

Written evidence submitted by [member of the public]

[Note: This evidence has been redacted by the Committee. Text in square brackets has been inserted where text has been redacted.]

Summary:-

Many home educating families do not respond to consultations like this as they are not sure how to, concerned their details will be passed on to the local authority or have little time to do so. This is why having surveys like this, to encourage more to respond and have their voice heard, is vital.

This survey was shared on Surrey Home Education social media pages and people invited to respond. It is based on a Survey put on a national home education page. All responses were between the 2nd and 4th of November.

146 respondents.

Most (42.5%) had no contact with the LA, of those that did 15.1% considered it to be useless but no bother, 13.7% thought it supportive and helpful, 11.6% thought it sometimes helpful but sometimes unhelpful or hostile, and 5.5% considered it to be officious or hostile.

The benefits from home education are many and wide:- Better academic progression – 64.4%; More flexibility to follow aptitudes – 88.4%; Closer family ties – 81.5%; Better social skills – 80.8%; Greater independence – 80.8%; Higher self-confidence/self-esteem – 89%; More educational support – 75.3%; Special educational needs met – 45.9%; Improved moral instruction – 48.6%; Protection from moral or social hazards – 51.4%; Safety from bullying – 73.3%; Ability to prioritise areas outside school curriculum – 74.7%; Chance to experiment with educational styles – 69.2%; Better sibling relationships – 53.4%; More space to express individuality – 78.8%; Ability to learn at own pace – 93.2%; Avoiding grading/testing – 68.5%; Keeping learning hands-on – 71.9%; Not having to break up learning into subjects – 63%; Spending more time in nature – 84.9%; Freedom to take qualifications in different subjects or at different ages to the norm – 67.8%; More chance to apply knowledge/skills in the real world – 83.6%.

43.2% of respondents could see no disadvantages of home education. Those that did feel there were disadvantages 32.9% felt harassment from authorities, 23.3% financial hardship, 13.7% difficulty in getting qualifications, 11.6% discrimination in higher education or workplace, and 10.3% no support for SEN.

The majority of respondents had no need for support from authorities or others, of those that did 7.6 wanted SEN support, 1.9% for disability, 5.7% for mental health issues and 1% each for higher education and caring responsibilities.

When asked about the effectiveness of current regulations Most felt they were good and either worked well or were stepped beyond in practice.

When asked about a statutory register of home educated children should be created, 80.8% of respondents disagreed with this. Similarly when asked about regular inspection 83.6% disagreed.

The greatest impacts on home education from Covid were the lack of ability to socialise and the stopping of classes/activities.

Please do read all the comments on here as they are heartfelt and show both the joys of home education and the problems home educators face in dealing with authority and getting the best education for their children.

Thank you.

Total number of respondents – 146 people from Surrey and some nearby areas.

*** = compulsory question. 146 responses for these questions**

1. Are you a parent or a child?*

- Parent - 97.9% of respondents
- Child - 2.1% of respondents

2. How do you find your local authority in regards to home education?*

- Supportive and helpful – 13.7%
- Useless but no bother – 15.1%
- Officious or hostile – 5.5%
- I have no contact with my LA – 42.5%
- Sometimes helpful but sometimes unhelpful or hostile – 11.6%

Responses to 'Other' (0.7% each)

- ❖ Not had contact yet
- ❖ Not enough contact to give opinion.
- ❖ Initial contact from LA but not heard anything since July 2019. Not much help to be honest
- ❖ The contact I have had is minimal but it was clear the person I was speaking to did not understand home education but saw it as a replica of school.
- ❖ Minimal contact, not helpful but also not a bother.
- ❖ I have only had contact when we deregister in May. Can't comment otherwise
- ❖ They were supportive and helpful at my first meeting with them, but I have had no further contact from them in in the last two and a half years. This suits me fine.
- ❖ Fine until now but recent letter overstepped with its demands
- ❖ I send a yearly report, this is the only contact I have, but it has always been fine. The current contact I have has been lovely and seems to really understand and value our more play based approach.
- ❖ Had no problems but also not too much contact and happy to simply give a yearly report and them let me get on with home educating my children.
- ❖ Absent
- ❖ Utterly useless. If you ask them for help, they don't even return your call. Advice of exams should be a pretty important function but they are not interested. On the other hand, they are happy to call my mother (she has dementia and I don't even know how they got her number) to ask what we are doing, instead of writing. Never acknowledged report we sent in.
- ❖ I don't know yet as we haven't been contacted yet but we have heard they are nice.

3. What benefits do you feel you/your children gain from home education? (Tick all that apply to you if a child, or your home educated children, if a parent)*

- Better academic progression – 64.4%
- More flexibility to follow aptitudes – 88.4%
- Closer family ties – 81.5%
- Better social skills – 80.8%
- Greater independence – 80.8%
- Higher self-confidence/self-esteem – 89%
- More educational support – 75.3%
- Special educational needs met – 45.9%
- Improved moral instruction – 48.6%
- Protection from moral or social hazards – 51.4%
- Safety from bullying – 73.3%
- Ability to prioritise areas outside school curriculum – 74.7%
- Chance to experiment with educational styles – 69.2%
- Better sibling relationships – 53.4%
- More space to express individuality – 78.8%
- Ability to learn at own pace – 93.2%
- Avoiding grading/testing – 68.5%
- Keeping learning hands-on – 71.9%
- Not having to break up learning into subjects – 63%
- Spending more time in nature – 84.9%
- Freedom to take qualifications in different subjects or at different ages to the norm – 67.8%%
- More chance to apply knowledge/skills in the real world – 83.6%
- None - 0%

Responses given to Other (0.7% each) -

- ❖ More emotional security and secure attachment, less separation anxiety, less future mental health problems
- ❖ Freedom from the rigid structure of school and their policies. No stress over attending when children are tired or ill. Ability to experience things we couldn't if they were tied to school holidays only. Being allowed to attend weddings and see relatives without having to seek permission from school.
- ❖ Less stress and anxiety and pressure to conform
- ❖ Learning a lot more languages in different settings
- ❖ Love of learning
- ❖ Broader learning than offered in school and more attuned to child's interest
- ❖ In non-Covid times, the ability to travel - to live in a different culture, learn a language, spend time with people whose life experiences are different. These things are immeasurable but so important.
- ❖ Home educating my children has proved much more beneficial to their mental health, academic progression and character development. This is compared to them spending time in their early years at school where the opposite was true. Mental health was ignored, there was not individuality to academic progression resulting in very boring

learning. We saw in the school bullying even in the early years, segregation, poor social skills and inappropriate academic pressure.

- ❖ Better foreign language skills than would have gained at school
- ❖ To allow the child to go as deep into a subject as they are interested in, to be able to research and answer questions as they arise. To be able to embed learning in real life experiences.
- ❖ HE for self-esteem as SEN needs unmet - unsurprisingly, this has had the side effect of huge improvement in academics.

4. What disadvantages do you feel you/your children likely risk from home education? (Tick all that apply to you if a child, or your home educated children if a parent)*

- Poor socialisation - 2.7%
- Harassment from the authorities – 32.9%
- Difficulty getting qualifications – 13.7%
- Missing academic areas – 1.4%
- Falling behind school peers – 4.1%
- Never developing self-discipline – 2.1%
- Financial hardship due to lost parental income – 23.3%
- No support for special needs – 10.3%
- Poor self-confidence/self-esteem – 0%
- Trouble developing independence – 0.7%
- Discrimination in higher education or the workplace – 11.6%
- Unrealistic expectations about adult life – 2.7%
- Bullying – 0%
- Abuse – 0%
- None – 43.2%

Responses given to 'Other' (0.7% each)

- ❖ There have been no disadvantages but I do have concerns that involvement from the authorities will lead to dictating curriculum choices and learning methods that may not suit my children and therefore negatively impact my children's learning and opportunity to reach their potential.
- ❖ More difficulty in accessing exam centres where private candidates are not properly catered for. Access to services like CAHMS which require more parental fighting for the same access school going children are entitled to. Authorities need to provide the same access for home educated children, not just in making the access available but in making staff aware that it is so, so procedures don't prevent easy access as in CAHMS asking for teacher reports during an ASD assessment, for instance.
- ❖ Relating to 'difficulty in getting qualifications' - This is just the concern of finding the right place, whether a school/college setting to study at or an exam centre to sit the qualifications they want to take.
- ❖ Challenges and costs of finding an exam centre
- ❖ Being forgotten by the Government when new laws and guidance are being made. Not being able to afford all qualifications available to school-goers.

5. Have you ever received support as a home educator or home educated child for any of the following, from your local authority or elsewhere? (Tick all that apply)

(Not a compulsory question - 105 responses)

- Special educational needs – 7.6%
- Disability – 1.9%
- Mental health issues – 5.7%
- Exams – 0%
- Higher education - 1%
- Careers advice – 0%
- Caring responsibilities – 1%
- Not applicable – 81%

Responses to 'Other' (all 1% unless indicated otherwise)

- ❖ This ended when we started HE, but we had some "leftover" support from school
- ❖ Currently applying for help but having to fight hard for it - 1.9%
- ❖ No -I have provided information to LA instead
- ❖ None although sen
- ❖ HE supported Exam Centres
- ❖ No
- ❖ None
- ❖ One day at a care farm but paid for privately - no help from LA

6. If you ticked any of the previous options, what group(s) or organisation(s) gave you the support, how easy was the support to access, what form did it take, and how useful was it? (16 responses)

- Very challenging to get support services are fragmented with lots of barriers. You need to be an expert to get any traction and have dogged persistence with legal advice. Yet you are treated as a non person and your expertise is derided and ignored by local authorities. (2)
- We arranged Private OT as state provision not meeting needs. Were unable to access SLT as not at school. (2)
- CAMHS were easy to contact via my doctor I find it's who you see that depends on the help given once they've been amazing, twice not Surrey County Council have been good finding my son help with his SEN needs
- Potential Plus UK who provide assessment, support and advice for gifted children, families and schools.
- Home ed groups online gave me all the info I needed to start we use twinkl for worksheets etc
- Other home educators ,Education Otherwise and Educational Freedom
- Occupational Therapy from NHS; NAS Surrey
- National Autistic society—invaluable
- GP, easy to access
- Other parents
- DLA

- No support required
- Woodwork at the care farm with great people, who know what they are doing. [personal information]. The LA pay for other people at the care farm, under normal circumstances, however they are not paying during this second lockdown, so who knows if it will ever reopen.
- [personal information].

