



Home Education Centre
Constitution for Home Education Centre

1. Name

The name of the group is Home Education Centre hereinafter referred to as “the group.”

2. Objects

The home education centre aims to empower parents by providing them with the information and support they require to make informed choices about their children’s education. Also, to provide opportunities to meet other home educating families, develop self-confidence and experience a wide range of non-compulsory, educational, cooperative activities and workshops.

The objectives of the group are:

- To provide a stimulating and motivating environment where children’s ideas and projects are facilitated, not directed and where children direct their own learning.
- Through the non-compulsory, educational, cooperative activities and workshops, provide a setting for children to develop their social skills.
- To provide a network of support for home-educated children and their families and to support families whose children are struggling in the mainstream system.
- To work proactively to widen public awareness of alternative education.
- To provide home educating families with access to free resources and assist in providing information regarding access to Further Education.
- To provide a model of how alternative education can work for the benefit of all children.
- To work to support the development of other centres and groups across the country.
- To ensure all the administrative and management tasks are undertaken in an organised and professional way.

3. Powers

In furtherance of the groups’ objectives the management committee may exercise the following powers.

- Power to raise funds and to invite, accept and receive contributions of all kinds (and to accept any reasonable conditions attached to them).
- Power to buy or lease and to maintain any equipment or materials necessary for the achievement of the objectives.
- To make such payments as are necessary.

This can include payments to elected committee and members as long as the following procedures are strictly adhered to:

- i. This must be agreed by the majority of members at an annual general meeting or extraordinary general meeting and reported on at the end of each academic year.



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- ii. They must not be paid for any committee duties and payment should be for skills/experience needed by the group. This payment must benefit the group and be the most cost effective option for the group.
- Power to employ such paid workers as are necessary for the proper pursuit of the objects.
 - Power to effect insurance of all kinds (which may include officers' liability insurance).
 - Power to agree or refuse membership.
 - Control the admission of families (children and parent/carers) to the sessions run by the group and, if appropriate, request their removal.
 - Power to publish periodicals, pamphlets and any other material in printed, recorded or electronic format and hold intellectual property rights to any such material.
 - Power to liaise with other voluntary sector bodies, local authorities, UK or Scottish government departments and agencies and other bodies, all with a view to furthering any of the group's objects or of similar purposes.
 - Power to do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the objects.
 - Power to make available to other home education groups our policies, constitution and any other details about the running of the group, as a model, in order that they may set up similar home education centres or groups.

4. Membership

Membership of the organisation shall be open to all home educating families who are interested in furthering the groups objectives.

- Prospective members should apply by registering and filling in a membership form. Membership shall be paid by subscription at a value determined by the management committee. The management committee will confirm membership for one year. Members will reapply at the start of each academic year.
- All personal details held by the centre will remain confidential and will not be shared by any other organisation without consent, as detailed in the data protection policy.
- Termination of membership - the management committee have the right to refuse or cancel membership for any child/adult they feel is adversely affecting the children's safety or well-being. The process will follow the directives laid out in the behavioural policy.
- The management committee have the right to refuse or cancel membership of any adult that does not sign and agree to the policies of the group.
- Honorary membership will be offered to adults whose children no longer attend the group.
- The management committee has the right to defer membership applications if they feel the number of home educating families currently registered, has reached the maximum number that can be accommodated at the centres premises.



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5. Management committee

- Committee members must be registered members of the group.
- The management committee shall consist of not less than four no more than six members, inclusive of honorary officers, elected at the annual general meeting who shall hold office from the conclusion of the meeting.
- The honorary officers will be Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary and any other office bearers as the management committee deem necessary at any time.
- Once elected, the Chairperson can sit on the management committee for a period of four years (and does not need to be voted into office at each AGM during this term of office). All other committee members need to be voted into office at each AGM. Committee members are eligible for re-election after their term of office.
- In the event of death or resignation of a committee member or a vacancy by any other cause occurring within the management committee, the management committee may co-opt a new committee member, with full powers, until formal confirmation at the next AGM or EGM.

6. Meetings and proceedings of the management committee

- The management committee will hold no less than three ordinary meetings each year. Any two members of the committee can call a special meeting with not less than one days notice being given to the members of the management committee.
- There shall be a quorum when three people are present at the meeting.
- When a vote is taken the matter shall be decided by a majority of the committee present and voting. In the event of a decision not being able to be reached, such as in the event the vote is tied, the Chairperson shall have the casting vote.
- The minutes are to be minuted by the secretary and distributed to confirm accuracy.
- In the absence of the Chairperson, any of the committee can be nominated Chair for the meeting.

