

Should I Home-School my Child?

You must make sure your child receives a full-time education from the age of five, but you don't have to send them to school. Around 80,000 children in the UK are currently [home-schooled](#) by their parents.

This guide to home-schooling will help you to answer the question: 'Should I home-school my child?' It's a question that only you can answer, but the information in this blog should help.

Do I Have to Send my Child to School?

You must make sure your child receives a full-time education from the age of five, but you don't have to send them to school, or follow the National Curriculum.

Will I Get Funding to Home-School my Child?

Schools receive a minimum of £4,700 per child per year from local authorities and central government. None of this funding is accessible to you for home-schooling. There are no grants or subsidies!

How Much will it Cost to Home-School my Child?

If you choose to home-school, then it will cost you financially. Can you afford to give up your job – and salary? If you and/or your partner decide to stop work to home-school your child, or if you both work part-time and share teaching, weigh up the financial loss and increased stress.

You might actually save some money by home schooling – costs of travel, uniforms, school dinners etc. However, bear in mind that you will have to invest in a large range of materials – text and reference books, pens/pencils and exercise books – in order to have a well-stocked classroom.

You might need to hire a tutor for specific subjects – if you have problems with reading or maths (for example), or if your knowledge is weak in some areas. You will also need to pay privately for your child to sit national exams like GCSEs and A/S Levels. The relevant fees might be steep, so do check.

Do I Need any Qualifications to Home-School my Child?

The good news is that you don't need to have a teaching qualification in order to home-school. However, your local authority has the right to look into the education you are giving your child. If they find it unsatisfactory, they can insist that your child attends a school.

Look at the [guidelines](#) published by the Department of Education: Although aimed at local authorities, they give some useful background information.

You might also want to visit this [government page](#) for more details, including a link to your local authority so you can ask about their policies on home schooling.

Do I Need Permission to Home-School my Child?

You have a right to home-school your child if you want to, as long as the standard you are teaching is high enough then you don't need permission. However, if your child is currently in school, you need to inform the head teacher in writing that you plan to withdraw them. If you are hoping to send your child to school part-time, the head teacher has the right to refuse.

If your child has a statement of educational needs and attends a special school, you'll need the consent of your local authority to home-school them. If your child has Special Educational Needs, the council may be willing to help with home schooling, provided that you have an EHC (Education, Health and Care) plan in place. Approach your local authority if this is the case.

What Should I Bear in Mind if I Want to Home-School my Child?

School is a good place to learn socialisation skills. If you are removing your child from school, do you have access to other children and adults, in a supportive networking group?

If you want your child to sit public exams such as GCSEs or A/S Levels, you will need to register in good time.

Your local examination centre will probably be a local school. Some local authorities offer workshops in home-schooling techniques. Contact yours to find out if any are available in your area.

Why Shouldn't I Home-School my Child?

Home schooling can be an excellent choice – but make sure you are considering it for the right reasons. Here are some reasons why you shouldn't home-school:

- You were bullied/unhappy at school, and you are worried your child might have the same problem. Your child is a unique individual, and needs to discover their limits for themselves
- You are worried about being alone when your child goes to school. Your child's educational and social needs are paramount. View your child starting school as an opportunity for you to enrol in an adult education class, do some volunteer work, or join local clubs
- Your child throws a tantrum whenever starting school is mentioned. If you give in to this, you are teaching your child that they can get their own way in life by screaming and shouting
- English is not your child's first language and you are worried they will struggle. Remember, children pick up new languages much faster than adults. The sooner your child starts school, the sooner they will be able to converse fluently with their peers

Why Should I Home-School my Child?

Just as there are reasons you shouldn't choose to home-school, there are other reasons why you should. Here are some valid reasons for home-schooling your child:

- If you want to give your child the freedom to follow their own passions and develop their talents
- If the local schools are all performing below average, and you feel you could provide your child with a better education
- If you want your child to continue to practise the family's faith during school hours
- If your child is being bullied, and the school is failing to intervene successfully. Have you explored whether or not there is a school nearby with a tougher anti-bullying policy?
- If your child has mild learning difficulties – not enough to be stated as 'special needs', but enough to make the school system bad for their morale, confidence or self-esteem
- If your child has a disability or difficulty that hinders their functioning to the best of their abilities in a school environment
- If your child is shy, sensitive or very quiet, and is frequently overlooked in class. The large class size – in state schools in particular – can be a negative factor for many pupils. An independent (private) school could be another option
- If you can supply the best education!

So, should you home-school your child? If you decide to teach at home, you can get great advice from fellow home educators and specialist organisations. 'Education Otherwise' is a home-schooling organisation that offers facts and support. Take a look at the website, which offers links to local 'EO' groups. Find out if there is one in your area, and make contact.

On all social media channels you will find "Groups" dedicated to home schooling. Facebook in particular have some extremely lively groups where home-schooling parents constantly interact. And of course, use [Education Quizzes](#) for a variety of educational activities based on national curriculum subjects!