7. What do you think of the current regulations around home education in theory and practice?*

- They are good and work well as they are – 28.1%
- They are good but in practice are often underused – 1.4%
- They are good but in practice are often stepped beyond – 22.6%
- They are unclear but work well enough anyway – 2.7%
- They are unclear and need to be clarified to avoid overreach – 13.0%
- They are unclear and need to be clarified so the authorities can confidently go further – 1.4%
- They are overbearing and need to be scaled back/removed – 5.5%
- They are underpowered and need to be strengthened – 0.7%
- I am not sure. – 19.9%

Responses to 'Other' (all 0.7% unless stated otherwise)

- ❖ Parental rights need more protection. Home Education for some is the only option where children are unable to cope with modern school size and pressures. Greater clarity and understanding of the benefits of Home Education need to be more widely understood and not feared. Too many misconceptions between home educators and authorities mean wrong conclusions are drawn – 1.4%
- ❖ We are too new to comment
- ❖ LA should be supportive.
- ❖ They are underpowered and need to be strengthened
- ❖ I feel they are good but can be both over and under used by the authorities. This lack of consistency creates high level of nervousness from families. Often the tone is threatening which makes families wary to approach for help, as the only path many LAs seem to offer is a route back into mainstream education, which in many cases has already failed their children.
- ❖ I've had very little contact with regards to this so difficult to comment
- ❖ I can't comment as we haven't been home-schooling for long enough to comment

8. If you wish, please explain your views in the question above. (30 responses)

1. The parents who choose to HE are the most dedicated people you would meet. I think there is no need for authorities to be involved as the kids are already getting the best form of education from people who love them and are very interested in making them successful.
2. Local authorities need to reassess the presumptions regarding home ed families. They have no understanding of the fact that many normal, academically strong and capable

- kids thrive in home ed and get a far superior “education” to what our school system can provide - and they’re FAR from “vulnerable”.
3. The regulations as they currently are allow for parents (who know their children best) to design education that suits the needs of their child(ren) and work in a way that works for everyone in the family. This flexibility is very important and aids in developing resilience, confidence, and competence in our children. Interference in family life is unjustified and as the research shows electively home educated children do as well or better than their peers academically and career wise.
 4. It would be good for LA’s to be consistent in their application of checks and balances.
 5. As far as I know, but I haven’t had any interaction with the LA
 6. We are new to home education - started in August and still no contact from LA.
 7. Local Authorities have mostly no idea how home education works .
 8. They are not qualified to assess what is and isn’t a good education for MY child and their abilities, and they LA tend to overstep boundaries, tantamount to bullying and harassment and coercion
 9. In June 2020, I received a letter from our LA Surrey Inclusion Service, asking for samples of my child's work and asking for details of education provided. I feel that this is overreach from the local authority as they have no reason to believe that I am not giving my child an adequate and age-appropriate education.
 10. We have been very fortunate to have no contact with our LA after initial contact. Constant monitoring and inspection would have caused the very stress and distress my child needed space from. LAs often don’t know there law and over step there responsibilities. Home Education can look very different to the school system that has been in place for the short period of just last 150 years. They are rarely educated themselves in how Home Education works and cannot see past the schooling they are familiar with.
 11. At the moment, we are free to organise our childrens' education without interference. The LA provides no support for home educators so there is no incentive to have involvement with them. Contact with them would only be for their benefit to satisfy their requirements but provides no benefit to the home educating family.
 12. There is too much missinformation from LAs towards parents. As in local regulations over national law
 13. I don’t know the regulations
 14. I don't mind having to provide things like an educational philosophy as I think this should be part of prepping/planning to provide a high quality home education but samples of work etc are completely irrelevant without any context / not representative of varying styles of home ed and shouldn't be requested.
 15. I am concerned that elective home education is unfairly and inaccurately lumped in with other issues, such as unregistered schools. These are not the same thing, so I would like to see authorities acknowledging this and making sure that their justifiable efforts to handle illegal schools do not unjustifiably target home educators too.
 16. Parents are responsible for caring for and educating their children. Elective education officers should play a supportive rather than monitoring role.
 17. Harassed by LA, who just turned up unannounced and demanding samples of work which I am not obliged to give. They need training so they understand and play fair.
 18. Had no concerns

19. LAs love to "monitor", even though the law says they should not. The correspondence they send is misleading, implying you have to accept visits and provide samples of work. They lump home ed in with the CME team and treat it as a safeguarding concern.
20. Not pressuring parents and children to conform to a level put in place for a wider group as opposed to individuals
21. The current law is crystal clear that it is the parent's responsibility to educate their child--how that should happen is correctly left to the parent to decide. Local authorities seem to consistently overstep their remit, and their internal guidelines are often ultra vires. Their obligation is also clear--to investigate only if education is not being provided. They confuse their role with safeguarding, which is an entirely different issue to that of education. Safeguarding is a matter for social services.
22. If parents are to have legal responsibility for their children's education, then home education should continue in its current form. If that responsibility is taken away from parents and given to local authorities, then those authorities will need to be responsible when children fail within their system.
23. Education is compulsory and parents are responsible for providing it. How we implement this is our choice. The state has no place here, other than offering the educational options that they already provide.
24. I think we experience a lot of freedom in this country to follow HE, following a range of styles/approaches and I think that this is something to be thankful for.
25. For us it works fine as we have access to great social support, resources and can afford external classes etc to make for fantastic child-led curriculums for our children. Also it was very much our choice to homeschool. However for less privileged families, maybe those who feel have been 'pushed out' of school i wonder whether local authorities could provide more? They save some £4000-6000 per year not providing state education - could that money be used to better support families and pay for books/resources etc? I believe in New Zealand homeschooling families receive approximately £400 per child annually to use for education. I wonder if offering some incentive like this would also encourage families to engage with a register. Really families should be given more than this considering the government saving and the fact that for many parents it is a financial sacrifice for one parent to give up working, in order to home educate - especially those who may have been 'forced' into homeschooling because school has been unable to meet a child's needs.
26. I am happy to have no contact, and will remain this way for convenience. If necessary, I would be happy to send annual report where I could detail progress in my own format, but only if I were to be offered support. Oversight without support is unreasonable. I would also understand if there was some kind of annual GP check-up for physical well-being, if safeguarding was a concern for authorities. Thus far though, I see no reason why HE kids would need more protection than any other child.
27. I am not aware of any regulations that council's are supposed to follow when contacting Home Educators and assessing suitability of education they are providing. The only regulations I am aware of are that the law states we are within our rights to educate our children as we see fit, so long as they are receiving a full time education. I feel that what constitutes a full time education needs further clarification - NOT in terms of how much time is spent learning, but rather in terms of what content is expected to be learned by a certain time. However, setting this out plainly would be incredibly difficult to define because of the complexity of what constitutes an education, varying methods that can be used for encouraging learning, and the ages at which different children are ready to

learn. I was thinking just a basic statement like 'evidence that children are learning to read and write at a pace suitable for them'. This way council's can ask about what they are learning and judge from there if it constitutes a suitable education for that particular child's needs. However, I feel strongly that the person chosen by council's to judge parental decisions over content should be suitably qualified and experienced with home education. It is too often the case that council's have contacted parents and made flippant judgements over the parent's educational choices for their children without having a shred of training or understanding beforehand. Educational Psychologists (EPs) would be qualified for such a role, and more funding should be provided for certification and job training in such roles as EPs are few and far between, which is causing problems in education sector as a whole.

28. We are fortunate not to have had any problems but I would feel concerned about moving to another location and what the LA might be like.

29. There is so much over-reach.

30. Now is good.. Only LA need be more respectful

9. Do you think a statutory register of home educated children should be created?*

Yes - 9.6%

No – 80.8%

Responses to Other (0.7% each)

- The authorities already have lists from birth registration and health visitors, deregistered children etc
- It depends upon the purpose of the register
- I understand the need to know how/where every child is being educated but when most local authorities are viewing home ed children as a safeguarding issue then I do not support the register.
- Would depend, if it gave families access to aligned funding
- It would be natural for the authorities to want to know how many people are home educating
- I'm undecided
- Depends on the reason
- Voluntarily yes, in exchange for exam help or financial help in some form.
- I'm not sure
- I don't see a problem with it
- It needs to be all or none. But I would prefer none, although unfortunately mine are now both known.
- It does not bother me one way or another
- I feel there needs to be clarity over exactly what this would entail.
- I'm not sure, mine are registered but I appreciate this could be a personal choice

10. If you wish, please explain your reasons for your answer above (52 Responses)

1. I think to ensure that a child is getting an education they need to be known about by the local authority.
2. The purpose of and reasoning for A statutory HE list would need to be very clear to prevent a big brother type register being formed that only benefits the state not the families and children involved.
3. Government's advise is often middle of the road and does not take into account individual developments. Anyone who is on the register will eventually be advised by the government, which is contradictory of the personal approach of HE.
4. It is my responsibility as a parent to educate my child.
5. Why are home educating families being singled out for a register and to what end? The only compulsory registers that I am aware of relate to sex offenders and terrorists - what does it signal to home educating families that we are to be treated in the same vein? How can this do anything other than increase distrust between home educators and local authorities? Is a register for children aged 0 to five years old being proposed too? (Or do none of the "safeguarding"/educational development/other reasons asserted for a register of home educated (i.e. school age) children apply to those under five years old?) Why is it that parents are able to bring up their child up to the age of five without being registered and monitored, but as soon as the child is "compulsory school age" and home educated this all changes? Clearly I am not advocating a register for children under five years old, but trying to highlight the discriminatory nature of a home education register. One of the main reasons I have heard advocates for a register repeatedly give is to ensure home educated children are visible and known for safeguarding reasons. The idea that home educated children are invisible and unknown is ridiculous - they are known and visible to their neighbours, community, friends, clubs, doctors and so on. In addition, the extremely rare but horrific cases of children that have died from abuse and/or neglect - who happened to be home educated - should not be used by those campaigning for a register. The fact that the children in these cases were VISIBLE and KNOWN to child protection and other services PRIOR to their deaths shows that the current system works (despite the sad fact that these services ultimately failed in their duty to protect these children). Home education was NOT a factor at all, and a register of home educated children would not have changed the outcome.
6. A child's education is the responsibility of the parents and I therefore see no reason to have a register.
7. A register does not benefit the children involved. It is an intrusion on privacy. Home educated children are less likely to suffer abuse compared to their peers in school. Cases where abuse occurred were already known to authorities who didn't do their duty to protect the children involved. A register will not improve the outcomes for home educated children. Children removed from school education and likely to need safeguarding will already be known to the relevant authorities.
8. The school system failed our son so we had to take a different path. I'm not sure how putting his name on another register adds any value.
9. As parents we take responsibility on ourselves to educate our children and provide care and ensure their well being , no authority is or ever could be capable of that
10. I believe it would be costly and difficult to maintain and wouldn't serve any beneficial purpose.
11. Children are registered at birth, that should be enough.
12. The children are not invisible and creating register like criminals won't help ,it will only marginalise home educated kids .

