offer for Welsh speakers and learners throughout the year. Find out more at www.urdd.cymru/en.

Will my child still be entitled to careers advice?

- 4.9 Yes, Careers Wales can give you information, advice and guidance to help your child plan their future. You can visit their website at www.careerswales.com to find information such as what jobs are available and what careers events are happening near you.

- 4.10 Talking to a Careers Wales adviser can help your child to:
- understand the options they have and find out more about what they can do locally
 - help them think about how to choose what to do next
 - help put these plans into action.
- 4.11 If you would like a Careers Wales Adviser to help your child plan their future you can get in touch by emailing ehe@careerswales.com or by telephoning on 0800 028 4844.

Can I use Hwb?

- 4.12 Hwb is a digital learning platform which hosts a vast amount of free learning resources. Hwb online resources can be accessed by you and your child anywhere, at any time, from a range of devices at www.hwb.gov.wales/.
- 4.13 The Welsh Government will create a page for home educating families to use on Hwb, which will include information such as how to access examinations, as well as links to learning resources such as Welsh language, English, mathematics, science and online safety.

Educational trips

- 4.14 Educational trips can have several learning benefits for your child. Educational trips provide unique opportunities for kinaesthetic learning, i.e. 'learning by doing', and encourage children to engage with people, places and buildings in new ways.
- 4.15 Cadw offers free self-led education visits at Cadw Heritage staffed sites, where charges are normally applied, to home educated children and their parents/carers, in parity with school-educated children. The scheme only covers educational visits which take place during term time, and within normal school/college hours. Cadw also offers free educational resources to use before, during and after your visit.
- 4.16 Find a Cadw place to visit at www.cadw.gov.wales/visit/places-to-visit/find-a-place-to-visit
- 4.17 Find out more about Cadw at www.cadw.gov.wales/learn/education/education-visits/self-led-education-visits
- 4.18 The National Museum Wales comprises of seven free-entry museums in Wales each focusing on different aspects of Wales' rich and varied heritage. These are:
- National Museum, Cardiff
 - St Fagan's Museum of History, Cardiff
 - Big Pit National Coal Museum, Blaenavon
 - National Wool Museum, Dre-fach Felindre near Llandysul
 - National Slate Museum, Llanberis
 - National Roman Legionary Museum, Caerleon
 - National Waterfront Museum, Swansea.
- 4.19 A wide range of educational resources are available free of charge on the website to use alongside your visit. Find out more at www.museum.wales.

4.20 Techniquest is the UK's longest established science centre, with a mission to embed science in Welsh culture through interactive engagement and offers experiences that are accessible to all. Techniquest provides opportunities for home educators to visit during term time. This includes visits to the Planetarium, taking part in a workshop in the Laboratory, or to see a Science Theatre show. During weekends and school holidays an informal education programme for all the family is on offer. Find out more at www.techniquest.org/education/home_educators.

4.21 There is also a vast range of local museums and galleries to visit in Wales.

Volunteering opportunities

4.22 There are thousands of volunteering opportunities in Wales for your child. Volunteering can bring many benefits to your child as noted below:

- As well as helping others, volunteering has been shown to improve volunteers' well-being too.
- It can be the perfect opportunity to test or find out more about a career without making a full commitment.
- It provides an opportunity to gain additional training and in many cases, awards or accreditation.
- Many employers view volunteering experience as a sign of maturity and as evidence of a range of skills that would be valuable in employment.

4.23 A national database of all volunteering opportunities in Wales can be found at www.volunteering-wales.net/?splash_page_viewed=1.

More able and talented provision

4.24 There are many enrichment opportunities for young, talented individuals in Wales that you can seek out alongside educating your child at home.

Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama – Junior Conservatoire

Every Saturday, the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama is the home of the Junior Conservatoire. The Junior Conservatoire offers the only training of its kind in Wales, immersing students in a specialist environment where they can benefit from an intensive and holistic musical education. Through residential summer schools, national development courses and one-to-one tuition for talented musicians the aim is to enable students to explore their full potential, and to lay the foundations for a successful and fulfilling musical life. Bursaries may be available.

www.rwcmd.ac.uk/junior_conservatoire.aspx

Youth Opera (at Welsh National Opera) is an award-winning training programme for any young person who loves to sing. You don't need to have experience but you do need energy, enthusiasm, commitment and willingness to work with other young people.

There are no auditions for the younger groups, and you get to take part in an annual showcase, have access to regular large scale performance opportunities and attend Welsh National Opera dress rehearsals and shows.

www.wno.org.uk/take-part/youth-opera

SportsAid helps the most promising young British athletes by providing them with financial support, recognition and personal development opportunities during the critical early stages of their careers. The financial challenge of trying to reach the top of their sport is one of their greatest barriers to success.

“With the help of SportsAid, I did my thing. I didn’t come from a wealthy family, and there were times when I thought ‘I need a job’ but I stuck to my swimming. Thankfully it did pay off.” - Adam Peaty MBE

www.sportsaid.org.uk/about/who-we-help

National Youth Arts Wales creates training, performance and development opportunities for Wales’ most talented actors, dancers, instrumentalists and singers. This is done through the six national youth arts ensembles:

1. National Youth Brass Band of Wales
2. National Youth Choir of Wales
3. National Youth Dance Wales
4. National Youth Orchestra of Wales
5. National Youth Theatre of Wales
6. National Youth Wind Orchestra of Wales.

