



'SKIPPING SCHOOL' - OUR REALITY

Survey Results

On February 4th 2019 The Children's Commissioner published her report,

Skipping School: Invisible Children **How children disappear from England's schools.**

In her report, Anne Longfield stated:

'Many parents withdraw their child from school because s/he is unhappy or not coping. These parents often feel that the school has been insensitive or unsupportive, whether the child has special educational needs, challenging behaviour, mental health issues or is being bullied. Some parents have reached crisis point as the relationship with a school breaks down.'

There are clear indications that the growth in home education is related to the rise in children leaving school due to their needs being unmet. Local authorities say the main reasons children in their area are being home educated are "general dissatisfaction with the school" and "health/emotional reasons". Ofsted's Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman has warned that there is a lot of anecdotal evidence that parents are also home educating their children under duress, because they are being encouraged to do so by the school, or because they want to keep the child out of sight of the state.

The Children's Commissioner's Office has spoken to many children and parents who said that they only chose home education because the situation at school had become so desperate - sometimes traumatic for the children involved. This includes many children with special educational needs (SEND). Recent research by Channel 4's 'Dispatches' programme found that 22% of children withdrawn from school to be home-educated in the 2017-18 academic year had special educational needs.'

On the same date, Channel 4 aired their 'Dispatches' edition 'Skipping School - Britain's Invisible Kids' which featured Anne Longfield visiting four families with children who had 'disappeared from school' to discuss their experiences. Anne Longfield used the programme to explain the conclusions she has reached in her report. The programme synopsis stated:

'As the number of children leaving mainstream education in favour of home education doubles, Dispatches investigates the reasons behind this dramatic rise and the impact it is having on the young people who are now learning at home in the UK. Children's Commissioner for England Anne Longfield considers whether the rights of parents to remove their child from school are coming before the education, and even the safety, of children.'

After viewing the programme, many parents expressed their anger and frustration both about the bias created by the lack of input from established and/or successful home educating families; and about the focus upon regulation of home education rather than the practice of off-rolling and the difficulties with school attendance that children and young people are experiencing.

NOT FINE IN SCHOOL shared an online survey with the aim of collecting a snapshot of opinions to discover whether parent's experiences of attendance difficulties, off rolling and opting to home educate a child truly reflect the observations and conclusions made by Anne Longfield.



KEY FINDINGS

The survey was completed by **473** parents within the 2 week 'live' survey period

Attendance

- **171** said their child is not currently attending school at all
- **100** parents said their child is attending school part-time or with difficulty,

Deregistering

- **122** parents had deregistered from school as a last resort
- **74** had deregistered because they actively wanted to home educate

Off-rolling

- **58** parents say a school pressured/forced them to deregister a child
- **56** parents say their child is still on-roll but the school are pressuring them to deregister
- **13** parents say a school removed their child from the register without their permission

Home Educating

- **179** parents are home educating their child successfully and want to continue
- **31** parents said they are struggling to home educate and would like more support

When asked, Why their child struggles with school attendance?

- **182** parents have children with diagnosed SEND but their needs remain unmet
- **170** parents state their child's anxiety is a result of academic pressures
- **132** parents blame undiagnosed SEND
- **127** parents have a child who struggles to attend because of bullying
- **125** parents blame school absence upon trauma
- **125** parents have a child with excessive anxiety but no other specific condition diagnosed
- **88** parents blame educational disaffection
- **61** parents attribute absence to physical illness
- **13** parents blame attendance difficulties on the influence of social media or online gaming
- **9** parents blame home based factors

EHCP Implementation

- **139** parents say they do not need an EHCP
- **101** parents are fighting to start the EHCP process;
- **63** have an EHCP in place but it is not being implemented properly
- **46** have an EHCP in place with the support outlined, but it is not effective
- **16** have an EHCP in place which is working well

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When asked, Why they felt forced to Home Educate?

- **233** parents deregistered because their child's health/mental health was deteriorating
- **149** parents now home educate because the school were difficult to work with and/or ignored their concerns
- **142** parents felt forced to home educate because a child's SEND was not recognised or not supported in school
- **85** home educate because a child was being bullied and the school did not intervene effectively
- **80** parents felt it was because there were difficulties or delays accessing CAMHS
- **72** parents say it was because they were threatened with prosecution for poor attendance

Some parents actively chose to Home Educate:

- **151** parents chose home education because their child needs a different learning approach or environment
- **98** parents chose home education because they do not agree with the current mainstream schooling system/National Curriculum
- **73** wanted more flexibility in the subjects their child is taught.
- **73** believed they can educate their child better than the school can
- **58** parents opted for home education because it was their child's choice and they accept he/she has a right to choose
- **38** parents chose to home educate once they found out that home educating is a legal option

In regard to the suggested changes to the current system of regulation for home education:

- **374** parents would like to see the introduction of optional support for those parents who are home educating
- **181** parents think there should NOT be any changes to the current home education regulations
- **99** parents agree there should be a register of all children being home educated
- **43** parents agree there should be specially trained home education inspectors
- **11** parents agree with enforced inspections of home educated children
- **8** parents support the suggestion of interviews with home educated children during inspections
- **6** parents support the testing of all home educated children

When deciding upon educational provision:

- **350** parents think that there needs to be a wider choice of provision so that different needs are provided for
- **324** respondents believe it is their RIGHT to choose their child's educational provision
- **283** parents believe it is their DUTY to choose their child's educational provision
- **5** respondents think that all children should be in school
- **0** parents think the State should decide which type of educational provision a child needs

Finally, parents were asked, If the right support was available in a mainstream setting would they still home educate their child?

- **109** said 'Yes'
- **188** said 'No'
- **102** said 'Maybe'



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In Conclusion

Ann Longfield begins her report:

"One exhausted mother described her daughter's secondary school to me as being like the Hunger Games. She, like thousands of other parents, had eventually removed her miserable child from school – just one more effectively excluded through no fault of their own from an unforgiving school system which appears to have lost the kindness, the skill or the patience to keep them."

The findings of this survey along with the anecdotal comments provided by members of Not Fine in School add to the findings of The Children's Commissioners report, *Skipping School: Invisible Children*. We share this further evidence based on our members lived experiences to help explain the rise in home education. We urge our Government, policy makers and Local Authority Heads of Children's Services to read, understand and acknowledge the difficulties many children are facing within schools and consequently, to access educational provision which suits their needs. These children have been let down by schools, Local Authorities and the Government. Their parents have often chosen to home educate as a last resort, usually after repeated attempts to ask for support their children desperately need. Some parents would welcome the support their children need to return to school, but many parents note that after leaving school, their children now have improved health and emotional wellbeing and after a period of recovery, are able to learn again, leaving these parents in a quandary. Strikingly, once deregistered, many parents wonder why they allowed their children to remain in such an unsuitable school environment for so long, and they often express a sense of guilt at this realisation.

Anne Longfield concluded that:

"Many parents who make a philosophical decision to home educate put a substantial amount of thought and dedication into providing their children with a high quality education. But as this report has shown, there are many other families out there who have ended up home educating for other reasons, and are struggling to cope. There needs to be a cultural shift away from pressurised, hot-housing schools, to help stem the tide of children entering home education when it is not in the family's true interests or wishes."

We agree with this conclusion but are disappointed with the order and some of the content of the recommendations that followed, which sadly seem to focus on the safeguarding risk of home education, rather than the harm and neglect of vulnerable children that too many children and young people experience at school.