13. Absolutely not. it should remain a free choice and offer help if required and make it voluntary
14. Mandatory registering of all home-educated children will inevitably lead to more monitoring and attempts by the LA to control what is taught and how it is taught.
15. no need
16. So that we get the help and support, and especially at the moment that our education groups will stay open rather than close like they have been now.
17. I am wary of our rights being eroded and don't think it's necessary. The relevant authorities already go beyond their remit & have little knowledge or understanding of alternative educational approaches. More oversight would facilitate their abuse of power & restrict the freedoms & flexibility that make our educational choices so successful.
18. Children are registered at birth. They are registered with the NHS, child benefits etc. They are traceable and exist. If a home education register was purely for the purpose of noting how a child is being educated, fine, but I suspect it will then go on to be used to implement assessment and curriculum goals on children on the register.
19. Children are registered at birth that is enough. We opt in to the school system not out therefore when Home Educating we are continuing the natural path of raising and educating our children.
20. A register would not guarantee safeguarding of a child or education. I am concerned the LA will try to persuade parents to follow a more 'school method' of education and overstep their powers.
21. School is opt IN and not opt out. In no other scenario would someone need to sign a register because they're NOT doing something.
22. The reason for a register seems to stem from the authorities believing children are at risk from their parents/carers, so safe guarding. This is extremely arrogant, disturbing and intrusive. Children are more at risk in school, hence the very unfortunate amount of suicide and self harming cases that get highlighted in the media.
23. The Australian model, whereby families apply to HE and then once approved, are able to access funding, grants, educational resource (exams etc)
24. They do not need to be keeping track of home educated children like they would need to for sex offenders!
25. It would be a form of control and harassment for the authorities taking away the freedom we want for our children
26. A register should be used in a positive way to inform parents of educational opportunities, to provide information about assistance, but not as a policing tool.
27. People who want to live under the radar will continue to do so, it will just create more work for underfunded and overstretched authorities and could prevent people seeking other support or services if in fear of being added to a register. I also have little faith of keeping that information secure.
28. To be honest, I assumed there was a register, but if there isn't, as long as the authorities have their own way of knowing where / how children are being educated, that's good enough for me.
29. I can't see how this benefits the child
30. It would give an accurate number for children being home educated
31. What use is a list? There is no end-user benefit.
32. I believe that creating such a register will be a step too far in removing responsibility for children from parents to the state. I am opposed to such a step. It will give the local authority unwarranted power over responsible, caring parents, effectively requiring them

to have state permission to do what they believe is best for their children. It is also likely that the parents who are a real concern are exactly the sort of people who won't register anyway, which will defeat the purpose.

33. I strongly feel education is a parent's responsibility. Parents can choose to send their children to a school, but study after study shows this is not the only (or best) way for children to learn.
34. Being known benefits only them for their records but does not benefit families and children at all. All it does is create extra work - ie reports and visits and harassment, whereas they do not give anything of value such as credits for subscriptions and clubs which would be far more useful.
35. Our children are registered elsewhere
36. Doctors, dentist etc our LA hasn't got the best track record for protecting our data and it feels as if it is creating a culture of guilty before proven innocent
37. Slippery slope to more monitoring. We would probably end up being pushed into recreating school at home. For most home ed parents I have met, if the kid could cope at school, we wouldn't have taken them out in the first place. Who would do the monitoring? On what basis would we be assessed? Would there be sanctions? This takes us back to square one - ie we took our child out of school because they would not authorise any more absences.
38. Children are registered at birth and a register of their presence already exists. A register for education is unnecessary as all children are required to be in education from the compulsory school age. Their age alone qualifies them for the requirement so an additional register for registration is unnecessary. If the register is attempting to monitor children for issues other than education, eg safeguarding, this is also unnecessary, invasive and open to abuse by unqualified officials. There are many other, more effective ways to monitor children for safeguarding purposes eg via trained medical professionals they come into contact with, or investigations by trained social workers from reports of concerned parties, if there is a concern raised, just as in the case of school going children. The assumption that children are at risk because they are at home completely undermines the legal principle of a person's innocence until proven guilty, and actively discriminates against home educating parents as opposed to other parents, who are assumed innocent in their own homes. The role of the local authority should be for support of education.
39. The idea that home educated children are 'invisible' is a myth. Our children visit doctors, dentists, libraries etc; they attend tutor groups and sports organisations. A register would be costly to set up and maintain, and would be of little benefit to home educating families.
40. Registering my children would not protect any child that is being abused, abusers will do it in plain sight of Authorities
41. I fail to see the point of registering home educated children. The parents have made an informed choice about their children's education as is their right. Our children are very visible in the community everyday and at no more risk than children in schools. Our children benefit from an education tailored to their specific needs given on a one-to-one basis. We offer more as parents than any school could hope to. I fear that registration could lead to regulation which would limit the educational choices we can make.
42. Criminalises a legal parental choice.
43. I personally do not have an issue with being on a register, but my interaction with my local LA [location] has always been extremely positive. Many HE families view it as an

intrusion: “we haven’t done anything wrong so why should we be on a register”. Unfortunately the internet is flooded with stories of many LA’s acting inappropriately, rudely and outside of their jurisdiction, which just encourages an environment of distrust within the HE community and a reluctance to engage. In my opinion, with a register has to come an extremely clear framework within which all LA’s are obliged to perform and to uphold certain standards.

44. I don't see anything wrong with a register if child protection is the driving force and if no one was interfering with families' chosen approaches to delivering education. What I would strongly object to is any kind of interference with the content of what families choose to teach their children, as often the primary purpose of taking children out of school is in order to offer an education that is tailored to the child and not available in the school system. For example my 9 year old's curriculum includes KS3 biology, GCSE chemistry and Latin, Spanish, philosophy, economics, politics, entrepreneurship, business finance, photography, documentary production, 1-to-1 maths and English tutoring and much more. He is 100% engaged and loving his education. If we had to go back to boring Year 4 maths and English, he would be devastated and without doubt become hugely depressed.
45. I see no reason for it under the current provision. Such a register would provide oversight of parents but without any safeguarding benefits nor requiring any input of use from authorities. A proper, collaborative approach, without bias towards in-schooling as a superior choice to HE, would be required as a standard - not currently present.
46. It creates a notion that home education is something to be regulated.
47. No benefit for the EHE child and creates a false confidence for the LA - any family "hiding" their child will likely fail to join the register.
48. As an ex teacher (qualifies to masters level in education), I feel that the assessment systems within mainstream schooling is the cause of most of the challenges. It has led to a narrowing of the curriculum, and expectation that children make linear progress, that children are made to feel like they are failing if they are just developmentally slightly behind their classmates. The worry with a register is that it would lead to greater monitoring and that this would end up being done against the school measures. If this would happen we would lose so many of the benefits of home ed, especially for those children who the school experience has already failed or proven a bad fit for.
49. This register would allow Council's to identify children who need to be safeguarded.
50. As things stand, with misunderstanding regarding home education pathways, I think this would cause a lot of problems for many home educating families, with LAs overstepping their remit.
51. It would be a complete waste of resources.
52. For children with anxiety because of school will be nightmare.

11. Do you think home educating families should be regularly inspected?*

Yes - 8.2%

No – 83.6%

Other (0.7% each)

- Not by the LA no. If a complaint is made by someone and social services are involved then that's under their remit. But the LA, no
- For the safety of the child maybe but not to the detriment of their education
- Possibly but voluntarily, without consequences if parents refuse
- Based on the family needs, communication in writing is preferred
- In conjunction with the above
- Only if there is a safeguarding issue
- Optional, in exchange for financial aid.
- If there is a need, most parents are going to ensure for their child's future they are learning regularly.
- Never inspected, as they (LA) would bring only their limited ideas and judgements
- Not "inspected", but checked in on

12. If you wish, please give your reasons for your answer about inspection of home education (73 responses)

1. A lack of maturity and tick box exercises lead to wrong outcomes. Home Education is not the same as Home School and therefore measures are often completely wrong and can seriously disrupt and impact children and parents mental health
2. I do believe an annual check in is good to ensure a standard of education is being provided. However this is not an Ofsted style inspection. There are so many philosophy towards home education, inspection can't be based upon the schooling systems belief for education ie curriculum aims per age group, there is far more flexibility in learning at at child's pace and with their interests and this needs to be respected within any inspection method.
3. I feel regular inspection would put my child under unnecessary stress and cause a lot of anxiety. I also feel that the way the current system works there would. It be enough understanding of his needs
4. An annual report from parents can sufficiently demonstrate whether a suitable education is being delivered or not. It is not within the remit of the authorities to impose a certain educating style or benchmarks of progress on home educated children. Having inspections opens the door to an invasion of privacy (what if our home looks nothing like a school? Will our education be deemed unsuitable because our living arrangements are just that - a home with children and pets and the usual clutter of a life that includes those?) Also the qualifications of those inspecting us are dubious at best. What are the criteria against which we would be inspected? Inspections allow for privacy invasions against nebulous targets that will vary between local authorities and probably between individual inspectors too.
5. I don't think it's a good use of resources. It's nearly impossible to accurately assess educational provision in the short amount of time that is likely to be allowed to an inspector. The provision will often be so much more than that produced on paper and often very tailored to the individual child. Without being very intrusive I think it would be very difficult to assess whether the provision was really suitable for that child. Resources are so stretched that I think I they need to better targeted.