7. Accounts

- The management committee can open and operate a bank account in the name of the group.
- The signatures of two out of at least three signatories appointed by the management committee shall be required for all cheques. Only committee members may be signatories.
- The day-to-day income and expenditure accounts for the group will be kept by the treasurer.
- The Treasurer will present an up-to-date statement of accounts to the management committee at every meeting.
- The Treasurer will present the annual accounts to the AGM for discussion.
- The accounts will be independently examined each year by a bookkeeper or accountant.



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8. Annual general meetings

- To be held in the last quarter of the year, with members receiving an agenda in advance.
- At least two weeks notice must be given to members before the AGM takes place.
- There shall be a quorum when six people are present at the meeting, two of which must be non-committee members.
- The management committee will present accurate annual accounts and a report of progress and evaluation of its objects will be discussed.
- Changes to the constitution may be made with an at least two thirds majority of members present and voting at the AGM.
- Election of any new committee members will take place with the member being proposed, the proposal being seconded and the decision made by a majority vote of those members present and voting, by way of a secret ballot.
- Upon receipt of a completed, paid-up membership form, members are automatically entitled to one vote per family.
- All children have the right to speak at these meetings and their views must be taken into consideration when votes take place.
- Extraordinary General Meetings (EGM) may also be called at other times of the year, with at least 2 weeks notice, when members votes are needed; such as to make changes to the constitution.
- At the Chairperson's discretion, an AGM or EGM may be abandoned and another EGM re-scheduled for a future date. A notice period of at least 2 weeks must be given to the members for the re-scheduled date.

9. Dissolution

- The committee may, by unanimous agreement, dissolve the organisation. In this event, the assets of the organisation shall be employed to discharge any outstanding liabilities of the organisation. Any remaining assets shall be donated to a registered charitable body with similar aims agreed by the committee, or proportionately to charities chosen by each of the committee if they cannot agree.

This constitution was adopted on 12th December 2008



Home Education Centre
Equal Opportunities Policy.

All home-educating and potential home-educating families, parents and children are welcome regardless of age, faith, disability, gender, race or sexual orientation.

Individual parents and families are encouraged to utilize their training and skills to provide activities as diverse as possible to facilitate cognitive and physical access for all ages and ability. The Group will provide training and advice to support this. Activities will also be reviewed with self-evaluation forms and children's evaluations.

The Group seeks funding to access external instruction for activities which families and individual parents are unable to provide. In this context we are committed to provide a broad range of activities requested by families, parents and children.

Where appropriate children will have access to multi-cultural resources.

We aim to:

- Acknowledge and value equally each child's individual stage, culture, religion, language, racial background and family group.
- Actively seek to combat sexism and promote equal opportunities for girls and boys, men and women.
- Encourage equality of opportunity for children with special educational needs and their families

The Group is committed to provide equality of opportunity for all families and children in accordance with all relevant legislation including:

The Children's Act 1989, 2004

The Human Right's Act 1998

Special Educational Needs Discrimination Act 2001

Adopted on
(date)

Signed

(Chairperson)

Date for review



Home Education Centre
Safeguarding Children Policy.

We intend to create in the group, an environment in which children are safe from bullying and all forms of abuse.

Adults operating workshops and activities.

- For the benefit of your own security when working with the children, the committee recommends that you should never work with a group of children on your own or in a one to one situation.
- Please ensure another adult is with you throughout the activity.
- Where this is not possible ie; guitar lessons, we have programmed the activity in a space that is visible to others.
- If this is not possible, enhanced CRB checks will be carried out.

Working with external agencies, tutors and coaches.

- When seeking to fund external tuition and training we will only work with agencies and individuals who have had current CRB disclosures.

Monitoring children's behaviour.

- All children registering with the group will be involved in creating our children's Charter of rights and responsibilities. This will help them understand how their behaviour affects others and they will receive support in moderating behaviour, which may lead to exclusion. (Please see Behaviour Management Policy).
- The behaviour of children known to have bullied will be carefully monitored in partnership with parents. Any unacceptable behaviour will be recorded and challenged and the group will withdraw any child who is placing others at risk.

Parents should be aware that the committee is obliged to inform Social Services of any suspicions of abuse, whether stemming from allegations against parent/carers, external tutors/coaches or the general public.