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Our Observations

- When asked, Why their child struggles with school attendance? Parents responses indicated that the most significant reasons were SEND where needs remain unmet; academic pressures; undiagnosed SEND; bullying; trauma or excessive anxiety. These results reflect the findings of The Children's Commissioner's report which states:

"Schools across the country are feeling the dual strain of squeezed budgets and the drive for good results. Funding per pupil has fallen by 8 percent since 2010 and 94% of school leaders say that they are finding it harder to fund support for pupils with SEND. This means that, according to the National Association of Headteachers, "the financial burden of additional support penalises those schools that are the most inclusive".

One of the biggest issues is that schools are being forced to cut additional support such as learning assistants and pastoral teams, making it more difficult for children with additional needs to cope.

- A significant issue is the under-identification of children's needs. This is particularly a concern for children who do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan but may have Autism, ADHD or other conditions which may create serious difficulties in the classroom. Teachers say they do not have the training to support these problems effectively – and that they have limited support and capacity to do so given the pressures within the school system.
- 12% of the survey respondents said that their school had pressured or forced them to deregister and a further 11% say they are currently being pressured to deregister. There may be a range of influences in relation to the practice of 'off-rolling'. The Children's Commissioner noted that a key indicator of school performance is their exam results and she expressed concerns that children who are not making good progress in the run up to exams, (perhaps because they have additional needs that are not being met), are being abandoned by schools in order to protect the schools' overall Progress 8 scores.
- Ofsted are aware of off-rolling practices, and of schools being 'exam factories'. There have been numerous governmental and organisational reports highlighting the SEND crisis, the child mental health crisis, the rise in exclusions and off rolling, and the devastating effects of cuts to school funding. We would add that these issues are further impacted by the lack of accountability for schools and Local Authorities, along with the absence of suitable attendance codes for children who struggle to attend due to SEND/mental health issues.

A Home Education Register

- Parents are responsible for the education of their children as outlined in the Education Act, 1996, and they have the choice to enrol at a school or educate otherwise:

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

Anne Longfield emphasised that there are many parents who actively chose to home educate, and they do that very well. The survey respondents who had actively chosen to home educate stated that their choice had been based upon concerns about the current education system and the mismatch between current mainstream schooling and their child's needs. These are valid reasons, and the Education Act 1996 gives parents the option to 'educate otherwise', therefore we would ask why these parents need to be registered and be subjected to intrusive monitoring?



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- Enquiries to parents who have recently de-registered to ensure these children haven't been off-rolled could be good practice. In this situation families may be struggling and may benefit from support to understand the options available to them, such as re-admission to their previous school, or admission to a new school - with the assurance that if they do this their child's needs will be adequately supported.
- 79% of the survey respondents agreed that optional support should be available for home educating parents. Some may need additional support through EHCPs. Some may simply need a period of adjustment to allow for recovery from their experiences at school and to investigate the various methods of learning. Some may benefit from being signposted to informal support from local and national home educating families. All of this support should be available if requested.
- It is important that local authorities acknowledge that there are national and local Home Education groups run by experienced home educators who offer advice and support to home educating families; and many new to home education are mentored by local home educators. Many families report that their children thrive within the home education environment.

Strengthened Measures to Tackle Off-rolling

- All schools, including academies, must follow SEND, medical needs and attendance policies. We absolutely agree that there needs to be system of accountability for schools who fail to make reasonable adjustments for children with additional needs. It is clear that early intervention has the best outcomes, in terms of longer term personal and financial cost. Local authorities and schools need increased funding to provide adequate resources and training for teachers. SEND funding also needs to be ring fenced, and better managed through a fair, effective system based upon need. Schools must be able to follow medical and professional advice, and implement recommended support through Individual Health Plans, SEND support plans and EHCPs.
- When children are struggling at school, parents, children and schools need to work together. 31% of the survey respondents said that they are now home educating because the school were difficult to work with and/or ignored their concerns. The common practice of schools insisting that children are "fine" in school needs to stop. All difficulties and barriers to learning need to be investigated and adequately supported before they escalate. Too many parents are unfairly and unnecessarily threatened with prosecution and social services intervention if their children are unable to attend school.
- 25% of the survey respondents said they are home educating as a last resort. If the government and Ofsted effectively address the issues that create this situation, and ensure that all schools follow existing policies and support rather than blame children and their parents, it is highly likely that there will be fewer parents feeling forced to home educate.

Advice and Support for Children and Families

- Ideally we believe that there needs to be reforms within our education system to ensure there is real inclusion. Children and young people who struggle within school need to be offered access to a range of alternative educational provision: including flexible curricula, specialist provision, support through EHCPs, personal budgets, funding for local independent or free schools, home education hubs, home education support for GCSEs, or on-line learning. These alternatives are necessary to enable schools and LAs to deliver truly child-centred education.
- The Children's Commissioner's report outlined how harsh the school environment has become and that needs to be urgently addressed. Mainstream schools are very clearly not the best environment for an increasing number of children. 49% of respondents said their children were removed from school to protect their mental health, and sometimes to literally save them from self-harm and suicide. This is especially significant when you consider the long waiting lists and high thresholds for CAMHS involvement, along with CAMHs treatment



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options with a priority of returning children to school as quickly as possible, rather than on full recovery and overall wellbeing.

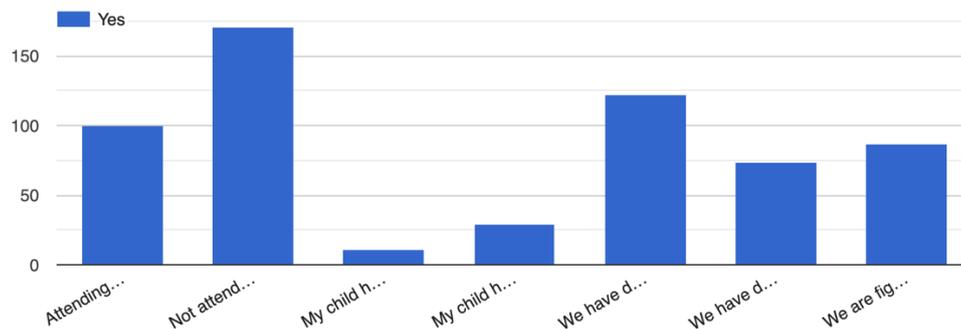
Greater Oversight of Children

- Anne Longfield suggests “There is also a pressing need for more immediate measures to improve the experiences, safety and wellbeing of children who do end up being home educated.” Of course children at serious risk of harm need to be protected. However, there is no evidence that home educated children are at any greater risk of abuse than other children. Child abuse is perpetrated against children of all ages and from all backgrounds. Many victims were known to social services but were failed so funding should be spent on improving the capacity and effectiveness of Social Services, rather than on increased monitoring of home educating.
- The recommendation for “council education officers visiting each child being home educated at least once per term to assess the suitability of their education and their welfare” is unnecessary and unworkable. Only 2% of survey respondents agreed that there should be enforced inspections of home educated children; 1.7% of respondents agreed that home educated children should be interviewed during inspections and 1.2% thought home educated children should be tested during inspections.
- Few children’s social workers or teachers are trained and qualified in SEND, including autism, ADHD, and mental health conditions. Would council education officers fully understand or be experienced in a range of SEND, differing learning styles and curricula? Would they be skilled enough to legitimately make judgements about a wide variety of home-based educational provision?
- Home educating families are a diverse group of people. As Anne Longfield acknowledged, the vast majority of parents provide an education that is successful, and no one has reason to doubt their children are learning and thriving - socially and emotionally. Understandably, loving parents who take their responsibilities to raise and educate their children very seriously are not likely to support or accept a system of inspection. There is no valid reason to subject them to an invasion of their privacy and safety in their own homes by people with very limited experience or understanding of their individual child’s needs.
- If the government are serious about protecting our children and ensuring they have access to a suitable education, they need to ensure schools and SEND are adequate funded. Extra support and resources should be available when necessary, when requested. The influx of children and young people who were ‘not fine in school’ in to the Home Education community is evidence of a failing system. The documented problems that children who are ‘not fine in school’ face must be addressed as a major priority for national and local governments. The current education system needs urgent reforms, a significant increase in funding and resources and a greater choice of suitable provision to improve access to learning and the future success of all children and young people.