6. I don't like the tone of the word inspection. I'm happy to send in an educational philosophy every year if need be but someone inspecting my home and our life is not acceptable. It sounds judgmental.
7. I think inspection is necessary but only if the inspection is done by qualified people who are open to all styles of learning. Having someone go round with a clipboard wanting to tick off items THEY believe is a proper education is overstepping and should not be in their remit.
8. People should be trusted with their own children. We know what is best for them.
9. Home education is the responsibility of the parent alone. However, if there was trust between parents and the local authorities and inspectors were well trained and experienced with home education methods/philosophies, child development and special needs, as well as understanding how learning looks and works outside the school model, I would not be so opposed to it.
10. Inspected is a harsh and imposing term.
11. In conjunction with the above, an annual report based system if families were accessing funding etc.
12. No home education setting and learning style is the same, some families require help and support, others prefer to educate their own way.
13. If the parents require help or advice or if there are concerns for child safety
14. School families aren't inspected.
15. Breaks right to family privacy and human rights.
16. This is an intrusion of privacy and interference in family life. Home educated children are already more visible in the community than their peers due to their many activities outside the home. There is no evidence that these children are "invisible". Schoolchildren do not have their homes inspected and it is wrong to suggest that home educated children should be subjected to this.
17. All the creativity and individualism in home Ed would diminish as people would be expected to conform to set assessment criteria as has been the case in schools.
18. Most of the parents who decide on home educate are more knowledgeable than officials who have no idea how it should work. The inspectors have no qualifications to assess quality of education or special needs of the children and their interference is more disruption than help.
19. The authorities know less about alternative educational approaches than home educators do, they are not qualified to assess and have nothing helpful to offer. They bring their own prejudices to a position of power over parents & children, and should not be entering people's homes to inspect anything. Home educators often have a holistic view of education & development which is inseparable from family life and is a natural extension of parenting rather than a separate thing. Being inspected on parenting is an infringement of rights & privacy, and an intrusion.
20. One cannot assume that every parent is a model parent who wants the best for their children. There are children in danger of abuse and neglect and this should be seen as equally important as parent's right to freedom of choice over the education of their children.
21. It is not the place of authorities to inspect since they have not shown many of us any competence in this area. If you fail my child in school, how do you inspect our in-home provision with any authority?
22. I would not object to home visits if the LA gave some financial support.
23. There is a doubt who should be performing the inspections? Staff at LAs is not qualified to do so, one needs to have a full understanding of home education to do this properly. I do not wish to be assessed by someone who believes we are mimicing school at home.

24. We receive no support or funding. Being Inspected by someone who doesn't understand the child individually is useless. It is an extension of parenting. It doesn't fall with on same need for inspection as schools as school inspections inspect that someone delegated to do the job proves to the parents they are doing the job this is irrelevant when talking about home education. You don't even inspect failing schools regularly. Making time for these inspections especially with sen children would be even more stress an annual report should be adequate.
25. From the perspective of an home educating adopter, a stranger coming into the safe environment that we have created to 'inspect' us would be detrimental to my child who has a form of C-PTSD.
26. Inspections would have to follow a set pattern which runs counter to the concept of home education. We all educate differently because each of our children is an individual. Home education is tailor made to fit the child. There is no checklist you could apply to cover all of our approaches.
27. The age-old we don't inspect school kids in holidays / under 5s argument. We live in a democracy, we have to assume innocence, good intent and competence.
28. If home educating families are to be inspected, where do we stop this logic? What about families of babies and young children who do not attend nursery? Seeing a health visitor is currently voluntary - will this be made compulsory instead? Just in case families are not providing a good home environment? Should prospective parents be inspected before they have children?
29. Who, within local authorities, will decide what should be inspected? What parameters will be used, given that the home education frequently allows children much more freedom to learn outside of the school curriculum. What qualifications will those inspecting the families hold? How will that allow them to make a judgement on the differences between children in their area and their learning needs?
30. If a child is in school they aren't inspected individually and legally the parents are still responsible for their education. Fear of inspections causes undue stress and invades a family's safe space. LAs are also inconsistent with what they look for and processes and procedures that follow. The people doing the inspections rarely have any experience or understanding of what effective Home Ed actually looks like unless it resembles school at home.
31. More respect, trusting parents to know their children and needs and if a parent has submitted a detailed report, accepting that rather than saying that a parent's "word" or report is not enough when it is the parent educating!
32. Home education is an extension of family life, I don't feel this should be encroached on unless there is cause for concern
33. Look above
34. For some children this can be really traumatic, it's hard to judge where a child is when a family chooses child led learning as not a lot of "sit down2 paper work will be completed, learning happens in ways that can't often be controlled, checked or physically proven
35. To protect from harm, but not to compare academics vs peers
36. I think having inspections would be very stressful for all involved, home educators all home educate in their own way based on what works well for their family so nothing can be compared to another family or school.
37. As above a child's education is the responsibility of the parent so does not need to be inspected. Inspections would take away that right because someone else would be deciding what constitutes an acceptable education for that child.

38. Inspection assumes that parents won't ask for help if they need it. Let the parents ask. It should be opt-in. Inspection would be intrusive and would be too difficult for an outsider to judge individualised education in practice. Trust the parents, we want what's best for our children. We will ask for help if we need it.
39. Only if the HE family specifically Request it, or there is a known welfare issue.
40. Who is qualified to decide a child is 'on track' and education is 'suitable'. No one knows the child best. Very few people go to the trouble of having their child with them all day if they don't really care for that child! They have a vested interest in their child and will do anything to help them cope!
41. I feel some families may need extra support but also feel people should not be hounded I guess let them ask if they require help and offer guidance.
42. Families are not regularly inspected pre school, in the holidays or post 16. It is an invasion of family life. If there are concerns about a child's welfare that are already powers in place to deal with these concerns. There has never been a case when a home educated child has suffered abuse where the family was not already known to Social Services pre non school attendance, In fact I believe these were Children Missing Education not Home Educated.
43. There are many styles of home education. How would the LA respond to the different styles. I already have a busy workload of organising my child's education and recording what we do and inspections would take up further time. Some home ed parents may feel anxious what an inspection would entail and may feel pressured to follow the national curriculum.
44. The reasons for home educating are usually broad and unless the people doing the inspecting are familiar with the many many reasons and benefits to educating outside a school setting I feel the 'tick list' they would be sent with would mimic ofstead. Missing the point and focusing on measurable outcomes rather than health benefits, vast real life experiences, family relationships etc etc the whole bigger picture that cannot be inspected.
45. If we have chosen to 'privately' educate our children and are providing annual reports to confirm they are receiving a good education, then there should be no need to 'inspect' anything.
46. A benefit of home education is that parents can decide how they wish to educate their children and the children can work at their own pace. Home education methods usually look completely different to school teaching methods. Having an inspection suggests that the inspector has defined standards / expectations of how the child should be educated. I believe this should be up to the parent unless they are specifically asking for help.
47. I feel identifying and supporting those families in need or requesting help is where the resources should be focussed
48. It is the legal duty of the parent to educate their child, not the state. If inspections were allowed it should be for safeguarding only not academic attainment
49. Children get uptight when inspected, as well as parents, which can have a long term stress effect; inhibiting the flow of learning in the home and outdoors. There are many different models of education and they won't necessarily be the same as the National Curriculum. As Inspectors will be primarily trained in the NC then a bias would be present. Many children who are homeschooled have specific learning difficulties, with a number having ASD tendencies; which are best understood by the parent; and secondly by an expert in the field. Home visits for these children/parents would be counter-productive.
50. I think the use of the word "inspection" has negative connotations and implies you are searching for something that is wrong. My "inspections" have been great. We provide a report detailing how we fill the week, what we are studying, what we plan on studying. We (Myself and the children) then have an informal meeting with the "inspector" (!! You really

need to change the term!!), they look at a variety of their work and then at a later date send us a report, which had always been extremely positive. Lots of HE families are suspicious of "inspections" and maybe before making it compulsory, work needs to be done to improve the image of LA's?! I would argue that many schools fail to provide education to many of the individuals within their establishments (where are the repercussions for schools whose pupils have spent 14 years in education and leave without passing one single exam?) and many children leave school with mental health problems acquired through their schooling experience, and yet school inspections have not prevented this. I would also ask what will be the repercussions of a failed inspection? How is it being judged whether education is appropriate or not? What do you need to do to pass or fail? These need to be clarified before being made compulsory.

51. Inspections are for schools so that parents know if their child is being educated appropriately and the school is functioning well in all interests for the children. HE Parents already know how their child's education is going.
52. There is no need unless flagged by child protection authorities as vulnerable as with any family, whether home educating or in mainstream school.
53. I think annually is fine (as we currently have). However some families may welcome and benefit from more contact as long as the purpose is genuine support and practical educational advice from a sensible, flexible professional who has an understanding of the many different approaches and models of education that families choose to take when homeschooling.
54. Home education cannot be measured to a standard since children learn at their own pace. It would undermine the very reason for homeschooling. Measuring learning with a system.
55. They do not know our goals and visions, they do not have a clue about the beautiful way our education programmes are geared to match our children's individual personalities and strenghts etc. They will only judge based on their limited understanding and this can be only negative as they will base it on averages but not on individuals.
56. As schools are run and funded by the state, there is a need for inspection. When parents accept full responsibility for their child's education, the state no longer has any need to inspect.
57. I think this would take away valuable time which should be spent focussing on my children, and would bring anxiety and stress into our learning environment.
58. Why we need to be inspected if we are not doing anything wrong, we love our kids and want the best for them, if they want to inspect us, so all the country, every home, every school, every work place, every business should be inspected as well which would make our country communist instead a democracy
59. Giving a child an adequate and age-appropriate education is completely the child's parent's responsibility and the parent is best placed to know what is best for the child. Inspections and monitoring puts unnecessary pressure on parents and subsequently their children too, and will inevitably affect the education that is provided and disturb the 'love for learning' atmosphere that we try so hard to create at home.
60. Parents aren't generally inspected for their parenting techniques/ meal planning/ housekeeping. Parents are assumed competent. Why should competent home educated parents be singled out? There are many ways to raise a concern for a child's welfare - funding and resources should focus on supporting families rather than inspections.
61. We are not an institution, we are families and unless there is any suspicion of abuse, families are not Meant to be inspected to see how they are getting on, so why should home educator be?