Adopted on
(date)

Signed

(Chairperson)

Date for review



Home Education Centre

Safeguarding Children Policy for Parents

We intend to create an environment in which children are safe from all forms of abuse and bullying.

The Home Education Centre has a duty to be aware that abuse does occur in society. These statements lay out the procedures that will be taken if any of the members of this group believe a child attending the centre is/has been subject to emotional, physical or sexual abuse, neglect or to bullying or harassment.

Are you worried about a child?

All children are subject to minor accidental injuries, but there may be occasions when you as members of this group familiar with the children, are concerned about the nature and frequency of injury or change in behaviour in a particular child/children.

It is important that we understand something about child abuse and neglect and are familiar with the procedures for reporting abuse; training will be sought for committee members responsible for safeguarding children and updated when necessary.

Please contact the committee member responsible for Safeguarding Children noted at the foot of this policy if you have any concerns about a child's welfare. It will be taken seriously and acted upon immediately.

Safeguarding Children Procedures.

Physical Abuse.

Action will be taken if the committee has reason to believe that there has been a physical injury to a child, where there is a definite knowledge, or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted knowingly or not prevented.

Procedure

- A discussion will be had with the parent/carer. This will be recorded and countersigned in agreement. These records will be kept in a confidential file and the parents can request to see any of their personal information at anytime.
- If there appear to be any queries regarding the injury Social Services will be notified.



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Sexual Abuse.

Action will be taken if parents have witnessed occasions where a child indicated sexual activity **inappropriate for their age** through words, play or drawing, or had an excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters **inappropriate for their age**, or had an **inappropriate** knowledge of adult sexual behaviour.

Procedure

- The observed instances will be reported, words/actions used, date, time and witnesses recorded.
- The matter will be referred to Social Services.

Emotional Abuse.

Within the home-educating community this can be a sensitive issue as children are often removed from school by their parents due to persistent bullying. The effects of which can be devastating. When parents register at the group, they are asked to include information regarding these situations.

However parents may not want to divulge this information with the wider group.

If the committee have reason to believe that there is a severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection not as a result of the school experience the following action will be taken.

Procedure.

- A discussion will be had with the parent/carer. This will be recorded and countersigned in agreement. These records will be kept in a confidential file and the parents can request to see any of their personal information at anytime.
- If there appear to be any queries regarding the injury Social Services will be notified.

Neglect.

Action will be taken if the committee have reason to believe that there has been persistent or severe neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation) which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development.



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Procedure.

- A discussion will be had with the parent/carer. This will be recorded and countersigned in agreement. These records will be kept in a confidential file and the parents can request to see any of their personal information at anytime.
- If there appear to be any queries regarding the injury Social Services will be notified.

PLEASE NOTE THERE ARE EXCEPTIONS TO THE ABOVE PROCEDURES. IF ANY CHILD IS THOUGHT TO BE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER THE HOME EDUCATION CENTRE WILL CONTACT SOCIAL SERVICES IMMEDIATELY ON EITHER:

Somerset Direct Children and Young Peoples Team: 0845 345 9122 or

Emergency Duty Team: 01458 253241

Any records will be kept in a separate file and will not be accessible to anyone in the group other than the nominated officer/s, the groups' chairperson and vice-chairperson.

The nominated officer for Safeguarding Children will be:

Adopted on
(date)

Signed

(Chairperson)

Date for review



Home Education Centre
Behaviour Management.

We intend to create a space, which is safe and enjoyable for all children. The Charter is the basis of our policy, which is devised by the children themselves and updated if necessary as membership increases or changes. This aims to work towards a situation in which children can develop self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding.

In order to sustain a positive space we will:

- **Treat all children and adults with respect.**
- **Praise and encourage positive behaviour**
- **Regularly provide a forum for children and ensure they feel they have input into the centre and their ideas and opinions are respected and listened to.**

All parents are responsible for ensuring that they and the children abide by the group's rules as stated in the Charter.

Children and adults who are concerned about the recurrent or serious misdemeanours of any child/children or adult/adults should talk to the Chairperson (group co-ordinator).