THE RESULTS IN FULL

Q.1

What is your child's current situation?



171 = Not attending school at all

122 = We have deregistered as a last resort

100 = Attending school part-time/with difficulty

90 = Other

87 = We are fighting for an EHCP or school SEND support

74 = We have deregistered because we actively wanted to home educate

29 = My child has been off-rolled

11 = My child has been excluded

Do you have any further comments?

School failed to provide appropriate educational or pastoral support, despite being provided with medical and CAMHS reports and letters confirming my child's needs. They instead used punishments

Hasn't attended since December 2017.

My son's school attendance declined rapidly from September. He became extremely anxious and was unable to attend. Now signed off by CAMHS and awaiting home tuition by LA.

I am at an incredibly supportive school but the challenges of school refusal are huge and the system totally does not support me or our teachers to help children with SEND

Deregistered after 2 head injuries in one week (bullies), not taking his health issues seriously and not addressing their punishment methods a year after I pointed out the serious flaws in their system.



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My son is autistic and school failed to support him. We are in appeal for the right school and he has been left with no support

Access to online learning

A last resort but the school tried their best to accommodate the needs

Still on roll but getting LA home tuition

We were encouraged by headteacher to home educate which she later denied doing. We were threatened with being off rolled for unattendance even though we had medical proof.

Currently on roll at specialist school but not attended for 5 months - school anxiety as school not following EHCP and not meeting needs. Out of education for 15 months prior due to unmet needs in mainstream school, unsupported, whilst applying for/ working on draft EHCP

On role but not attending at all. Was going to deregister but need as much support for exams. I found an online provision

Dyslexia needs I met within current education system

Son with mental health issues near to permanent exclusion home schooling for over a year

My child has an EHCP and ASD panic disorder and separation anxiety

Child on waiting list for ASD. Couldn't cope with school so refused to go. When he started High School we were told he couldn't access any help unless he came full time. He couldn't manage that so wasn't offered help to build up his hours. He used up his quota of absences in first month and would be fined unless he de-registered.

Son is still registered at school but, it is at home with me for his mental health and wellbeing. Despite begging for help and reasonable adjustments to be made. Nothing adequate was put in place to support him and his behaviour deteriorated, they threatened him with permanent exclusion for having a meltdown at drop off when they physically removed him from me sobbing, they claim he is violent and a danger to staff as he threw his bag in frustration. One day he walked out in front of a car as he would 'rather be in hospital than go in that building'. We are now working with a clinical psychologist through the LEA who have stated my son has suffered 'school based trauma' from his experiences at the hands of those I trusted to educate him.

I really hope he can go back to school in September.

Child at a new supportive school. We de-registered and home educated in the last academic year.

School and LA said school isn't for everyone. I refused to deregister

My child suffered with anxiety which led to school refusal while attending his local mainstream Secondary School. They recommended that we move to a SEN school, but none would accept our son. We were eventually successful in changing schools to a smaller Catholic Secondary College and this has been a vast improvement on our situation.

No one listens to the mother especially when she's a lone parent

Back in a SEN school after two terms off mainstream school.

Medically signed off school by paediatrician/psychologist 5 years ago, no support since.



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We are awaiting Hospital Ed. Son is desperate to attend online school.

The school (specialist unit within mainstream) and L.A. decided together to end daughter's placement with just 3 days-notice! When asked if she was being permanently excluded, we were told no she wasn't. 16 months later, she's still without a school!

Have been encouraged to put son on part time timetable as soon as he started GCSE year, he has SEN and they do not want to support him full time.

My son is at a mainstream school who have said that they cannot cater for his needs. His been going 2 hours each day as he is on a part time table. It's taking a toll on his anxiety.

No school since July 2018. Less than 50% attendance since 2015

Excluded due to not meeting his Sen needs

Child has never been to school as we home educated from the start.

According to IPSEA our year-long on/off attendance is technically an 'informal exclusion' from full time education

Had to withdraw our ASD diagnosed daughter due to lack of the right support and bullying resulting in severe anxiety even though she is a high grade student and wants to be able to be at school.

My child is enrolled with a mainstream secondary school but they've decided in Oct 2018 they won't support him even though he has an EHCP. He starts at an independent special school in 2 weeks-time.

Child is desperate to go to school that can meet her needs; we were "granted" a hospital school place 12 weeks ago; hospital school has prevented her from taking it up

Extreme school phobia, panic attacks & depression, not been in school since 16th Dec

School very poor, child is highly anxious, 2 years behind in both English and Maths, every day a battle to get her there, just manage it most days, fulltime employment single parent. If I could home educate, I would in a heartbeat as school is destroying her

My son is now dual registered (Original school is a mainstream secondary which he hasn't attended since Oct 2016. Additional school is an alternative medical provision which provides an online education for my son).

Attending school by being medicated

My son has not been to school since October 2018 due to a combination of anxiety, bullying and having ASD issues which so far undiagnosed. He is 12 years old and told his twin brother he wanted to die in October 2017 and the GP referred him to CAMHS. There were a further 2 referrals but he had to wait 14 months for his first appointment and is now waiting a further 16 weeks to be seen again and treatment to start. He has also been diagnosed with epilepsy to add to his anxiety.

Our private independent school terminated our contract 'with immediate effect'. Nevertheless our child had been flexi-schooled with them and we were very happy with the HE element.

Referred to and attending medical PRU second time in 2 years.



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Had school supported him when he was first ill I don't believe we would be in this situation now.

Daughter has EOTAS named on EHCP finally in year 11!

Have had to wait 9 weeks to get home tutor initial visit. Once Home tuition starts it will be 11 weeks out of school

It became unmanageable. My children's mental health crashed (both have SEN), and school staff criticised, bullied (and illegally restrained one of my kids). Parents were blamed, referrals, threats of fines made, told to remove kids etc

The school weren't meeting my son's needs but it wasn't a last resort.

Illegally suspended. Attendance fraud resulting in child marked unauthorised and also at times stating child was in paid provision off site which was untrue. LA ordered school to keep child on roll. Then when suited LA instructed school to illegally off roll without permission off parent. EHCP amendment notice states one thing. Final EHCP then issued stating child is attending a special school and has been for months. Child has never been enrolled nor has LA even warned the school they are lying on an EHCP.