62. I do not believe there is a mandate for state inspection of home educators, nor any evidence that such inspection would produce any positive result. I can immediately think of several negative results—stress for parents and children, or time wasted preparing that could be better spent learning, for example.
Since home educators don't all use the same materials or methods, it would also be burdensome for an inspector to have to assess the education—or burdensome for the educator, to have to fit their system into an official pattern.
In any case, the education provided by home educators is already assessed—in the exam room, in the workplace, in the real world for which home-educating parents have sought to prepare their children.
63. Again, as things stand, with widespread lack of understanding of the value of alternative routes in education, this could be very damaging and disruptive for many children and families. It is very unnatural for children to be expected to reach certain goals at certain ages across the board. This is the reason many people home educate and it is unnecessary and unhelpful, to say the least, for this standardisation which only exists for the purposes of mass schooling, to apply to home educated children.
64. I understand they want to somehow make sure that children are offered opportunities to learn but I think asking parents to write a report on this is enough to showcase this.
65. Yearly
66. I believe that a written report once a year is enough. Home should not be invaded, as it often is the safe place.
67. Every parent has the right to educate their child/children which is can be autonomous, follow the National Curriculum or academic, how can an 'inspector' justify if this is correct or not. Also to allow a stranger into your home, is quite worrying, how do we know correct protocols have been followed and will the inspectors homes checked to make sure there is nothing untoward in their house too.
68. This is the "myth" of invisible home ed families. We are not all religious nut jobs, locking our kids in cupboards. We are not irresponsible parents. We are the MOST RESPONSIBLE PARENTS. We see how our kids are suffering and do something about it. We give up jobs. We give up our free time. We put the health and well being of our kids first. Kids go to the doctors, dentists, loads of home ed meetings etc etc - they are seen by plenty of people. As I mentioned above, on what basis would we be assessed? If we are deemed to be "failing" , would we be told to send them back? My son would never set foot in a mainstream secondary again - who is going to pay for the swathes of specialist provision that would be required. The vast majority of home ed parents, that I have met, have kids with special needs, who gave up battling the system. Is the LA, that failed our kids in the first place, going to suddenly pull proper provision out of the hat? I don't think so! They will want to send our kids back to the crummy places that nearly destroyed them in the first place.
69. There is no need. If families are struggling they can seek support. Home education is not an easy choice. It is highly unlikely for people to opt to home educate unless they have their child's best interests at heart.
70. We have stepped outside the school system, we have chosen to follow our own path and should be trusted to do the best for our children.
71. I think those who wish to have support should have it, and I think the authorities should always offer, and I think families where there are children identified as 'at risk' should be inspected, but other than that, I think it really is ok for the state to trust the parent to be parenting. No one inspects any other aspect of my family life, so why this?

72. What is the purpose of inspection? What are the credentials of the person inspecting? What criteria are the inspector going to use for their assessment?
What is the purpose of the inspection from the perspective of the inspector and/or local authority?
73. Having to talk to a stranger about my education would be very stressful

13. Are there any changes you would like to see in how the local authority and public services treat home educating families? (75 responses)

1. More respect and ready to learn how and why home Education succeeds. Open and non judgemental dialogue to understand best practise and build a body of knowledge around that which families can use. Home Education is not always a choice but when faced with it families need more help to make it work well
2. No
3. Children educated at home should have access to the same additional support as at school eg ed psych/OT/SLT. Given the LA is not spending any money on that child's education, this is the least they could do. An annual nominal financial contribution or tax relief would be useful
4. Yes - without disdain or suspicion but with respect and support.
5. I would like to see things like speech and language or vaccines or physio more easily obtained
6. Yes. They need to start from a point of respect and acknowledgement of the validity of our education choices. They need to understand that their purpose is to ensure an education is being delivered, not to assess it, not to meet with parents or children, not to threaten parents with school attendance orders or social services visits. Unless they have evidence to suggest that education is being neglected, they need to embark from a starting point of trust and respect.
7. I would like local authorities to be better informed about home education and not to see it as school at home. I would like there to be greater awareness that home education is often focused on the whole child rather than just measured by exam results. I would like LA's to have a more supportive role - eg facilitating exam access for home educators.
8. I would like there to be some sort of financial support (even if just exam entrance fees) - this could be in exchange for working with the LEA
9. Don't make us pay for GCSE's
10. With a lot more open mindedness. Many LA staff are judging and do not understand the unique needs of children.
11. I want to see them approach us positively and not from a negative suspicious attitude. Some of them actually have it as a goal to get the kids back in school which is insulting.
12. To treat families the same they would any family and not be constantly suspicious of people who choose to educate their children differently.
13. More support needed regarding educational opportunities, especially for parents with SEN children.
14. I would like to see home educating families treated with respect and understanding rather than distrust and condescension. Parents are committed to doing what is best for their children. They work extremely hard to provide their children with what is best for them, often when a school has failed them. This should be encouraged and admired not stigmatised. It's

our job as parents to support our children the best we can whether at school or at home - it makes no to see home education as a negative.

15. Their starting point needs to not be from the department that specifically focuses on vulnerable children! All the presumptions need to be dropped and local authorities need to re-educate themselves on both the rich and diverse approaches to home ed which are adopted by different families, and also remind themselves of the limitations and shortfalls of the British school system as the alternative.
16. Yes, understanding that elective home educators think very carefully about the decisions we make. Elective home education is a valid choice and we should not feel looked down upon and feel we have to constantly justify that decision. The majority of parents choose to send their children to school but nobody interrogates their choices!
17. Home visits should be pre-arranged and only at the wishes of the parent/educator.
18. Properly trained and qualified staff; contact initiated by family if support required.
19. The local authority should generally assume all is going well as it is in the majority of cases. It is unfair and unjustified to view and treat parents as incompetent and needing supervision.
20. Yes, by not being first referred to the inclusion/truancy officer before being passed to a home Ed team (which I'm not even sure exists in our area) I was interrogated with a very passive aggressive set of questions from the inclusion officer who kept phoning to talk to me despite receiving my letter in which I notified her that I didn't need a home visit and I was very happy with my decision to home educate and that I confirmed I hadn't been "off rolled" by the school.
21. Yes -treat parents with respect like adults not like naughty children who need to be controlled by authority. We are not dictatorship and most LA behave like one .
22. More trust, and less judgement
23. Culture needs to change to be more equal, parents need to be respected and local authorities need to build trust by offering support rather than trying to seek people out and monitor them.
24. They require training in how to deal respectfully with parents when contacting them, to give support without judgement.
25. Providing places for us to meet without paying hire fees or rent.
26. Providing information about what help and services are available to us when they first hear about us entering into Home Education, rather than visiting and judging us before we have settled into our new roles.
27. Assisting with the process of entering our children for examinations.
28. Paying for qualifications. We have saved the system money by educating our children ourselves, so why do we have to pay for qualifications that are required by the system to prove our children have been educated? For example, if school children can take GCSEs for free, and we pay tax like other tax payers, then by rights we should also not have to pay to enter GCSEs. The same goes for NVQs and other qualifications that any school child has access to.
29. Help with resources
30. Less checking, more trust in parents being able to safeguard their children. Also some interest in the research of education and neuro education so they understand that it is impossible for a child to not to learn.
31. Yes less heavy handed and suspicious. They are bullying and act like know what is better for your child even with no knowledge of said child
32. Adopters are one of the groups most likely to home educate. Often we have no choice. Our children are 20 times more likely to be excluded than their peers (Adoption UK). Our children

thrive in home education, it allows us to form the bonds of attachment we need for our children to become healthy adults. If we could have access to the same Pupil Premium Plus funding as schools that would be amazing. I was a foster carer. I am an adopter. I have never met a home educated child at risk of harm. I have met many children who have been abused whilst also in full-time education. I have researched and looked into this subject at great length and I can find no evidence that a home educated child is at greater risk than a mainstream educated child. The fact that home educating parents are so invested in their children is a positive thing. We are not a threat to our children's wellbeing. We should be treated fairly and without discrimination.