As well as providing these six national ensembles, programmes will be developed in addition to enable greater involvement and participation by young people across Wales. These will be aimed at young people who may not be ready for the national ensembles but may be inspired to develop their talent and skills to give them confidence to apply in future years.

www.nyaw.org.uk

Libraries

- 4.25 Your local library has a large range of resources such as books, e-books, DVDs, CDs, etc. which you can access for free. Some libraries run a student lending scheme that can be accessed by home educated children which allows them to borrow more books for longer periods of time. Find your local library at www.libraries.wales.

Sexual health education

- 4.26 Sexual health education is learning about a broad variety of topics related to sex and sexuality, exploring values and beliefs about those topics, and gaining the skills that are needed to navigate relationships and manage one’s own sexual health.
- 4.27 If you and your child choose to discuss sexual health, there are a number of online resources available for you to use.
- www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/HealthyLiving/sex-education-tips-for-parents
 - www.tes.com/teaching-resources/blog/sex-and-relationships-collection
 - www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/parents/resources-parents
 - www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/useful-links

- www.solgrid.org.uk/wellbeing/pshe/relationships-and-sex-education/key-stages-3-4-and-5-relationships-and-sex-education-resources
- www.autismtoolbox.co.uk/resources/topic-resources/sexual-health

Youth services

- 4.28 Local authorities in Wales are responsible for the provision of youth support services. These services are intended to provide opportunities for young people (aged 11 to 25) that encourage, enable or assist them to:
- participate effectively in education or training
 - take advantage of opportunities for employment
 - participate effectively and responsibly in the life of their communities.
- 4.29 In addition to these services, the Welsh Government also provides grant funding to local authorities to support their youth work offer to young people. Youth work aims to enable young people to develop holistically, facilitating their personal, social and educational development. In this way, it aims to help them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential.
- 4.30 For more information on how to access these services, please contact your local authority.
- 4.31 Third sector organisations also play an important role in delivering services and opportunities to young people. To find out more about what is available in your local area, contact the Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services (CWVYS) at www.cwvys.org.uk, who may be able to provide more information.

Play and leisure

- 4.32 Play is essential for the growth in children's cognitive, physical, social and emotional development.
- 4.33 If you wish to find out more about play in your area, it is advised you get in touch with your local authority who can advise about all play opportunities, play areas, activities, clubs and events for children and young people in your area and wider community.

Examination support

Will my child be able to sit examinations?

- 5.1 Yes. However, parents/carers will have to enter their child for examinations and meet the costs of those examinations themselves. If you can, you should plan GCSEs well in advance.
- 5.2 There are a number of different examination boards that offer GCSE qualifications with different syllabuses. It is crucial that before starting a particular GCSE course you identify a centre such as a school, PRU or college that will accept your child's examination entry.
- 5.3 It might be helpful to consider the following:
- If you have an existing and positive relationship with a school or college you may wish to enquire as to whether your child could be entered there for the examinations and that the school or college will be willing to undertake the assessment of any coursework.
 - If you do not have any relationship or contact with a school or college you will need to contact an examinations board, which may be able to arrange a local centre on your behalf. If you do this you should also ensure that the board can arrange for any coursework to be assessed.
- 5.4 In the majority of cases, if a young person wants to take a GCSE which requires an examination, the examination has to be taken at an approved examination centre, usually a secondary school or further education college. As a home educator, you will have to contact the provider directly to find out the precise way in which they handle private candidates.
- 5.5 You will have to pay for any examination registration fee and assessment of coursework by an accredited person. You may incur extra fees if registration is late.

How can I prepare my child for their examinations?

- 5.6 When helping your child to prepare for their examinations, there are many online resources available for you to use. For example, BBC Bitesize provides interactive revision material such as flashcards and quizzes tailored to specific GCSEs and exam boards and can be accessed at www.bbc.com/bitesize. Similarly, Hwb provides access to a vast amount of free teaching resources at www.hwb.gov.wales/.
- 5.7 Examinations boards can supply syllabuses and copies of previous examination papers at nominal cost or they can be downloaded from the board's website.
- 5.8 You may wish to hire a tutor to support your child through their GCSEs. However, if you are employing private tutors you are strongly advised to ensure they have had an advanced DBS check (see Section 3.19 onwards for more information).
- 5.9 There are home education networks online which can provide support and guidance on helping your children to sit examinations.

What are IGCSEs?