We wanted to home educate after realising our autistic son would not cope with the sensory overload of school.

I am currently in dispute with LA over placement. I initially requested specialist provision but LA name mainstream secondary despite school refusing to put my son on roll. I refused to send my son while I considered options. Last week I attended mediation. What I have realised is that HE is perfect for us currently but may not be right in the longer term as my son is very academic. His autism is a huge barrier to school though. I am leaning towards EHE as I am tired of fighting the system.

School staff were unsupportive of son. Also no communication with home.

At a loss! Not attended since end of Nov18. We have contact with school, GP, referral to Paediatrician but NO site of LA or contact during this period. NO schooling of any description and no idea what's happening to help her get an education. She cannot attend school and there is no alternative or support available locally. CAHMS will see us 'Julyish'. School are trying to get MET but have been ignored to date - seems we have been forgotten and nobody is concerned. Welfare? We know she and we are safe however the LA don't!?! It feels like we are going to have NO OPTION than to home ed. meaning me putting my job to one side to focus on her education. Oh, and also fight for an EHCP that Worcestershire County Council are refusing as they simply can't cope and there aren't the establishments locally to facilitate the education she needs.

Son became too unwell to attend school (anxiety) October 2017. Due to commence high school September 2018 but School have said they cannot meet needs

My child's mental health was deteriorating.

School system is letting our children down

My eldest child has an EHCP, was continually excluded and now struggling because of anxiety about what happened at first school still affects him greatly, my youngest has been deregistered for home schooling as a last resort short term, will start a new school in 2 weeks

My oldest son (14) has spent half his education on roll but out of school or in isolation due to diagnosed SEN needs not being met - he has had an EHCP/statement for 7 years



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Unable to attend school due to severe anxiety related to ASD. Poor provision for education from school whilst at home. Still on roll.

It is a battle to get my child to school and a battle to get the support he needs.

The actions of the headteacher towards my son constitutes to emotional abuse and had a huge impact on his mental health. I tried to arrange meeting with her but she refused, I contact other agencies involved with my son care to seek support but was left dealing with the situation on my own and felt I had no option but to remove him for his own safety.

School have not had contact with me since December and it's very much become my responsibility to provide an education.

I was frustrated at the schools inflexibility regards Pupil Premium and their unwillingness and inability to cooperate.

We have been lucky to gain a referral to a specialist medical provision but he still does not access education full time.

Although we originally looked into home education through desperation (school's inability to deal with our two children's different problems - bullying and anxiety/school refusal) the more we looked into it the more we realised how appealing it sounded. Home educated is far more child centric allowing a much more rounded education promoting learning at a time when schools appear to just turn most children off learning. Home educating allows learning to be accessible and challenging, interesting and enjoyable developing a child's innate desire to learn. We actively therefore chosen not to send our third child to school.

There are no schools for above average children with complex Tourettes and ASD. We are given no choice or correct support

School is broken and not fit for purpose. My confident, funny, happy, highly intelligent daughter was gone after a year in reception. At 4 the staff at school told her she was not talented at writing, she couldn't stand to be around children anymore and cried every morning with huge meltdowns. The evenings were fraught with panic about the new day. It was such a terrible time. I had always wanted to home Ed, but she wanted to try school and I have always made it very clear that it is her choice. She is now back to her old self with her confidence and inquisitive nature returning daily. The government should be thankful that there are parents out there who care enough about their children to support and honour them enough to home educate.

My child was home-educated for Year 8 and most of Year 9. Went back part-time for GCSE's but is struggling and health conditions getting worse again

My son did not attend school for all of year 9. He attends now but only for some of the lessons.

Our Local Authority failed to secure a suitable school placement for my daughter after issuing her EHCP. She does not currently have a school place and is likely to be out of school for an entire academic year. We did not actively choose to be in this situation. She is receiving 5 hours 1:1 tuition per week, provided by a Local Authority tutor.

He has anxiety and depression

Now in a special school but before that, had deregistered as a last resort (threats from school ref. Prosecution due to inability to attend).

I am fighting to get out of school tuition for my son

My son's autistic goes to school for special needs has EHCP plan every day they phone me



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The school has neglected her by not dealing with bullying. My daughter is officially signed off as sick and has low mood and anxiety problems.

Trust in school broke down after son had accident at school leading to significant time off in year 5 with no offer of help from school, back in in September for year 6 and school threatening with fines if not in

I felt steam rolled in to home education due to lack of empathy, understanding, and support from both the school and the local authority. Three years down the line the battle continues with the LA having stepped in to deem my home ed provision unsuitable in April 2017, yet they still are not helping/supportive. Dismal school system!

We have now moved him to a school which is supportive

my daughter hasn't been able to attend school for 18 months - not what either of us wanted but the lack of school support meant her mental health declined to such an extent she could no longer attend

The system is appalling - children and families are continually pressured, bullied and blamed for the failings of a system unfit for purpose.

Due to bullying and the school not understanding the needs of our son, and his worsening mental health we took him and his brother out of school for his mental wellbeing.

This is the second of my children to go through this

The school actively tried to help my child

EHCP declined once. Currently trying again. My child is part time as we try to reintroduce her to school after an extended period of absence because she was suicidal. Her difficulties are mostly school/ SEN related.

After several exclusions most days sat in isolation by himself left with no alternative but to home school for which a child who stated wanted to die to a confident child now

Mental health is more important than school. Once mental health is ok, learning follows. School and autism are a bad mix

My daughter is in temp alternative provision until her EHCP is amended

Decision was helped by lack of send support and concern about mental health

We have been asked to deregister but I have said we will not do this until the school and LA can guarantee the same level of support e.g. Ed Psych, for after we have deregistered. So far, they haven't been able to do that. So we await ed psych and meanwhile she's studying on roll.

Electively home-educating with joy

My wrist daughter is autistic so had some difficulties there, however this was only part of the reason we decided to HE. The main reason being we wanted the freedom to educate our children the way we chose.

We have an EHCP for online school.



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Wasn't a last resort as such but the lack of help, understanding and funding for my child to have the help he needed and deserved.

My child was really unhappy at school. Could not cope with full time school and no special unit or school would agree to part time.

After a year-long battle to try and get effective strategies in place to support child's identifies and unidentified issues of the time, we gave up on school because it was too negative and he was not being educated there.

The school were unwilling to make small allowances for our daughter's severe dyscalculia and high functioning Aspergers.

our child is being home educated because of being constantly bullied and the school not doing enough about it and our also is not invisible like the channel four documentary falsely claimed

Adopted child, tried two schools, unsupported with trauma aware teaching staff

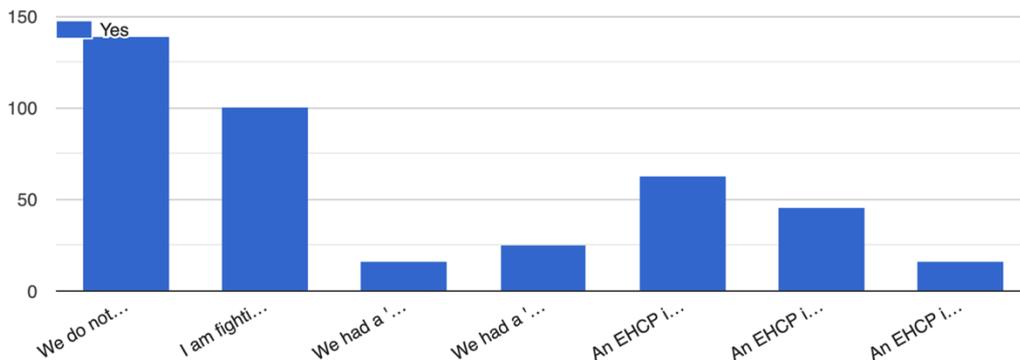
state education is no education if children are forced to progress at the average pupil.