33. Tolerance. An understanding that home educating families are not, by default, abusive.
34. To assume that people are not opting for Home Ed for reasons that would cause safeguarding concerns. Many people have been traumatised by their dealings with schools and authority figures and that reluctance to provide copious amounts of evidence does not suggest having something to hide.
35. More respect, less threatening! My LA continuously threatened us with court even after submitting a 20-page report! Trusting parents to know kids also trying not to fool parents (insisting on visits, trying to find I
36. Yes to be treated with mutual respect
37. More respect for families
38. Yes, a most understanding approach should be provided. It's a lot easier to send the kids to school. So if a parent decided to use a much more challenging approach and dedicate themselves to HE, then LA should treat this choice with respect and understanding.
39. yes, we often want the best for our kids and we're often seen as doing them a disservice
40. More funding available for exams.
41. Consistency in approach. Funding support and access to Exam Centres.
42. Yes, leave them alone and stop going on about registering children. Their education is my responsibility and I take that responsibility seriously. I don't need anyone interfering.
43. It would be nice not to feel ostracised for taking a different educational route as the norm isn't for every child as long as it can be seen we are doing the best for our children which I have seen in all home ed families I have met so far then leave them be.
44. With some respect and acceptance that home education is a valid positive choice.
45. It would be nice to have somebody who can accept school is not the be all and end all and just like everything in life appreciate there are different ways of getting to the same outcome: adulthood- no one way is better but for someone to see home education as an equal choice as school for families. Someone without bias. Someone without the 'everyone should go to school' attitude and rather focus on the everyone is entitled to a full education attitude because that can occur in many different places- not just a classroom, with one teacher in one school room.
46. With support. Support families, not penalise and make them feel threatened.
47. The last letter I received was aggressive and demanding; in effect adopting a high-handed approach. The Local Authority needs to treat parents with more respect. It should be more of a case of 'How Can We Help?' Building relationships is important.
48. Not personally with my LA
49. More respect that HE is as much an education choice as school, private school or home tutoring. Less assumption that HE children are missing out somehow!
50. Be respectful of families choices, offer support and learning resources.
51. Sadly some local authorities are hostile towards families, thus discouraging engagement from families and making parents fearful of judgment. People working in this area should

- have improved training and helped to see the huge benefits of home education. They should be genuinely positive about home education. People who believe that there is no better alternative to school ought not to be employed in these roles.
52. Yes, have more respect for us. Many of us sacrifice a huge amount to nurture children with amazing intelligence, kindness, joy, motivation, confidence, creativity and self-esteem. Schools typically focus way too much on 'stuff' on paper etc. LAs need to leave us alone to get on with our truly wonderful work.
 53. Easier access to exams in the future
 54. More awareness of home education for all public services.
 55. They seem to feel we need checking up on in case we are not doing the best for our children. We are their parents, of course we want the best for our children! We sacrifice time, money and employment to give them the best (i.e. home education) but instead of encouragement we get suspicion, instead of help we get blame. We seem to have to defend and justify our choice before anyone will help us. Even those where it is of no consequence even doctors and dentists.
 56. Yes, with respect and validation , education doesn't mean scholarship, education happens anywhere and has different approach that can suit everyone needs, as we are not all the same, the education shouldn't be all the same for everyone, should be tailored as we are doing as a home educating families.
 57. I would like to see home education held up to the public as an honourable and perfectly acceptable way of educating children. There are still many who view it with scepticism and who question us when we are out and about. Society in general still believes that outsourcing our children's education to schools is the best way to educate children, which I truly believe is not the case for every child.
 58. This should be seen as an intelligent and reasonable education choice for families.
 59. The GCSE are very complicated And expensive to book and sit, I think there should be support regarding exams so it's easier for our children to take them.
 60. Provide access to educational software, training and resources on request, to enable educators, ie microsoft and apple discounts. Ensure any organisation offering school sessions, also offers HE sessions. Ie, science centres, museums, sports facilities
 61. In practical terms, improving accessibility for home educators to exam centres would be appreciated. It is not always easy to find a local school that is willing to allow external candidates to sit exams, which can lead to home-educated children having to travel significant distances to sit their exams.
 62. It would be great if there were more provision and support for home educating families without the fear of being inspected and served compulsory school orders.
 63. Stop treating us like a safeguarding issue, have an open mind to understand different learning styles, more appreciation of parents who offer great opportunities for their children to learn a range of things, offer clear support to access GCSEs.
 64. Stop harassing families
 65. The emphasis should be on supporting home educators
 66. Treat them with respect and support.
 67. To be more understanding and realise sen children literally have no choice to be HE, due to support withdrawn, not given or just unable to cope with school and the pressure. A more positive light needs to be shone on our completely supportive and hard working community.
 68. Treat them with respect! We are not guilty until proven innocent! Local authorities don't like to accept a report as "evidence". They want proof. Why should we be held to a higher standard than in a court of law? Return our phone calls, when we ask. If we ask to be

contacted by letter, don't badger us with phone calls. Easy access to exams facilities should be compulsory (including arrangements for special needs) at no charge. It is a pittance when compared to how much they save when we take the kids out of school. Stop off rolling. We were not technically off rolled, but were left with no choice but to remove our son. If he were an adult, it would have been called constructive dismissal. Make EHCP provision easier to get. Give more weight to emotional and social needs. Just because a child is doing well academically, it should not be a reason to refuse help. If help had been available to us, we would not have started to home ed. However, now we have seen how much better our son is doing, we would never send him back. Make flexi schooling for maths and English (as a minimum) a right at 14-16. Reintroduce funding for places like Nova Training (this is where we were planning to use, until the course had to be cancelled)

69. Keep an open mind, please. School is a massively stressful place for some children, not just educationally where they are expected to fit in a box but simply the environment. Those children that are sensitive to sound/crowds/hustle etc cannot learn as they are frightened and on a constant 'high alert'.
70. Funding for exams without a demand to monitor provision would be welcome
71. Yes, with respect, support and understanding. I wish they would drop the accusations and mistrust
72. We have had virtually no dealings with them re: home education, so I don't feel I can offer an answer
73. Gaining more knowledge of different home education styles and individual families before visiting
74. Local authorities and public services should: Approach home educators without prejudice; Acknowledge that elective home education is not a safeguarding issue per se; Not assume that they know what's best for a child, rather than the child's parent; Keep to national guidance (and particularly not request more information than they are entitled to); Fully train their staff in the government's home education guidelines; Fully train their staff in different educational styles - far too many LA staff seem to expect that home education should replicate school style learning; Not conflate elective home education and off-rolling (off-rolling is a school issue); Not conflate elective home education and illegal schools (there is already legislation for illegal schools).

14. How has COVID-19 impacted your home education? (Tick all that apply) 140 responses

- Exams cancellations meant no grades – 9.3%
- Classes and workshops had to stop – 69.3%
- Socialising was limited – 75.7%
- Had to cut back on things due to financial pressures – 12.9%
- Had more time outdoors – 45%
- Changed approach to more book work - 10%
- Children more stressed – 13.6%
- Parents more stressed – 16.4%
- Improved family life due to furlough/working from home – 38.6%
- Strained family life due to furlough/working from home – 4.3%
- SEN support stopped – 3.6%

- Greater public support for home education – 23.6%
- New friends due to influx of new home educators - 25.7%

Responses to 'Other' (all 0.7% unless otherwise indicated)

- ❖ My husband now works from home which has greatly improved the amount of time we can spend together as a family and my husband can be more involved in teaching the children. On the flip-side it is often challenging keeping the noise-levels low enough to enable my husband to take calls and concentrate on his work.
- ❖ We always spend a lot of time outdoors anyway but during lockdown we couldn't do it with friends.
- ❖ Raised public awareness of Home Education so more activities for HE children became available.
- ❖ Mentally children are struggling as fun sports are cancelled. All 'fun' of any sort has been cancelled in 2020....
- ❖ Influx of children who left school has unfortunately brought a lot of school behaviours to our local Home Ed activities. Very competitive and anxious children, bullying behaviour, poor losers, exposure to adult media and over-sexualised dance behaviour etc. Rough behaviour. Parents new to home education who are not used to being with their children and can't or won't discipline them as previously they were at school all day. It just shows how good elective home education is, to contrast the behaviour of the home educated children with the ones who have only just come out of school.
- ❖ Enjoyed museums which were quieter than normal
- ❖ There were positives and negatives. But the hardest was not being able to socialise and attend classes which they love
- ❖ We are paying for tutoring in a few IGCSE subjects but are not sure if we will be able to get assessed grades if exams are cancelled.
- ❖ Forest school stopped
- ❖ Increased availability of online education. For example my children have enrolled in a fantastic online democratic school two days a week.
- ❖ Personally, we really enjoyed the time being together as a family for several months!
- ❖ Children were worried about not being able to continue the normal routines. Many places we rely on for education were closed. Playgrounds for socialization and physical activity. Museums for history, science, etc. leisure centre for swimming. Group education and activities cancelled.
- ❖ Lack of clarity and provision/consideration for home educated children in second lockdown - when schools are still open, but many activities, classes and venues accessed by home educated children are stopping or closing
- ❖ Increased use of new technologies and more opportunities to attend online groups and classes. More e-learning resources available.
- ❖ Very little changed except the pause in group meetings. Overall it has been positive and has gained more understanding for HE. 1.4%
- ❖ Socialisation (despite being an issue so often raised) has been zero challenge in normal times. Socialisation is harder this year.
- ❖ Rules were unclear & restrictive for our informal (social) educational style. After months of isolating & distancing, we are now meeting weekly with 2 other families, this might look to some like a social meeting that flouts the rules, some clarity on our exemption would be helpful if anyone reports us.

- ❖ Difficulty accessing museums or places of interest to visit (1.4%)
- ❖ Only during Lockdowns, where things like indoor activities and classes were put on hold.
- ❖ It hasn't - we only started in September of this year

15 What could be done to mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic on your home education? (86 responses)

1. Allow Home Education groups to continue with spaces to meet particularly through the winter. Shelters in parks would be really helpful
2. Have clearer home ed guidelines issued that recognise the same aims for home ed children apply as children in school, but are achieved in a different way, and need to still be facilitated
3. Greater clarity on what home educators were allowed to do as things began to open up.
4. Clear cut rules for home educators with either some kind of support bubble system of clear indication of how many can come together
5. Home educated children needed to be acknowledged as having legitimate educational needs for meeting up once schools went back. Classing them with out of school settings of education was ignorant at best. They needed validity in the ways they normally learn and meet - outdoors, informally, indoors but not in the homes of other home educated children, in sports clubs and craft clubs that do not always meet the requirements of an after school club.
6. More support to allow home educators to access exam grades.
7. Still allow educational groups to continue
8. Allow he to carry on in the same way as schools.
9. Clear guidance for home educators. We always seem to be left out.
10. Also access to exams.
11. Include HE meet-ups as education.
12. Allow more home education groups to run indoors when national lockdowns are not on
13. Make sure that home ed is included in any education allowances so home ed groups still allowed to run if schools are also open etc
14. Home education activities and workshop locations/providers should be considered as educational settings!
15. Allow HE children to meet in the outdoor spaces.
16. A strategy needs to be in place for exams/grades
17. An overall understanding that education automatically covers all activities and meet ups we arrange and attend as home educators. We don't need separate guidance just for it to be clear that if schools continue then we can continue our activities.
18. Still be allowed to meet in small groups
19. Better support for self employed workers
20. Include home education settings and meetings in list of permissible activities.
21. Realise that home education looks different. Allow 'educational' establishments and groups to continue their activities. Home education is often "family and community education" and as such means that older/younger siblings, parents, extended family, friends, and community groups participate in providing education experiences. This will look different but is still equally important compared to the activities and socialization which happens in schools.
22. Financial support for home Ed families in order to buy resources for teaching
23. Help with exams -more centres /school.to accept external candidates,move to more exam - centred IGCSEs (no coursework), discounts for home educators