- 5.10 GCSEs may include a significant amount of graded coursework, which would require an independent person to mark. For this reason, some home educators choose to use IGCSEs as they are predominantly assessed by examination.
- 5.11 Like GCSEs, you will have to decide with your child which subject they want to study, the examination board you want to use and find a suitable centre that accepts private candidates.
- 5.12 A number of organisations offer distance-learning courses for IGCSEs. This can be useful for home educators, especially as many offer examination registration support. For more information, please see www.eddistutorial.com/distance-learning-courses.html.
- 5.13 LearnOnline is an innovation in distance learning from Pembrokeshire College that allows access the latest high-quality education without needing to attend school or college. They have been delivering online distance learning since 2011 and have been continually developing LearnOnline in association with a number of home education groups, schools, and colleges.
- 5.14 LearnOnline provides access to GCSEs/IGCSEs and A levels. All learning is included with a LearnOnline course (including textbooks) and the learning platform can be accessed using computer and internet connection from anywhere. LearnOnline allows students to work at their own pace, studying when they want, where they want, allowing them to fit their studies into their unique lifestyle. LearnOnline A level and IGCSE/GCSE courses are supported by a qualified tutor who guide studies, set and mark homework, and help with examination preparation. Find out more at www.online.pembrokeshire.ac.uk/.

Alternatives to GCSEs

- 5.15 There are a number of qualifications available to you as an alternative to GCSEs. For example, AgoredCymru is a flexible way to earn qualifications in subjects ranging from Essential Skills for Work and Life to Welsh Language for the Family. They currently work with over 200 centres across Wales. They can provide one-to-one support, guidance and training at every stage of the learning journey from registration to developing qualifications and awarding achievement.
- 5.16 A variety of assessment methods can be used to evidence achievement such as written work, audio/video recordings and witness testimony. To find out more, visit www.agored.cymru/Home.
- 5.17 In addition, ASDAN qualifications offer qualifications to help young people develop knowledge and skills for learning, work and life. ASDAN also provides programmes and qualifications for learners with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Their courses have been developed for learners with a wide range of learning needs and abilities. To find out more, visit www.asdan.org.uk.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families

- 6.1 Local authorities should have an understanding of and be sensitive to, the distinct ethos and needs of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. If you are a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller family with children of compulsory school age, it is strongly encouraged that you contact the local Traveller Education Support Service for advice and help to access local educational settings. Most local authorities provide such a service.

Safety on the internet

- 7.1 Technology is a valuable educational resource for children. The internet, other digital information and communication technologies can promote creativity and assist with the development of key social skills. However, it can also provide a medium whereby inappropriate material such as pornography and abusive images can filter through, cyber bullying can take place and online grooming by predators can occur.
- 7.2 You can seek advice and information on keeping children safe while on the internet by visiting the following websites.
- www.saferinternet.org.uk
 - www.childnet-int.org
- 7.3 Education packs containing lesson plans, posters, presentations, activities and more can be found at www.saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2019/education-packs.
- 7.4 If you want to know more about keeping children safe online, you can use the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Command's Thinkuknow education resources at www.thinkuknow.co.uk. This aims to empower children and young people aged five to seventeen years old to identify the risks they may face online and know where they can get support.

Advocacy/mediation

Children's advocacy

- 8.1 The UNCRC Article 12 states that children and young people have the human right to have opinions and for these opinions to matter. The opinions of children and young people should be considered when people make decisions about things that involve them, and they shouldn't be dismissed out of hand on the grounds of age. Children and young people should be given the information they need to make good decisions. The opinion of a child and young person should be considered everywhere, including in their home, in their workplace and school. This is true no matter how young a child or young person is, although the weight their opinion is given should change as they grow up and become more mature. You can access child advocacy services to represent the voice of the child at websites such as:
- www.meiccymru.org
 - www.tgpcymru.org.uk
 - www.nyas.net.

The Children's Commissioner for Wales

- 8.2 The UNCRC sets out the human rights of all children and young people under 18. This international convention has been formally agreed by the United Kingdom. The Welsh Government must have due regard to the UNCRC and strengthened the national commitment to children's rights with the Rights of children and Young Persons (Wales) Measures 2011.
- 8.3 The guiding principles of the UNCRC need to be fulfilled for children to experience their rights. These guiding principles are:
- non-discrimination (Article 2)
 - adults must act in the best interests of the child (Article 3)
 - children have the right to live, survival and development (Article 6)
 - children have the right to participate in decisions (Article 12).
- 8.4 The rights laid out in the UNCRC are universal: they belong to all children, without discrimination. They are also indivisible: this means children must experience all of these rights.
- 8.5 Children have a right to know their human rights (Article 42) and the Children's Commissioner for Wales' protects and ensures children's rights in Wales.
- 8.6 If your child is part of a community group and wishes to find out more about children's rights, their group could join the Children's Commissioner for Wales' Community Ambassadors scheme. Community Ambassadors are children and young people who have volunteered to take on three main tasks:
- tell others about children's rights
 - tell others about the Children's Commissioner for Wales
 - tell the Commissioner about what is important to them by completing regular 'rights missions'.

- 8.7 If you would like to get involved please contact the Children’s Commissioner’s Office on 01792 765 600 or e-mail post@childcomwales.org.uk. Find out more at www.childcomwales.org.uk/our-schemes/community.
- 8.8 The Children’s Commissioner also publishes a range of resources about topics raised as important by children and young people in Wales. All of these are available at www.childcomwales.org.uk.