We deregistered due to house move then saw our son's behaviour improve instantly so didn't look for another school. He has since been diagnosed ASD.

School continued to fail keeping my children safe from bullies. Teacher and pupil bullying!

Q.2

EHCP Support



139 = We do not need an EHCP

101 = I am fighting to start the EHCP process

16 = We had a 'yes' to assess but were then denied an EHCP

25 = We had a 'no' to assess so are currently appealing this decision

63 = An EHCP is in place but not being implemented properly

46 = An EHCP is in place, with the support outlined, but is not effective

16 = An EHCP is in place and is working well

78 = Other

Do you have any further comments?

After nearly two years I am still waiting for the plan to go from draft to agreed!

School made the ECHP application without me seeing or contributing to the document. They failed to include any medical or CAMHS supporting evidence

Transfer from SSEN to EHCP taken over 2 years. Now going to tribunal in March.

We are going through assessments currently.

We were given a no to EHCP assessment. No one would help us and we gave up. We deregistered.

We were messed around by the school, first told we could apply for EHCP, then they changed their mind and refused to help. I started process to apply on my own but eventually deregistered before applying as the situation got so bad.

EHCP process started through school.



'SKIPPING SCHOOL' - OUR REALITY

Survey Results

Not sure whether we need an EHCP

Parent was by school told ds would not qualify. So badly damaged by lack of simple accommodations, he definitely needed one by the time he was off-rolled (last day of Y10).

The system of endless tests and working memory tasks does not enable dyslexic kids.

It always seems to be a working progress!

There have been 3 EHCPs so far but no help has been offered.

We are considering EHCP but have been told we don't need one.

The school did not support us and gave the LA a plan this plan was the reason we didn't get an EHCP and also why child won't attend

Denied EHC to assess had to appeal now refused EHCP issue

Just had a fantastic session re-writing my son's EHCP with the head of provision at his SEN school. What a breath of fresh air! The LA SEN Officer written one was very poor...

Starting tribunal proceedings

School said son would be unlikely to get an EHCP as he is academically able. I plan to apply for one.

EHCP in place but not in a school for it to be effective.

EHCP has no medical or social care needs met, despite these clearly existing.

Been at the proposed plan stage since 9th October 2018 and still at the proposed plan stage today date 11-2-2019

EHCP not effective as 'support' is restricted by what the school can offer. School environment needs complete overhaul - not individual measures (seen as stigmatising and decreasing independence by my child)

We have been discouraged from getting an EHCP by literally everybody in the system except IPSEA and SOSSEN

Currently being assessed for EHCP

Always been told she is too high functioning to get one. Getting advice and looking at applying for one.

The school did not give enough time to embed the EHCP before telling me to move him.

We have an EHCP but mainstream not suitable fighting for SEN school been off school 18 mths

Overwhelmed by the process on top of medical appointments and working

Looking for an alternative placement. No autistic school places locally. Original request rejected at EHCP panel. Going back after half term



'SKIPPING SCHOOL' - OUR REALITY

Survey Results

We would apply for an EHCP if it didn't mean that the LA could use it to mandate school attendance.

Social and emotional issues evident from reception, selective mutism traits advised by SLT, got further and further behind and more anxious. Year 5 and finally an Ed Psyche assessment.

Our EHCP took 43 weeks but still needed to have contents amended. Subsequently had mediation and now almost at Tribunal - hearing dates are over 2 days early March 2019.

The school began the EHCP process in November 2018. Our council is Surrey CC whose children's services have twice been rated as inadequate by Ofsted and indeed further found to not be improving at the required rate. They told the school in January that no paperwork had been received relating to my son and asked for the forms to be re submitted. Someone is not telling the truth.

Had we remained in school; we would have been applying for an EHCP. As it is now, we can't see how it would benefit our child.

I had to contact child services to get the school to provide an EHCA

EHCP just gone through although his needs state SEMH mainstream school reluctant to take him back from PRU. State they can't meet his needs.

We are waiting for EHCP to finalise

We have only just achieved this. I had to apply for it.

Waiting on report before I apply. A report I've had to wait 3 years for as no pathway in my area for selective mutism- finally got the CCG to pay for private Cate assessment

I have three kids. One with EHCP (autistic), one ADHD and Tourette's, possibly autistic, one in school with possible autism. Adjustments aren't made, help not given, kids blamed.

my son is now enjoying home education. He now has 3 SEND diagnoses including inattentive ADHD that weren't recognised in school.

We had a no but are not appealing at the moment due to being exhausted with the fight

EHCP granted 2017, never once enrolled child anywhere or granted home tutoring.

EHCP in place but largely irrelevant at moment as I am delivering education at home.

Everyone keeps telling us we won't get an EHCP as the LA have put a stop to them?! This is Worcestershire County Council. I was even told by a manager when I attended a SENDIAS meeting that she would be the person I would be complaining to and to expect a long wait... A very long wait! All whilst my child is not in education - how are they getting away with it? AND how does

I have considered applying for an EHCP but haven't done as it seems like we won't get one and it could be very stressful

Requested Needs assessment December 2016. Assessment completed April 2017. Refusal to issue. Appealed on change of circumstances. Lost. Appealed to upper tribunal. Won. Bounced back to first tier Tribunal for fresh hearing scheduled September 2018 but LA conceded day before and agreed to issue. Draft plan received but useless so amending now.



'SKIPPING SCHOOL' - OUR REALITY

Survey Results

I am not sure if the education my child needs exists in state primary, I don't think an EHCP will help

Currently on assessment period for EHCP (during which local authority have declined referral for hospital school, do my child is at home, with no education)

Youngest child does not have an EHCP but has been affected by his brothers experiences at the school (i.e. repeated restraints)

Not sure what EHCP is?

According to an Ed Psych report 4 years ago our son needs an EHCP but his school said they didn't have funding for a 1:1 for him (even though his teachers said he couldn't learn without 1:1) so they couldn't prove he needed the level of support an EHCP provides and then suggested he would do better home Ed (I have a PhD, my parents were a teacher and university lecturer so we can give him a very good education) and that school were unable to educate him due to funding cuts when the school became an academy and sacked all the support staff (prior to academisation he had a level of 1:1 and small group support which meant he was able to attend school and learn all this was removed when the school became an academy.

My youngest son a serious but undiagnosed physical health condition which causes him to vomit repeatedly and to faint - according to his paediatricians it is physiological and he is under investigation but it has taken 8 months to get basic tests done due to NHS underfunding. His school have put him on a part time timetable due to the severity of his illness -he is fine at school and loves school he has no SEN

His EHCP now is good and current school are excellent but due to years of trauma caused by a string of schools both specialist and mainstream not meeting his needs he is now school refusing

EHCP attained whilst out of school. Consulting for new school but no responses

The time it took to get the EHCP meant that by the time we got the provision was not enough. Had we received earlier it might have been

They have almost finished the needs assessment phase and I should hear soon

The school wouldn't recognise his difficulties and instead of implementing actions in his EHCP they punished him instead. I did put in letters of complaint and the LA raised concerns that school were not using his funding appropriately.