24. Each time The Government has announced changes to the law and issue guidance, they haven't thought to give clear statements over how Home Educators are affected. We have had to put groups and our education on hold while we request answers from MPs regarding what we are allowed to do. In future it would be respectful to be considered when making announcements that impact our ability to educate our children.
25. Offer options for group meets within safe parameters - eg outdoors, registered attendants, etc
26. Allowing all home educated children the same opportunities as mainstream educated children. Support with resources and virtual class lessons and access to workshops.
27. Clear guidance on what home educators can and cannot do.
28. La to back off hounding for things they are not legally entitled to eg. Work samples
29. Covid 19 has had no impact on my home educated child's education.
30. However, my mainstream educated children might need a bit of extra support to get them through their exams.
31. We've really enjoyed it as a new challenge in the same way as any other challenge we might have set ourselves. It has raised our child's interest in politics and civil rights, democracy and freedoms etc, also our involvement in our local community... as long-term home educators, we also enjoyed a 'raised profile' as expert support to peers who normally attend school... it has also stretched IT skills maintaining a virtual social life and organisation skills as we ran some parcel swaps etc. All good for us, really...
32. Continuing to afford home educated children the same rights as schooled children.
33. Exclude children from numbers of people able to meet. Exclude educational and social meet ups for Home Ed children. Classes and facilities should be allowed to stay open - ie swimming and sport lessons, dance and drama classes. Clearer guidance so Home Ed organisers understand what they are allowed to do and need to do to keep people safe.
34. Clear guidelines for home education groups re: education exemptions and expectations.
35. Allowing home education groups to continue providing educational experiences for children whilst schools are still open
36. Only limited movement
37. Parity with schools eg peripatetic education and all home education group activities continue.
38. Some paid subscriptions should be free during lockdowns. Private tutoring should be allowed for HE, as those classes as part of the day-to-day education.
39. give us the same opportunities as school, the ability to meet in groups etc
40. To allow home educating families to meet up still to allow children some social contact with other children and also for parents to support one another in their home education
41. Keep our groups open
42. Educational activities such as dance classes, nature groups etc should be allowed to go ahead
43. Allow local bubbles for learning to create opportunities for social interactions
44. Being able to carry on education in groups just like schools can.
45. Children should be able to learn together in groups as they are able to in schools. To do this it should be possible to hire halls etc. for educational groups if the schools are open. External classes should be able to continue for home educated children.
46. There is a lot of anxiety among those new to home education when they see that the Covid guidance on education doesn't mention self-organised home ed groups. A more trusting and supportive climate to home education would be very welcome.
47. Easier local access to sit Exams.

48. Allow home educators to meet as usual and home education spots activities and meet ups to continue
49. Covid was not my main reason for choosing to home educate my son is autistic he struggles a school.
50. Treat home education and related activities the same as schools and allow them to continue.
51. Whether Home Educated or Educated in school, the constant mention at the start of the pandemic from officials that children would be a lost generation academically was negative and unforgivable and didn't need to be the case at all. This attitude severely impacted many children unnecessarily . There should have been a much more positive and healthy attitude towards the changes they faced.
52. As a Home Educating family the thing we have missed the most has been our educational trips and social interactions.
53. Greater freedom (children in schools are mixing in great numbers - larger than 6 and obviously outside a single household!). Many home education meet ups are outdoors anyway!
54. Access to free learning resources. We actually have no problems accessing our learning materials except for the cancellation of classes. Socialisation when lockdown occurs will be harder. Further clarification is needed on how home educators can meet. We normally meet in nature.
55. Treat home educators as educators and not close our classes when schools do not close.
56. Better guidance for home educating families meeting
57. Allow home educating children to socialise / meet to play whilst schools are still open, even if only outside. Children are learning all the time so socialisation and play is education and is important for good mental health.
58. Make it clear what home education groups can operate when Covid restrictions are introduced
59. I feel that as a home educating family we are significantly lower risk than children attending school, as our meet ups are often outside or in smaller groups. Although we are still allowed to gather for educational reasons, I personally feel nervous about the idea of having to justify myself. We are cautious as a family as we have vulnerable loved ones. But this is potentially my own concern as legally we are allowed to continue to meet. One main challenge though is that many of our events involve parents staying with their children and this seems to be challenging with the Covid guidance.
60. Clear directives as to what is allowed, outdoor groups etc
61. I would say the only thing has been the inability of HE kids to get their exams this summer. My son had an exam cancelled via a local high school and they just washed their hands of us (despite government guidance to help every child to get a grade). He was also due to sit an exam with an external centre (tutors and exams in [location]) and they went out of their way to help pupils registered with them to get a predicted grade. How they dealt with the exam situation should be upheld as the gold standard for helping HE kids and it's a shame more places didn't handle the situation as they did. Other than that, there's not a great deal that can be done-it's a pandemic, it's a bit rubbish for everyone!
62. To recognise that HE falls under the same rules as school so that HE children/groups maintain all the same exemptions as schools do. This needs to be a clear directive from Government.
63. Allowing indoor and outdoor activities, classes and social groups to continue in a Covid safe manner, especially as schools are still permitted to remain open.
64. I'm not sure

65. Allowing sports classes in groups. Allowing tutoring and art classes in groups.
66. No more lockdowns.
67. Clear public guidance that home educators are still permitted to mix for educational activities as long as schools are open.
68. I think regular classes and activities for home educated children which are educational should be allowed to continue.
69. Provide access to exams somehow and centre assessed grades. My daughter was withdrawn from her A level exams because she was a private candidate. She had to sit them in October months after her last tuition and it has meant she can not apply for apprenticeships this year. Private candidates need a fair way to access exams and get grades in these unusual times.
70. Validate the role of the families that home educate allocating the taxes that are paid to support schools to the ones decided for home education.
71. No pandemic
72. Continue to allow home educated children to meet in Home ed bubbles for educational purposes.
73. I'm so thankful that we home educate as this was a constant during the initial lockdown. Life changed (we're not generally at home!) but we had already worked out a routine and parental support so did not have to juggle education and work.
74. To be allowed to meet as educational groups and let the children socialize
75. Clearer guidance for home educators, not just schools
76. More consideration and clear guidance for individuals and organisations providing classes or activities for (not necessarily exclusively for) home educated children.
77. Let home ed groups continue especially outdoor ones!! Eg, home ed sports, forest schools, self organised groups of nature studies, anything organised as home education. And letting parents fulfill their duty to provide learning experiences for their children as long as schools are allowed to stay open!
78. Freedom for home educators to meet up at inside venues
79. To allow HE social groups to take place, with groups of six children, excluding parents.
80. We are paying for tutors, (expensive!) so a third party will be able to assess my son's grades. MAKE SURE HOME ED KIDS CAN GET A QUALIFICATION BASED ON A TUTOR ASSESSMENT.
81. None, it was the catalyst to begin it as I had no idea how little education she was able to access at school.
82. Allow small, social, multi family bubbles
83. My parter was able to spend more rime with us which was amazing. We went to Mexico and lived like locals there, went to other European countries and spent time there learning different languages and cultures, best thing that happened to us.
84. Allowing all home ed and parent / child groups to continue, where appropriate Covid-secure measures can be put in place
85. Allow extra curricular activities
86. Support for HE community/support groups - and the possibility for Home Ed families to meet up so that children can play and socialise (not just purely for "educational purposes").

16 If you have any other comments for the education select committee, please leave them here: (36 responses)

1. Home Education is a valuable and for some only solution where children are unable to cope in a mainstream school environment. It is not a choice but a necessity and needs proper support and funding from government that respects the rights of its citizens. A best practise body of knowledge on Home Education that stats an open dialogue with local government is vital. Local authorities vary greatly in their approach typically based on negative perceptions rather than being supportive to families who need or desire to Home Educate
2. We have joined a large community of parents educating SEN children at home as the school environment is not fit for their needs, there is a lack of understanding or skill in managing these children in mainstream, who are seen asnot severe enough to get an EHCP, which might then enable them in the mainstream. The lack of support for these parents is massive but they take the step to home educate their children so that their children don't develop mental health issues from constant anxiety and stress , often not seen or recognised by school and watch their children flourish at home. A SEN home ed section of the LA would be a wonderful step forward....if community services could recognise home ed children and funding could be portioned appropriately
3. It is my right and privilege to be able to home educate my daughter. Seeing her learn, develop confidence and even better her social skills has been fantastic. Being able to stop the slide she was on in secondary school in relation to her mental health has also been a huge blessing. I did not come to the decision to home educate lightly and take my daughter's education very seriously. I would appreciate a system and government that took this into account. I would like to see more respect shown to home educating families. I would also like to see some funding given to us to help us educate our children seeing as the government is saving a considerable amount not having that child in school. And there is no reason whatsoever that home educated children should not be allowed to take exams for free. If the government is taking such an interest in how we home educate then they need to step up and follow through with their concern by allowing all children to sit exams for free.
4. Continue educational groups/classes
5. I personally found home education was the best thing I did and wish I knew about it earlier I think it should be an option put on paperwork given to parents when they are considering what education is available
6. Stop criminalising home education. It is not a safeguarding concern. Do your research and reach out to home educators rather than confront them.
7. Recognise that parents want the best for their children. School is not the best choice for everyone. I was home educated from the beginning of my education until I began university. I was on par or ahead of my peers and obtained first class honours. In addition to the academics, I enjoy closer relationships with my parents and siblings, more advanced practical skills, and other benefits too numerous to mention. In summary, I had a positive experience and want to share this with my own children now that I'm educating them at home. I want to do this with minimal state intrusion and know that it works best for families from my own experience.
8. Most of home educators are highly qualified professionals who chose home education to bring the best in our children. We are not criminals and would like not to be treated as such .Home educated children are less likely to be involved in crime ,less likely to.be abused and suffered mental health problems or bullying .
9. Thanks for doing this. I hope it makes a difference for all of us. We are a minority so need to have a loud voice to be heard.
10. Stop treating home educators as freaks with suspicion. Many of Home educators are doing it because mainstream school is not the correct setting for child. And if like me you have a

child on the autistic spectrum who is not autistic enough to attend a specialist school to which there are too few places. Home education is the only option left.