Mediation between parent/carer/child

- 8.9 Moving to home education is a big decision for any parent/carer or family, and it can affect lots of areas of family life so it’s important to think it through carefully and look at all your choices. Some parents/carers find that after a while, educating their child at home takes its toll on everyone. Home educating can affect relationships too if a parent/carer and child don’t have time to pursue their own interests or spend time away from the family home. You can find family mediation services at websites such as www.relate.org.uk.

Mediation between parent/carer/school

- 8.10 Many parents choose to home educate for positive educational reasons. However, if you are considering opting for home education as a result of a disagreement with the school which your child attends, it would be advisable to try and resolve the problems with the school before deciding on home education. If these concerns remain unresolved, all schools and local authorities have complaints procedures which can be followed. If you do have any concerns, you should get in touch with your local authority and they will be able to advise you.
- 8.11 The Children’s Commissioner for Wales’ investigation and advice service is free and confidential. It’s there as a source of help and support if children and young people, or those who care for them, feel that a child’s been treated unfairly. This service offers individual advice and investigates individual cases. Find out more at www.childcomwales.org.uk/about-us/investigation-advice.

Access to support services

- 9.1 You should ensure your child is registered with a General Practitioner (GP) to provide general healthcare and offer important preventive services such as immunisations and health screening.
- 9.2 By choosing to home educate you have opted out of state education provision. However, this does not mean that you have opted out of state health services. You are still entitled to health services normally offered through schools.

Health services

Immunisations

- 9.3 Immunisations are an important part of protecting children against avoidable illness. You should contact your health visitor, GP, pharmacist or local health board to talk through the schedule of routine immunisations which are recommended in the UK and who will be able to answer your questions.
- 9.4 Most immunisations for older children are routinely offered at school and delivered by the school nursing services. You can contact your GP or pharmacist to arrange for your child to have these at your local surgery or pharmacy.
- 9.5 The routine schedule can be found at www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/LiveWell/Vaccinations.

Screening programmes

- 9.6 Screening programmes are used to check out people with no symptoms who may be at increased risk of a treatable problem. In school-age children, we offer a universal vision and hearing screening test at ages five to six years old to check for vision or hearing problems.

Hearing screening between four and five years old

- 9.7 The aim of the hearing screen is to identify children with hearing loss that might have happened since the new-born screening test. It's important to identify hearing problems as early as possible because they can affect your child's speech and language development, social skills and education. Treatment is more effective if any problems are detected and managed accordingly early on. An early diagnosis will also help ensure you and your child access any special support services you may need. If you would like to take up the school entry hearing screen, or if you have any concerns about your child's hearing, you should get in touch with your local health board audiology services.

Vision screening between four and five years old

- 9.8 All children should be taken to a high street optician for an eye test when they are aged around four or five years old.

Eye tests

- 9.9 Children under sixteen years old, and young people aged sixteen to eighteen years old and in full-time education get free NHS sight tests and are also entitled to NHS vouchers towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses. Full-time education includes home education for this purpose¹¹.
- 9.10 Getting an eye sight test for your child is simply a case of arranging an appointment with the optician of your choice. There is no registration process involved.

Dental health

- 9.11 Every child should be registered with a dentist from the time the first teeth appear, and attend for checks as advised. Children under eighteen years old, and young people aged nineteen years old and in full-time education are entitled to free NHS dental treatment.
- 9.12 To find information on dental practices in Wales, including contact details, opening times, services offered and whether they are accepting new patients, visit www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/LocalServices/?s=Dentist#. Alternatively you can contact your local health board for the latest information at www.wales.nhs.uk/ourservices/directory.
- 9.13 Designed to Smile is a national programme to improve the oral health of children in Wales. It involves a wide range of professionals, including health visitors and other early years' services. They can provide advice and support on good dental health habits. Find out more at www.designedtosmile.org/welcome-croeso/welcome.
- 9.14 If you experience difficulty accessing routine care and advice through your family dentist, you should get in touch with your local health board to find out more about their. These include the Community Dental Services which are able to provide care for children who may require special care services.
- 9.15 You can find helpful advice on dental health at www.dentalhealth.org. NHS Direct also provide information on a wide range of dental and oral health subjects at www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/Encyclopaedia/d.

Healthy Child Wales

- 9.16 The Healthy Child Wales Programme is a universal programme aimed at families with children up to age seven years old. The programme aims to work in partnership with families to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and sets out a common set of contacts between families and health visitors. Implementation of the Healthy Child Wales Programme focuses on early intervention with a view to ensure children achieve optimum health. You can find out more at www.gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/160926healthy-children.pdf.
- 9.17 The key priorities for the Healthy Child Wales Programme are as listed below.
- Provide key public health messages so that families are supported to make long-term health enhancing choices.

¹¹www.wales.nhs.uk/sites3/docmetadata.cfm?orgid=735&id=246420

- Promote bonding and attachment to support positive parent-child relationships resulting in secure emotional attachment for children.
- Promote positive maternal and family emotional health and resilience.
- Support and empower families to make informed choices in order to provide a safe, nurturing environment.
- Assist children to meet all growth and developmental milestones.
- Protect children from avoidable childhood diseases through a universal immunisation.
- Ensures early detection of physical, metabolic, developmental or growth problems through an appropriate, universal screening programme.