Just been issued an EHCP which is not fit for purpose so going through the mediation and appeal

As yet, we are waiting to hear whether an assessment will be carried out.

At the draft EHCP stage, still trying to get a placement so that it can be finalised

We didn't think he would get one even though he is diagnosed by a Child Psychiatrist with Anxiety

New school actively helping to get EHCP but believe they cannot offer the provision

The government is trying to be the de facto parent and any further intrusion would be a serious breach of the human rights of both the children and their parents.



Not Fine in School

'SKIPPING SCHOOL' - OUR REALITY

Survey Results

My daughter (5.5yrs) is thriving in home education.

I'm fighting for my child's needs to be recognised at school, an EHCP will be the next step

We are appealing the content of the EHCP as it does not address my son's needs and is not specific or quantified.

An EHCP is still being transferred after 2 years +

My daughter has an EHCP, but does not have a school place, so therefore the EHCP is not being properly implemented.

School are at least verbally supporting not sure if happy to support EHCP in writing. Daughter in year 6 - all far too late due to school staling and giving me the run around for so long. Had to apply for EHCP needs assessment myself! Daughter is academically able but anxiety is crippling her. Now having daily migraines etc

See above.. EHCP only in place now since deregistering at previous mainstream.

The school has applied for Ed Psych but decline support for EHCP

MAP panel said no to assess as 'school haven't shown enough evidence' despite my son being a full time school refuser for almost a year. I didn't take no for an answer and had a rant at MAP and quoted the law. Then they agreed to assess.

I won at mediation to EHCP, Assessment was done and decided school could manage her condition.

As we took our daughter out of school during the EHCP process, it seems to have now been halted. Although we hoped to continue the process ourselves, the office has not responded to our emails.

I am astounded at how the school is getting away with this. Nobody in Authority seems to want to know including Ofsted.

We didn't bother with EHCP as told it would take too long and she was being given detentions and isolations for her disability so we chose to home educate for safeguarding reasons as believed she was unsafe at school

Starting EHCP process due to school anxiety and refusal to go.

EHCP in place after 5 years of fighting for one, but LA still nowhere near implementing it.

We think mental health is more the problem but not serious enough to be accepted by CAMHS

I applied for and fought for the EHCP with little school help

As the school staff who were entirely clueless, continued to say 'she is fine in school' all other agencies ignored our pleas for help that was desperately needed. At tribunal hearing, the views of the school were given a lot of weight - and the evidence we had from 4 independent assessments we commissioned was ignored - though the failings were with the school. As a result, we have a daughter out of school, increasingly socially isolated and her needs further away from being met than ever. EWO only focussed on getting her back into mainstream school. Wrong on so many levels

EHCP names mainstream he couldn't attend, so currently appealing.

The LA's use illegal barriers to refuse to assess the children.



'SKIPPING SCHOOL' - OUR REALITY

Survey Results

We have considered applying for an EHCP, but were advised it would be unlikely to be successful. We considered this to be fine for us at the moment as it would change nothing for us, but we do worry what will happen should child want to attend College in the future.

Actually at the start of the EHCP assessment process after my parental request being accepted last week. But had been asking school for about a year whether they felt we should make an application and they continually said no - and in the end the school refused completely so I did it and got accepted straight away! Makes me think there was an agenda from the school not to do it last year because of funding as they are already strapped for cash and now will have to 'find' £6K if we are successful and makes me wonder if staff have been primed to discourage all new EHCP applications on these grounds, as my child was clearly not fine before, as I kept telling them....

School told me we would not get an EHCP

New EHCP in place but now gone to panel with request for specialist provision

School was going to apply for EHCP then changed their mind

SENDCO has previously said she would never get an EHCP. Now the head has suggested it since she hasn't been to school since July.

We tried for an EHCP but were refused whilst my son was still in school as school was unsupportive of it.

They refused to assess until they saw how my daughter coped in her first year of high school even though she was struggling to attend at her primary school

EHCP is in progress now. School delayed and delayed and said he wouldn't get one.

We were told our daughter would not meet the threshold for an EHCP

tv companies should get all the facts before putting a programme out instead of a one sided one

Deregistered before EHCP and have found ways to home educate that don't require one. Wouldn't try school again without one though.

We do not believe applying for an EHCP would be successful so have not tried.

I've been fighting for an EHCP for 2 years & still being denied.

Son has brain tumour/VI/learning disability. LA very helpful in giving us access to help and equipment. (Hampshire)

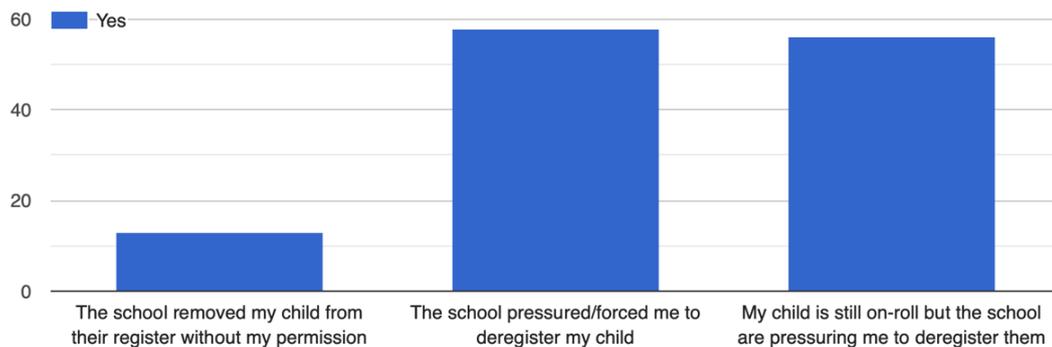
SEN child without ECHP - deregistered before process started due to delays

'SKIPPING SCHOOL' - OUR REALITY

Survey Results

Q. 3

Is 'off-rolling' a factor? (where the school has either taken your child off their register without your knowledge or put undue pressure on you to change schools or home educate)



13 = The school removed my child from their register without my permission

58 = The school pressured/forced me to deregister my child

56 = My child is still on-roll but the school are pressuring me to deregister them

23 = Other

Do you have any further comments?

School repeatedly suggested I look for another school or home educate

The Local Authority tried to get me to deregister, even offering me the chance to apply for a PB to EHE.

We are still on roll currently but we felt under enormous pressure to de register. My son is obviously suffering from anxiety, under CAMHS and going through EHCP process, but threats of legal action constantly made.

We felt we had no choice but to deregister

Pressure and verbal threats.

School did pressure to move schools or exclude

If I wasn't "informed via this group from the outset he would have been off rolled!

School tried to force my son out to a provision for SEMH children who are un able to be in mainstream school. Thankfully the staff their recognised my son did not for the criteria and we have help from a new initiative for children who have suffered childhood trauma. They are helping to repair the damage caused at school before reintroducing him into a new mainstream setting. My son has a few simple sensory needs and was otherwise fine and academically able at school. His deterioration began after an incident of



'SKIPPING SCHOOL' - OUR REALITY

Survey Results

assault in school by another pupil which made him feel unsafe. The decline went unreported to us for 5 months and they suggested it was ASD. Obviously, the clinical psychologist has diagnosed otherwise.