Group members who are behaving in such a way, which is not acceptable to the group, will go through a series of measures aimed at moderating the offending behaviour. If the behaviour recurs or is considered to be of a serious nature, the following procedure will be followed:

- **Children will be spoken to by the Chairperson or in their absence a member of the committee. The children will be reminded of the Charter and why their behaviour is unacceptable. Parents will be informed.**
- **If the behaviour keeps occurring the Chairperson will talk to the child with his/her parents to try to resolve the matter.**
- **If this is not successful the family will be asked not to attend for a week and will meet with the Chairperson on their return. This will be a chance to reflect on their behaviour and think about the next sanction, which is removal of membership of the group.**



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- **The final resort is removal by the committee of membership of the family.**
- **Adults acting in an unacceptable way will be asked to moderate their behaviour and will have it explained to them why it is unacceptable and the consequences of it.**
- **In the last resort the family will be asked to leave the centre and their membership will be removed.**

Adopted on
(date)

Signed

(Chairperson)

Date for review



Home Education Centre
Health and Safety Policy

First Aid Procedure

Our nominated First Aider is *****, Chairperson.

The first aid box is situated in the baby changing room in the main corridor.

The nominated First Aider is responsible for checking the contents of the first aid box once a month.

All accidents will be recorded in the Accident Book. Parents will need to sign a copy of the record.

Health Procedure

Infection can spread rapidly, not only amongst children, but also adults. Parent/Carers are required to stay away from the Centre if you suspect illness or infection in any of the family members who usually attend the group. If you think it is relevant we would ask you to contact the Chairperson if the infected person has had contact with any of the members during the incubation period.

We would need to be aware if anyone has the following;

- Conjunctivitis
- Hand, Foot and Mouth
- Severe gastric upsets
- Chicken Pox
- Measles
- German Measles
- Mumps
- Whooping Cough
- Slapped Cheek Syndrome (can affect pregnant mums)

In a case of Nits, Scabies, Impetigo or Threadworm we would ask you to contact the Chairperson as soon as you can, as it is often very difficult to establish when and where they were picked up. It enables everyone to use treatment and prevents re-infection.



Home Education Centre

Fire Policy

We aim to ensure the safety of parent/carers and children against the risk of fire and will do all in our power to prevent such an occurrence.

Fire Procedure

- The nominated Fire Officer is *****
- The nominated Fire Officer is to ensure that fire drills are carried out every 12 weeks
- The nominated Fire Officer must ensure that the Chard Youth and Community Centre make regular checks of the smoke detectors and receive a record of when this was done.
- The Chard Youth and Community Centre are responsible for having the fire extinguishers checked professionally on an annual basis.

Adopted on
(date)

Signed

(Chairperson)

Date for review



Home Education Centre
Health and Safety Risk Assessment.

The Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 protects the health, safety and welfare of workers, children, parents and the public. As a group we need to be aware of the responsibilities and the standards of good practice. The recent Management of Health and Safety at Work Act 1992 has more specific regulations. They now include the basic principles of managing risk through a mixture of assessment, training and balanced control measures.

There is also the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR), which place duties on employers to report certain accidents and ill health at work, contact number . This information then assists the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and local authorities to ascertain where and how risks occur and to investigate serious accidents. The HSE can then advise employers/groups on how to reduce accidents and ill health within the workplace/centre.

Hazards and Risks

- A **hazard** is a danger or something which could cause harm to somebody.
- A **risk** is the chance of a hazard happening and causing harm.

It is a requirement in law to assess the risks to health and safety in our setting. This will be directed by the committee and is the responsibility of any parents directing individual activities during the session. You are asked on our forms how regularly you feel your activities should be reviewed. This is called a risk assessment.

The risk assessment forms are on the cabinet in the Activity room. Please read the guidelines below or if you are unsure how to fill it in please ask a committee member.

All external tutors and coaches will be expected to risk assess the training or activity they are being employed to carry out.



Home Education Centre

Risk Assessment

What is it?

A risk assessment is nothing more than a careful examination of what in your working environment could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. The aim is to make sure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill.

How to assess the risks.

Step 1 Look for hazards

What could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Ask other parent/carers what they think. They may have noticed things which are not immediately obvious.

Step 2 Decide who might be harmed and how

Include children (and adults and members of the public if applicable.)

Step 3 Evaluate the risks

Evaluate the risks and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or more should be done.

Consider how likely it is that each hazard could cause harm. This will determine whether or not you need to do more to reduce the risk. Even after all precautions have been taken, some risk usually remains. You will have to decide for each hazard whether the remaining risk is high, medium or low.

Step 4 Record your findings

Write down the significant hazards and how you/we can reduce or eliminate them.