Health visiting and school-age nursing services

- 9.18 The school-age nursing service aims to ensure that school-age children receive up-to-date information and advice to enable them to make informed lifestyle choices now and in the future. This is an offer of support and it is not mandatory to engage with the service. School-age nurses are available to support children and young people whenever they need it and offer any appropriate advice and support. This includes reaching out to children and young people who are not attending school and promoting, improving and protecting their health and well-being to ensure they achieve the best possible health.
- 9.19 School-age nurses will provide and coordinate health intervention and public health programmes on a range of issues. For example, they can signpost children to the community dental service or provide help accessing routine care and advice through the general dental 'high street' services.

Speech and language therapy

- 9.20 If you are worried about any aspect of your child's speech and language development, the first step is to get advice from your health visitor or GP. They can undertake assessments and if necessary refer for speech and language assessment, hearing assessment or other services as required.
- 9.21 NHS speech and language therapy services are provided free of charge by local health boards. You can find your local health board at www.wales.nhs.uk/ourservices/directory/localhealthboards, who should provide the contact details for your local children's speech and language therapy service.

Complaints or concerns about NHS Wales care and treatment

- 9.22 'Putting Things Right' is the process for managing complaints and concerns in NHS Wales. You can find out more at www.wales.nhs.uk/sites3/home.cfm?orgid=932.
- 9.23 If you or your child is unhappy about the care and treatment they have received you should firstly raise your concerns with the staff involved with their care or treatment. NHS Wales will try to resolve your concerns immediately. If this does not help, or you do not want to speak to the staff, you can contact the health board or trust's concerns team. You can find out more at www.wales.nhs.uk/ourservices/contactus/nhscomplaints.

- 9.24 If you have a concern about services you have received from your GP, dentist, pharmacist or optician you should normally ask the practice to look into it for you, but if you prefer, you can ask your health board to do so.

Special educational needs (SEN) support

Statutory assessments

- 9.25 Some children with more severe or complex needs may need more help to reach their full potential. These children may need a statutory assessment to establish what their difficulties are. This may lead to a statement of special educational needs (SEN) which will set out the help the child must have. You may request the local authority to undertake an assessment under section 328 or 329 of the Education Act 1996. Other agencies, such as health and social services, can also make a request.
- 9.26 You should send your request in writing for a statutory assessment to the Education Department of your local authority (see Annex B for an example letter). You should keep a copy of the request letter and make a note of the date as the local authority has a specific timeline it has to follow (see Annex C).
- 9.27 The local authority must advise you of the procedures involved, the timing of each stage of the assessment within the 26-week period, provide details of a named officer at the local authority who can be contacted for more advice and information, and advise you of your rights to submit evidence, which can be submitted in English or Welsh. The local authority must set a time limit for you to give your evidence (which will not be less than 29 days).
- 9.28 Following a request for an assessment, the local authority must comply unless:
- they have made a statutory assessment within six months of the request
 - they conclude, after examining all the evidence, that a statutory assessment is not necessary.

Annual review

- 9.29 All statements for children over two years old must be reviewed at least annually. Where required, they can be reviewed more frequently. The review is an opportunity to discuss your child's progress and whether any changes need to be made to the statement. Your views and those of your child are important to the review.
- 9.30 When a child is home educated, the local authority will convene the review to which parents/carers will be invited and will take place at a mutually convenient location. For children of Year 9 age, the review will involve the agencies that may play a major role in their lives post-education (including Careers Wales).
- 9.31 Following a review meeting the local authority can decide to:
- amend/change the statement
 - leave the statement unchanged
 - end the statement.

Right of appeal

- 9.32 In notifying you of their decision the local authority must also explain your right of appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales (SENTW). The SENTW is an independent tribunal established in 2003 and is responsible for hearing and deciding appeals against decisions made by local authorities about a child's special educational needs. Appeals to the tribunal regarding SEN issues must be lodged within two months of the local authority's decision.
- 9.33 You can appeal to the tribunal if your local authority:
- will not carry out a statutory assessment of your child's special educational needs
 - refuses to reassess your child's special educational needs
 - refuses to make a statement of your child's special educational needs, after a statutory assessment
 - decides not to maintain (decides to cancel) your child's statement of SEN
 - decides not to change the statement of SEN after reassessing your child
 - has made a statement of SEN, or has changed a previous statement of SEN, and you disagree with one or more of the following:
 - the part which describes your child's special educational needs
 - the part which sets out the special educational provision (help) that the local authority thinks your child should receive.
- 9.34 Further information and guidance on appeals can be found at www.sentw.gov.wales/sentw-faqs/?lang=en.
- 9.35 If your child needs speech and language therapy, it is important that this is specified in the statement of SEN.
- 9.36 The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice¹² states that, as communication is so fundamental in learning and progression, addressing speech and language impairment should normally be recorded as educational provision, unless there are exceptional reasons for not doing so. Prime responsibility for provision of speech and language services for children rests with the NHS. Where the NHS does not provide speech and language therapy for a child whose statement requires such therapy as an educational provision, the ultimate responsibility for ensuring the provision is made lies with the local authority (unless you have made appropriate alternate arrangements).

The Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

- 9.37 The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act (the Act) provides for individual development plans (IDPs) for all children and young people with additional learning needs (ALN). This will be instead of a statement of SEN or other types of school or college plans. The IDP will say what support the child or young person needs to be able to learn.
- 9.38 Local authorities have a duty to decide whether a child has ALN, and therefore whether the child needs an IDP. This duty is not dependent on gaining agreement from parents/carers of the child to assess the child for ALN.

¹²www.gov.wales/special-educational-needs-code-practice

- 9.39 If the local authority decides the child has ALN, it must secure the additional learning provision (ALP) described in the IDP. This does not mean the local authority must provide the ALP directly. Where, for example, the IDP sets out the ALP as being one-to-one support, this could be provided by the parent home-educating the child. However, the local authority must ensure that the ALP is being delivered. This would be assessed as part of the IDP review undertaken by the local authority annually.
- 9.40 The Act will come into force on a phased basis over three years from September 2020.

SNAP Cymru

- 9.41 If you need help with this process, SNAP Cymru offers free and independent information, advice and support to help get the right education for children and young people with all kinds of special educational needs and disabilities. They can also provide advocacy, disagreement resolution and training for young people and parents/carers. You can find out more at www.snapcymru.org.

Neurodevelopment services

- 9.42 The neurodevelopmental services in Wales are specialist provision for those with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and are inclusive of those children who may have learning disabilities.
- 9.43 The neurodevelopmental diagnostic assessment pathway¹³ and associated guidance¹⁴ is for use with children and young people who have difficulties suggestive of ASD and/or ADHD.
- 9.44 You should ask your health visitor or GP for advice if you are concerned about attention, activity, social or communication problems suggesting the autism spectrum or attention deficit. They can provide advice, support and referral for more detailed assessment if necessary.
- 9.45 Parents/carers of children with a statement of SEN should be supported by the local authority to access the educational psychologist and gain support for a referral from them. Children or young people who meet the criteria for referral to a neurodevelopmental team for assessment should have the assessment started within 26 weeks of the referral being received by the neurodevelopment service¹⁵.
- 9.46 Please note that while private diagnosis is an option and can reduce the waiting time for a diagnosis, some local authorities may not accept the results of private diagnoses if the assessment does not meet agreed quality standards, and may not be able to rely on such as assessment to inform any decision about providing services. Therefore, you should check with your local authority before subjecting a young person to a private assessment: it may be costly and actually delay accurate diagnosis.

¹³ www.goodpractice.wales/SharedFiles/Download.aspx?pageid=185&mid=326&fileid=653

¹⁴ www.1000livesplus.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/1011/2018-06-07%20ND%20Guidance%20Doc%20Version%202016.pdf

¹⁵ Welsh Government target.

Independent counselling

- 9.47 Every local authority in Wales must provide a 'reasonable provision' for independent counselling services in respect of health, emotional and social needs for all 11 to 18 year olds in their area, including those who are not being educated at school.
- 9.48 If you would like your child to access independent counselling services, get in touch with your local authority to learn more.

Family Information Service (FIS)

- 9.49 Family Information Services provided free, impartial help, support and advice on range of issues such as health care, education and training, and leisure services. They can put you in touch with experts who will provide free help and support tailored to your individual needs. They can also signpost you to useful information and services such as Flying Start and Families First. Each local authority in Wales has a FIS which you can contact via post, e-mail or telephone call. The contact details for your local authority's FIS can be found at www.gov.wales/find-your-local-family-information-service.

Families First

- 9.50 The Families First Programme can provide your family with help, advice and support. Families First teams, within your local area, will work with your family to help you look at what is working well in your life and to decide what help you need for your family to thrive. Families First is available to all families who need help, regardless of where you live or how much you earn. The contact details for your local authority's Families First team can be found at www.gov.wales/families-first

Useful information

Useful contacts and resources

Careers Wales
www.careerswales.com

Children's Commissioner for Wales
www.childcomwales.org.uk

Ed Yourself
www.edyourself.org

Education Otherwise
www.educationotherwise.net

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children
www.gypsy-traveller.org

Home Education Advisory Service
www.heas.org.uk

Home Education in the UK
www.home-ed.info

Hwb
www.hwb.gov.wales/

The Welsh Government
www.gov.wales/

Online educational resources

Primary	www.familylearning.org.uk
	www.starfall.com
	www.primaryresources.co.uk
	www.teachitprimary.co.uk
	www.readingeggs.co.uk
Secondary	www.gcse.com
	www.getrevising.co.uk/
	www.revisionworld.com
	Mathematics specific
	www.mymaths.co.uk
	www.cleavebooks.co.uk/trol/index.htm
	www.mathsroom.co.uk
	www.nrich.maths.org/frontpage
	www.freemathhelp.com/index.html
	www.mathsphere.co.uk/resources
	www.doodlemaths.com
	Science specific
	www.rigb.org/