This was a previous school.

School frequently requests the LA to prosecute for non-attendance LA wont

Brink of exclusion

My son was never taken off register. We agreed I would home educate until his special school placement became available. School didn't realise they had to inform the LA of this. I could have got more help...

Just 3 days-notice of terminating placement but was made to feel it was the only option as staff were threatening to leave!

Pressure to attend school part time only, which will continue until he finishes school (2.5 years of part time)

I'm still waiting for alternative provision. I'm not going to deregister d

Not exactly pressuring me but suggesting that it might be something I should do if I want to access an alternate provision

The pressure is implicit rather than explicit e.g. threats of fining / prosecution for 'unauthorised absences', endless meetings which go nowhere except parent blaming followed by pointless and inappropriate 'interventions' which are beside the point when all my child needs is an appropriate education for his needs. Time passes and my child is losing ground educationally. IQ in top per cent but will not fulfil Potential at mainstream. Told he'd have to be 'on medication' to get into specialist!?!?

None of the above

No, our decision but feel it was easier for school if she wasn't there. No response from head to my letter explaining what my daughter experienced.

This is the second secondary school to off roll my son. The first one permanently excluded him but the governors overturned it. I moved him to the school he is now being off rolled from because they don't want a child with special needs even though he has an EHCP.

School has arranged for 5 hours home tuition from local PRU

My child has never attended school.

Mainstream secondary, on numerous occasions at Child In Need meetings encouraged me to de-register my son from their roll. I had always made it crystal clear I would NEVER do this. I do not want to educate my son and take on the responsibility for doing so. Despite this Secondary school (without informing me or my son) attempted to remove my son from roll - just prior to the Jan 2019 census date. It is important to note that my son, although in Yr10, is due to sit a GCSE this May and his results will skew their Progress 8 scores as my sons outcomes have dramatically decreased since leaving primary and sitting his SATs.

Early Help suggested I Home Educate

We held the small privately owned independent school to account for a number of things including proven misleading information to us and other parents, and also how they punitively refused to support and our suspected SEN son



'SKIPPING SCHOOL' - OUR REALITY

Survey Results

The school stayed they couldn't meet his needs but we said we wanted him in mainstream and at that school and they have reluctantly agreed to let him transition slowly back.

It's more subtle than that for us. By not helping they off rolled us but they never suggested or recommended it

My son has been dual registered without first discussing with us.

Traumatic

La emailed school instructing them specifically to off roll despite numerous emails from myself begging them not to and informing them of the law

School refused to put my child on roll despite offering a place for Year 7. When consulted they said they couldn't meet need. After a disastrous transition & appalling communication between them & myself, I whole heartedly agreed. However, LA still named them on plan but then did not back this up by directing them to admit. As a result, my son officially CME since September.

After approx. 8wks at secondary we were told our 11yr old girl was 'unique' in the fact she was displaying ASD traits & struggling to integrate into school. Although also told that she was 'fine' in school too? Think it was them witnessing her complete meltdown and hitting her head against the car on the last day she attended.

They have said they can't meet needs. Still on roll. No alternative education.

They were not off rolled but I felt under pressure to home school youngest because of his brothers very negative experiences, no option

The school didn't force or pressure me to deregister but stated he couldn't learn without 1:1 but that they had no funding for 1:1. Instead they gently hinted that my son would get a better education and be happier and less anxious at home so we de-registered

He has always been on roll but has spent years out of school or in isolation

School have not suggested deregistering openly but not providing support at home

Head of school often made suggestions such as 'I was choosing to send my child to school' 'I was choosing to send my child to a ms school'. I did feel some pressure but didn't deregister as I knew it wouldn't work for us. We also had multiple fixed term exclusions which were stressful. I have just managed to secure a specialist placement for child so am moving to that

My daughter with ASD struggled to go to school she managed to go in for the last half an hour on the day. She is 14 with social anxiety. She was in a room on her own three teachers came and tried to talk her into moving to a different school. They called me and told me a manager would give her the option of returning I told them she doesn't need that option as she is not going anywhere.

The main and initial solution the school presented me with was home schooling.

We felt the school could not meet the needs of our son due to lack of funding - Anxiety is classed by the school as a Medical condition not SEN! So no additional support or funding available.

I'm not receiving pressure to off roll. However, in the previous school I was sent a letter stating I was not allowed to discuss alternative provision with my school refuser.



'SKIPPING SCHOOL' - OUR REALITY

Survey Results

No. In fact my son's secondary school didn't actually inform the LA, I got in touch with them myself 3 months after deregistering him and they chased the school. Apparently his name is still called in some class registers!

No pressure but indicating they cannot support but aware there is no alternative

Completely my choice to home educate and we love it. My daughter enthusiastically starts studying at 7:30 am every day.

The school have not pressured us to off roll but by putting the absences down as authorised, which we thought was great as no fines, there were no alarm bells about his education. Even worse when he was signed off with anxiety we were told by the LA he wasn't fit for learning so he didn't need a tutor. Er, no.

When my daughter was enrolled at a mainstream school, she struggled to attend without appropriate support in place to meet her needs. We never deregistered, nor was she "off-rolled", but we did stop sending her to school as it was too distressing for her. We stopped sending her to school at around the time of the assessments for her EHCP. The Head teacher at the school made a strong suggestion to "make home ed official" i.e. deregister her, which we refused to do as we knew that if we did then the Local Authority would not have any duty to provide an education.

I have a TAC meeting tomorrow so depending on the outcome we could end up deregistering and HE

If we had left him on roll, the school were insisting on visiting him at home every 10 days to make sure he was 'safe'! However, on their first visit, he refused to come down and see them. They refused to leave until they had been upstairs and seen him, even though he was hiding under the duvet. Their visits made him even more anxious which then stopped him from attending his online school.

My school has recommended another local school but for now they accept my decline in this recommendation

Changed school

See comments below, the school forced us to leave by not putting the correct support in place. Comments like 'we know nothing about autism here' suggest they were trying to get rid of us.

School offered a managed move to an unknown as yet school which may or may not meet my daughter's needs.

Although reintegrated we felt we did not want our son to be there due mainly to total lack of understanding by staff

still on-roll but receives limited home tuition from local authority

I may have to remove my child, not because of pressure from school but because of lack of support/ being in the wrong environment has seriously damaged her mental health.

None of the above. I've not yet been pressured to off-roll but it's still early days.

No pressure to off roll

Not an issue



Not Fine in School

'SKIPPING SCHOOL' - OUR REALITY

Survey Results

When it got to point of having to pay for tuition for him, EOTAS, they also turned nasty and parent blaming and tried to involve SS. We felt we had to disappear to avoid stress of unwanted SS.

The school told us our daughter would be better taught at home because of her SEN needs

There was pressure to home educate when it became apparent that no school in the city could meet her needs. No-one ever suggested EOTAS, that was all our idea!

I was left with no option other than to home educate, an option given to my son from school as I wasn't aware you could home educate in Britain.

No; we chose to remove from school due to the neglect an schools part and fir my child physical and mental wellbeing.

We were not pressured to deregister - very much the opposite - but the school failed to meet my son's needs.

No at current school, by was pressured at mainstream school

My child has never been registered at a school

Feeder secondary school told me not to send him if I wanted him to achieve as they had no money to support him. Costs to send him to nearest school outweighs the cost of EHE

No we choose to leave.