Step 5 Review your assessment and revise if necessary

If there is any significant change to your activity add this to your assessment. Don't amend your assessment for every trivial change . It is good practise to review your assessment from time to time to make sure that the precautions are still working effectively.

Adopted on
(date)

Signed

(Chairperson)

Date for review



Home Education Centre **Confidentiality Policy**

The aim of the Home Education Centre is to promote an environment of respect with reference to confidential information relating to the children, families and external tutors.

Procedure

Committee members will be reminded that:

- During their term in office as a committee member, they may be party to confidential information concerning children, families or external tutors.
- Any information which is received as a result of their position as committee member must remain confidential to them.
- Committee members must sign a Confidentiality Agreement Form when voted on to the committee.
- Confidential issues must not be discussed with any individuals not connected with the organisation.
- They must not disclose or allow the disclosure of any confidential information (except in the proper course of their membership of the committee) either during their time in office or when it has finished.
- Once a committee member's term of office is over, any paperwork not handed across must be destroyed.

Parent/Carers

Parents will have access to files and records of their own children.

When a family leaves the group all their membership admissions forms including names and addresses will be destroyed.

Confidential information given by parent/carers to the group will not be passed on to others without permission, unless we feel there may be a child protection issue (see Safeguarding Children Policies).

Adopted on

Signed

(Chairperson)

(date)

Date for review



Home Education Centre
Policy For Attendance

We are a non-affiliated voluntary group consisting of families, parents and children.

The group is managed by an annually-elected committee of parents. We have a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, and Committee member.

The Committee cannot be held responsible for the health and welfare of individual children during the sessions.

If you have family visiting and wish to bring them along to the session, could you please inform a member of the committee in advance.

ALL CHILDREN ATTENDING THE GROUP MUST BE ACCOMPANIED AND SUPERVISED BY A PARENT/GUARDIAN OR CHILD-CARER (IE: GRANDPARENT) ENTRUSTED BY THE PARENT/GUARDIAN.

YOU MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR CHILDREN'S HEALTH, BEHAVIOUR AND WELFARE THROUGHOUT HOME EDUCATION CENTRE SESSIONS AND ACTIVITIES.

Adopted on
(date)

Signed

(Chairperson)

Date for review



Home Education Centre

Selection Procedure for Activities with Limited Places

External tuition/workshops are often funded with stipulated age groups and/or restricted numbers. These are decided by the external funding bodies.

- Every effort will be made to incorporate flexibility to meet demand.
- If that is not possible, a register of names will be taken by a pre-determined date.
- On that date names will be drawn.
- Those not included will be kept on a register for future activities.

IF EXTERNALLY FUNDED ACTIVITIES ARE OVER-SUBSCRIBED THE COMMITTEE WILL SEEK ADDITIONAL FUNDING TO PROVIDE A REPEAT OF THESE ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN WHO WERE UNABLE TO GAIN ACCESS IN THE FIRST INSTANCE.

In relation to the activities offered at the Home Education Centre by families, parents or children some activities/groups may have to be divided by ability, for example: beginners and advanced learners in guitar lessons or language groups.

This differentiation will be decided by the leader of the activity, with the support of the Committee.

For reasons of safety or limited space some activities may have to run with restricted numbers. Again in this instance, the oversubscription procedure stated above will be put in place and the Group will support families, parents and children to offer these activities again

Adopted on
(date)

Signed

(Chairperson)

Date for review



Home Education Centre
Complaints Procedure

If a Home Education Centre member has an issue involving either their individual child or the centre as a whole, they should in the first instance raise the issue with the group's Founder and Chairperson.

If the member feels unable or unwilling to raise the matter in this way, they can approach any of the other Committee members; a notice board with committee member's names and photographs can be found in the activity room.

ISSUES RAISED WILL BE DEALT WITH USING THE FOLLOWING FRAMEWORK:

- A matter relating to an individual child should be discussed between the parent/carer and the Founder/Chairperson.
- Should the matter not be resolved, the issue will be brought to the attention of the committee members, who will meet with all parties involved.
- If the matter concerns a general or policy issue, again it should be raised to the Founder/Chairperson, who will report it to the committee for consideration.
- Should an approach on general or policy matters be made via a Committee Member it will be reported to the Committee for consideration.
- A record will be kept of all written complaints received and of any action.
- Within 14 days of a written complaint being made an initial written response will be given.

At all points through these processes all parties involved will be kept informed of progress.

Adopted on
(date)

Signed

(Chairperson)

Date for review