	www.thehappyscientist.com
	www.cam.ac.uk/science-festival
	www.thebigbangfair.co.uk
	www.sciencekids.co.nz/gamesactivities.html
	www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/learn/children-and-families
	www.youtube.com/user/click4biology?feature=watch
	www.youtube.com/user/BackstageScience?feature=watch
	www.periodicvideos.com
	www.chemactive.com
	www.schoolphysics.co.uk
	www.cyberphysics.co.uk
	www.physicsclassroom.com
	www.qcsescience.com/qcse-physics-revision.htm
	www.cosmolearning.com/physics
	English specific
	www.literacytrust.org.uk
	www.doodleenglish.com
	History specific
	www.historylearningsite.co.uk
	www.schoolhistory.co.uk
	Geography specific
	www.nationalgeographic.com
	www.geography.org.uk/Teaching-resources
	www.fieldguides.com
	Languages specific
	www.french-games.net
	www.bbc.co.uk/languages
	www.rosettastone.co.uk
	www.mangolanguages.com
	www.spanishdict.com
	www.studyspanish.com/tutorial.htm
	Music specific
	www.classicsforkids.com
	www.naxosmusiclibrary.com
	www.musicteachers.co.uk/resources/features
	Art specific
	www.free-teaching-resources.co.uk/lesson-ideas/art-design/index.html
	All subjects
	www.bbc.com/bitesize
	www.twinkl.co.uk
	www.education.com/worksheets
	www.memrise.com
Faith-based curriculum	www.teach-at-home.org
	www.sonlight.com
Distance learning	www.briteschool.co.uk
	www.interhigh.co.uk
	www.oxfordhomeschooling.co.uk

	www.nec.ac.uk
	www.catherinemooneytutoring.co.uk
	www.echo.education
	www.alison.com
	www.cloudlearn.co.uk
	www.openuniversity.edu

Universal services contacts

Sensory impairment

Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)

Telephone: 0303 123 9999

www.rnib.org.uk/wales-cymru-1

Action on Hearing Loss (Royal National Institute for Deaf People)

Telephone: 0808 808 0123

Text/telephone: 0808808 9000

www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/default.aspx

SENSE Cymru

Telephone: 0300 330 9280

Text/telephone: 0300 330 9282

www.sense.org.uk/get-support/centres-education-and-day-services/touchbase/

The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) Cymru

Telephone: 0808 800 8880

British Deaf Association

Telephone: 020 7697 4140

Text/telephone: 07795 410 724

E-mail: bda@bda.org.uk

Speech and language

AFASIC Cymru – unlocking speech and language

Helpline: 0300 666 9410

Telephone: 029 2046 5854

www.afasiccymru.org.uk

Learning difficulties

Learning Disability Wales

Telephone: 029 2068 1160

www.ldw.org.uk

Dyslexia Action

Telephone: 02920 481122

www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk

MENCAP Cymru

Helpline: 0808 808 1111

www.mencap.org.uk

Special Needs Advisory Project (SNAP) Cymru

Telephone: 0845 120 3730

www.snapcymru.org

Autism

National Autistic Society (NAS) Cymru

Telephone: 0808 800 4104

www.autism.org.uk

www.autism.org.uk/services/wales.aspx

The National Autism Team

www.ASDinfowales.co.uk

Mental health

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/mental-health-services/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services-camhs/

Mind Cymru

www.mind.org.uk

Medical-based support organisations

National Attention Deficit Disorder Information and Support Service (ADDiSS)

Telephone: 0208 952 2800

www.addiss.co.uk

General support organisations

Action for Children

Telephone: 0300 123 2112

www.actionforchildren.org.uk

Barnardo's Cymru

Telephone: 029 2049 3387

www.barnardos.org.uk/wales

Children in Wales

Telephone: 029 2034 2434

www.childreninwales.org.uk

Action for sick children

Telephone: 0800 744519

www.actionforsickchildren.org.uk

Public bodies

Equality and Human Rights Commission

Telephone: 0808 800 0082
Text/telephone: 0808 800 0084
www.equalityhumanrights.com

Health and Safety Executive

Infoline: 08701 545500
Telephone: 029 2026 3000
www.hse.gov.uk

Contact a Family - for families with disabled children

Helpline: 0808 808 3555
www.cafamily.org.uk

NHS Direct Cymru

Telephone: 0845 46 47
www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/contactus/feelingunwell

Annex A: Model letter of notification of home education

Head teacher's Name
Address
Date

Dear [Head teacher's name]

RE: [child's name and date of birth]

I require [child's name] to be deleted from the school register as I will be home educating him/her from xx/xx/xx.

I wish for his or her name to be removed from the admissions register under Regulation 8(1)(d) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (Wales) Regulations 2010.

Yours sincerely
[Your name]

Annex B: SEN request

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to ask you to assess the educational needs of my child [give your child's name and date of birth] under section 323 of the Education Act 1996. I am making this request as is my right under section 329 of the Act.

I have concerns that my child may have possible learning difficulties/disabilities and request a special educational needs assessment. [Give as much information as possible - Explain what your child's educational needs are and how they affect them when learning. Think about reading, writing, numbers, talking, listening and understanding, friendships, physical skills, concentration, emotions, behaviour, mental health. Explain if your child has been receiving help and why you think it is not enough].