11. My children are educated in the way that best suits them. I have two mainstream educated children who thrive in that system. I have one home educated child who needs one-to-one tuition, sensory breaks, weekly therapy sessions, a behaviour management system based on natural consequences, therapeutic parenting, medication twice daily, additional supervision, and a constant supportive adult on hand to help her regulate her brain. We tried the mainstream route and schools do not meet her needs. We do. Home education is a truly wonderful experience for our child. It has given us the opportunity to offer our child an education tailor-made to fit her needs. As home educators, we need fair, equal access to support. We do not need the unwelcome burden of registration and regulation.
12. [personal information]. I do think that mainstream education can be a great experience for a wide range of typical children but it cannot be denied that any "mass" provision, educational or otherwise, is generic. It cannot be tailored to the needs of the individual, that is a contradiction in terms. This is not a criticism of mainstream schooling, it has the potential to be very successful at what it aims to achieve, for most. Many children with special educational needs are better suited to home education which is inherently individualised and can be easily tailored and flexed to suit their specific talents and challenges; I am lucky to live in an area where our Elective Home Educational Support Teacher understands that parents are ultimately the expert, most poignantly for those with learning challenges, and sees home education as a brilliant opportunity for my daughter's 'special needs' - needs that would invariably have to be seen as negotiable by schools as there is limited financial resource. Allowing parents to educate as they see fit, as they intimately understand what is best, is not only saving the public purse significant monies in education terms but also increasing the likelihood of our children to thrive and succeed and not end up being a life-long burden on the state. Parents and experts in autism know that many autistic kids (with no other intellectual disabilities) simply have a slower learning and development timeline, reaching the same level of maturity and capability at around 25 as 'typical' children do around 18. They will not succeed if assessed and judged at points in time that are, for them, irrelevant and arbitrary. They will be slated as failures. Educators understand this but schools cannot easily cater for it, home education can and does. Pre-school age, our nation's health visitors constantly reassure new mothers to look at their children's development as "stage not age" and to stop comparing, but then suddenly from age 5 it is a problem when children do not reach milestones at exactly the right time. We have home educated 12 year olds passing GCSEs at A* in some subjects whilst still learning at Key Stage 1 level in other subjects, that is not uncommon, and it is not wrong. 70% of autistic adults are unemployed, I passionately believe that we can ameliorate that statistic by continuing to allow parents to nurture their children without intrusive state oversight or unnecessary rules and regulation, allowing parents to provide individualised, accessible, low duress learning environments as we do now: awareness campaigning alone will not change things. Our children are not missing an education in any sense of the word. They are not necessarily able to follow the National Curriculum or learn in a traditional "desk-based" way, they benefit from alternative methods. They would not perform to their best abilities under assessment or being interviewed by strangers... this would be absolutely devastating to many of them. Our home educated children lead rich, diverse, appropriately challenging lives - the world is our classroom - they are deep thinkers, creative problem solvers, team builders, kind, generous, community-oriented, passionate, ambitious, fair, respectful and very importantly learning to self-assess, self-regulate and self-motivate naturally from a very

young age. We employ a range of child-led strategies, it looks like play or even “high jinks” at times, we learn at unconventional times, we follow obsessive interests as they provide a wonderful way to introduce skills and concepts that may otherwise remain elusive. We don't sit at desks, we watch lots of YouTube. [personal information] No one in the UK is proactively investigated as to how they are behaving inside their own home - we are innocent until proven guilty, we live in a fair democratic society - it is not just or justified to introduce heavy-handed measures for home educators to limit how we can educate our children and how we must be assessed. Parents of pre-school aged children are not investigated in this way, nor parents of schooled children during evenings, weekends and school holidays. No other minority group, by definition of their minority grouping, lives under the assumption that they have criminal intent or are acting criminally, let alone to their own children. People do not have to join a register due to their faith, nor do people who engage in extreme sports, nor people who watch pornography, smoke, break speed limits, maintain poor dental health, eat less than 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day... home education does not come with any inherent risk.

13. Home education gives their children freedom to learn at their own speed and in their own way. To follow their passions, spend time outdoors, to travel. To learn history at historical sites, geography at places of scientific interest, art at galleries and foreign languages in other countries. It should be celebrated, not demonised! The possibilities are endless when you are not restricted to four walls and a 'rigorous' curriculum. The Select Committee should look carefully at the levels of happiness in UK children and teenagers and ask themselves why so many people, COVID aside, now want to step out of the schooling system.
14. Lockdown must not cause disadvantages to Home Ed children compared to those in mainstream schools. If schools remain open, then HE children must be allowed to continue their full range of educational activities as well as social interaction with their peers for both educational and social purposes.
15. As a parent I have a much better understanding of my children and their needs than a teacher who needs to look after up to 30 children at one time. I can give my children one-on-one time and help with work. The way I work with my children would not look the same as a teacher works with a class. We enjoy alternative methods which may not be understood by a local authority, particularly if their only personal experience of education is via the school system. The education of my children is mine and my husband's responsibility, as is providing for their physical and mental wellbeing. We take this responsibility very seriously and make financial sacrifices in order to fulfil this role.
16. Home education is freedom and happy life for my kids. We don't want change it.
17. Artistic, social and sport activities are all a necessary part of child development and education.
18. Keep the libraries open during lockdowns, HE goes through a lot more books than school kids. We are currently on around 20 books a week for 2 kids; I can not afford to buy those if the librarians shut again
19. home-schooling has been the best decision for our family. I do not believe that it is the right decision for everyone and schools will always be needed but to have the opportunity to do this has been amazing for us all. Our child has transformed through this experience.
20. Look less at how to change home ed, and more at why parents choose to move away from schooling in its current form
21. Please separate safeguarding from discussions of home education. They are completely separate areas. Please allow families to educate (bring up) their own children. The state is not the parent. Please turn more attention to helping schools and improving the areas of

- concern (off rolling, illegal schools, safeguarding) rather than trying to increase regulation into how responsible parents can bring up their own children. Thank you for your attention.
22. We never dreamt of choosing the HE path for our son but in hindsight this was far better for him and his mental well-being after being bullied. Not all children are suited to the framework of school. Our daughter however loves it. Please keep an open mind that some form of flexibility is required and be supportive of HE parents.
 23. Everything is educational for many home educators so a library visit, a playdate at another home educating parent's house, a climbing class at a local climbing wall - all should be allowed to go ahead - with social distancing, hand gel etc, reduced numbers, of course - these activities are ostensibly safer as there are notably less children, larger venues and often one-to-one adult to child supervision.
 24. It would be helpful if the LA paid for GCSE exams.
 25. We have only been home educating for 10 months but have already, despite covid restrictions, seen huge benefits and joy in our children no longer being in school. We had a visit from a lovely inclusion officer 3 weeks in who was very supportive and this gave us confidence at a time when it all felt very new and slightly scary. We've only had one request for a report so far where I filled out a form generally describing what we've been up to and that has felt fine but I have to admit that hearing many horror stories of others not having such a positive experience with LA's does leave me worried as to what will be expected of us in terms of giving evidence of our children's learning in the future. I want to be trusted that we are doing a great job with our children and would like the acceptance that home education does not necessarily mean doing 'school at home'. A lot of our children's learning is done conversationally at home at any time of day, often whilst out and about, being hands on and using technology and art and play, often with other home educating families and old school friends, with family, friends and neighbours (all this when not restricted by covid). It should be absolutely necessary for LA's to be informed and open to the different ways to HE and about the wonderful work of Peter Gray for example, his book 'Free To Learn' and his articles for Psychology Today, and also the work of John Holt, which a lot of families read. There are many other excellent books and resources out there too detailing how best children learn, and studies that support the evidence. My hope is that trust, knowledge and understanding will prevail and help the authorities and home educating families work together harmoniously.
 26. I believe home education offers a valuable counter point to mainstream schooling, allowing for innovation in approaches and a truly agile education. School suits many children and they thrive, but anecdotally we all know children and adults this wasn't the case for, families willing to make the necessary sacrifices to provide the best learning environment for their children should be supported in doing so.
 27. Every Child Matters, Every Learning Approach Matters. A large percentage of children do not respond positively to the highly structured, numeracy and literacy based school system, and flourish outside of it. Home schoolers are mostly aware of the advantages of play based learning, the disadvantages of pressurising children with unwarranted tests; and the alternative forms of education which have proven positive outcomes.
 28. Thank you for listening!!
 29. The rights of parents to educate and invest in their children's lives has to be defended. Home educating parents invest in strong stable family life which is the building blocks of a strong society.

30. Why the government want to have control over our children if we as a family have the nature right to raise them in the way we feel is best for them? Aren't we a democracy with Freedom?
31. Over the last few months I've appreciated an increase in classes and resources available to families. Other parents have told me how much they enjoyed learning alongside their children and an increase in time together as a family.
32. Thank you.
33. Let Home education be a valued form of education. All homeedders are taking away a tax burden from the public. This is never mentioned or appreciated 😊
34. Exams should not be charged, every child has the right of an education and therefore exams are extension of this. Every L.A should be able to offer free membership to key learning websites e.g Mathswatch, Twinkle..which are currently used in state schools.
35. The home ed community are not the enemy - stop treating us like we are. Cut us some slack. Stop hindering and help instead.
36. Government role on education needs to remain in the area of support rather than policing. Children's natural development and the protection of childhood should be the primary lens through which legislation on education is passed.

November 2020