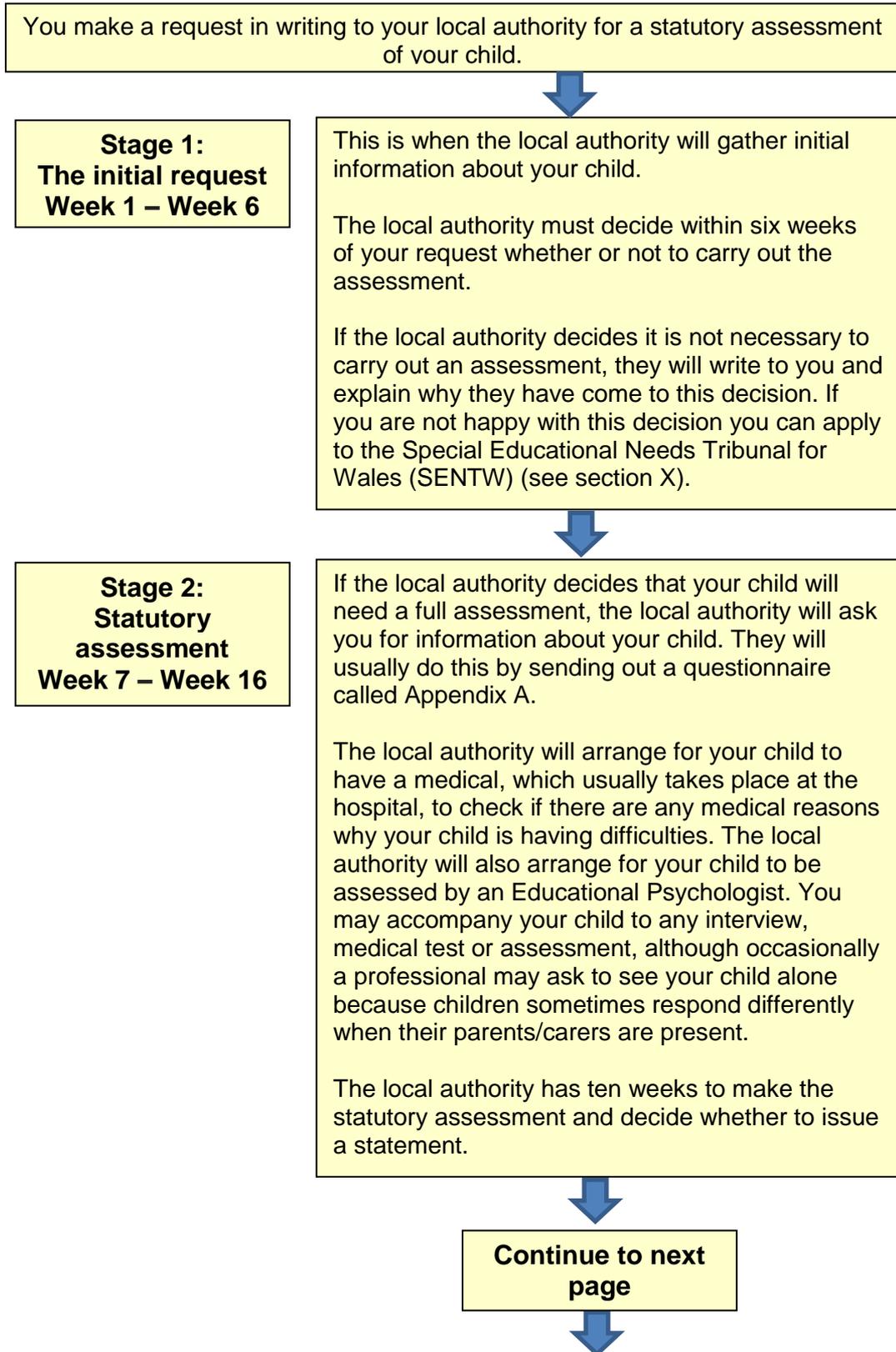
The following professionals are involved with my child and I would like you to get advice from them. [List the people involved with your child].

I am also sending you copies of other reports, which may help you make your decision. [Send copies of any reports you may have from a teacher, educational psychologist, doctor etc.]

I understand that you are required by law to reply to this request within six weeks. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours faithfully,
[Your name]

Annex C: SEN assessment timeline



**Stage 3:
The proposed
statement
Week 17 – Week 18**

If the local authority decides that your child needs extra provision to meet their special educational needs, you will be sent a proposed statement (or following a reassessment, a proposed amended statement). All reports and evidence gathered for the statutory assessment will be included with the proposed statement.

If the local authority decides not to make a statutory assessment, they must write to you and explain why. The letter should also contain information about the SENTW, time limits for lodging an appeal, and the availability of disagreement resolution services.

If the local authority decides not to issue a statement of special educational needs they may issue a note in lieu (see section X) instead.

Your local authority should make every effort to ensure that you are happy with the proposed statement or note in lieu and that you understand the background to the proposals.



**Stage 4:
The final statement
Week 18 – Week 26**

Once discussions have been held and agreement has been reached, a final statement will be issued by the local authority.

If, in some circumstances, an agreement has not been reached, the local authority may issue a statement anyway along with an accompanying letter which will give written notice of your right to appeal to the SENTW.