We were served legal action as they had not told me what medical information I needed to be medically signed off.

None of the above she is still on the school roll but I feel I will have deregister her soon because I dint feel forcing her by carrying her through the doors will help her mental health

They will not allow me to a health appointment for my son thus discriminating further.

We HE as mainstream could and would not accommodate

No the school did NOT off roll my child but the bullies were not removed which meant my son saw them every day which was more damaging than school telling me the better option would have been to have moved. By the time I realised that too much damage had been done and with academics behind to the degree they were and self-esteem so low another school was more than my baby needed to suffer.

I de registered them

I am waiting for EHCP but can't take any more stress so will most likely EHE whilst addressing school trauma. I want to secure EHCP first because I hope my son will return to school one day, he is age 9

The LA suggested I home educate when I was waiting for a special school

It became clear that unless our daughter magically recovered from her mental health issues and was able to attend, the school would begin the process of taking us to court over attendance.



Not Fine in School

'SKIPPING SCHOOL' - OUR REALITY

Survey Results

N/A

Nobody cares - seriously - whether she's on/off/rolled/de-rolled - nobody cares that she's in part-time, whether she increases, decreases, unrolls or explodes. Nobody cares except me!

See above. The issue was lack of understanding of how to meet son's needs in school, lack of consistency in applying recommendations, lack of funding for 1:1 support he needed, refusal to be honest that they could not cope with his behaviour as they feared it would impact Ofsted to admit this or to formally exclude him - we requested this

Previous secondary school created so much pressure, hostility despite huge amounts of evidence sent that neither my child nor I could take it anymore. They refused to acknowledge medical / mental health and wellbeing needs which led to be off-rolling for the health and well-being of my daughter. They also didn't deal effectively with bullying at school. De-registering was the healthiest thing I did in hindsight as my daughter has been able to heal.

Opposite. Left on the list instead of instantly removing this they still got funding.

Still on roll but no school

Home education was a last resort but not because school advised it- because my son really couldn't cope in school & I was concerned for his wellbeing

Off rolling only happened to my eldest son , other two children we made the decision to remove from school

Legal process threatened after 10 days of refusal. Request for work home and a breathing space refused. De-registered as not wanting to waste energy on fighting school/system that didn't care about our child, who has always been a top student (9ys old)

Pressure is subtle, but I still feel it.

None

No. We electively HE. Never been on register.

Felt pressured into removing my child as the head stated her behaviour was impacting on the education of the other children in the school.

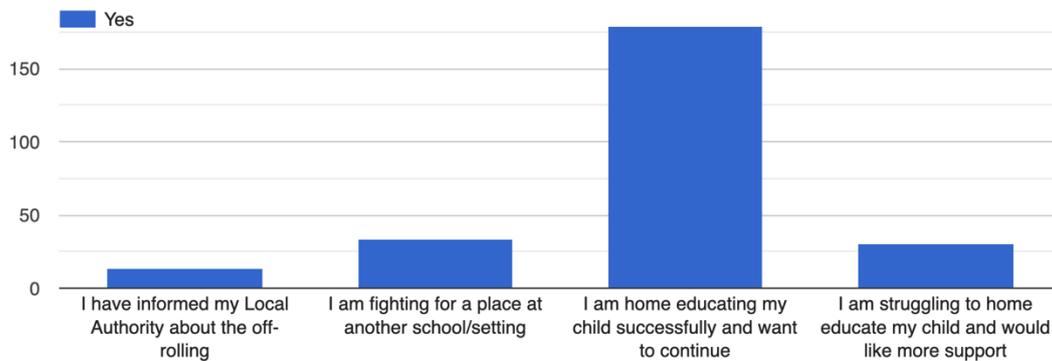
Not yet.

School asked us to consider home educating. Said they couldn't deal with daughters ASD/anxiety and she needs to go to a PRU

Assessment placement in SLD nursery has ended and no EHCP. We feel we have no choice but to keep her at home as her anxiety is too high in/around 'mainstream' environments.

Q.4

If you are no longer on the school's roll what is your situation?



14 = I have informed my Local Authority about the off-rolling

0 = I am trying to get my child's place at the same school reinstated

34 = I am fighting for a place at another school/setting

179 = I am home educating my child successfully and want to continue

31 = I am struggling to home educate my child and would like more support

Do you have any further comments?

Due to the punitive, abusive treatment of my child by school, my child had a complete breakdown, became phobic of formal education and suffers PTSD. I have had to focus heavily on her recovery and education is either verbal or by physical example.

I am at present finding it difficult to find a tutor to regularly come to teach my daughter aged 13.

Schools should be made accountable for the fact they could not support my child through her sudden anxiety and that they became so threatening I believed school was not a safe place for her to be, under the care of a headteacher who did not understand or care.

Impossible for ds (16) to attend mainstream setting again. Home Ed is the only way forward.

I am successfully home educating but would like support in terms of needs relating to SEN and some social care support.

My daughter gets 2 hrs tuition per week. She has autism with a PDA profile, so will rarely engage.

Child is unofficially part time educated, I help with his studies when not at school

So little suitable provision in my area. Waiting for tutors to be allocated to teach out of the home but not in a school environment

Cannot believe Home educators have never protested that they should be entitled to the funding the child wouldn't have got in school AND MORE!



'SKIPPING SCHOOL' - OUR REALITY

Survey Results

Online school is working really well and health and wellbeing has improved significantly

I've been fighting since mid-October 2018 to find my school an alternative provision and finally last week the local authority approved a place at an independent school.

Still on roll

We are doing Red Balloon of the Air which is working well

No contact from the LA

Form misbehaving. For us it was us awkward parents who were off rolled. They tried to coerce us and make support of SEN investigation conditional - we objected! CAMHS believed their lies and we have lost all faith in 'the system'. CAMHS underfunded and keen to save costs by taking schools word over parents. They basically blame parents for children's behaviour as a default position - incredibly damaging to entire family!

One is happier, the other less so but suffers from IBS and couldn't cope with attending school

I have now been told I have from this week until May this year to educate child at home 7 GCSEs for exams they have already paid for in May. Child has not been educated since year 8. It is impossible. It also isn't mentioned once that they are doing this to us on the EHCP. EHCP names a school that has always refused to put child on roll. We are supposed to start today. Have not told child due to raising anxiety immensely.

I went to mediation to request funding EOTAS. However, LA now talking about another EP assessment (this will be 3rd EP to see my anxious son). I feel my energy now would be better spent helping my son & rest of my family.

We are still on the role but in limbo as to what's happening. Waiting for MET but been told they're full locally and not taking children with anxiety or ASD... so where does our daughter go? They are suggesting the school she is on role at? The place she can't cope with... the place that is completely overwhelming

One at special school (struggling to attend), other starting new school in 2 weeks

Instead of supporting her school have tried to bully and intimidate her and me

I have got him a place at another school but he can't start until appropriate support is in place we have been waiting 2 weeks and they are saying it will take at least another 6 week to arrange.

I have been asked to provide excessive medical documentation, above and beyond the guidelines, and this pressure has continued despite a note from the GP stating my daughter is not fit for school, but no other solution has been forthcoming. I am now in a position where I have minimal choices left before de registering for her health and well-being.

After fighting for support for 8 years I've come to the conclusion that if my child is to have a future, I will have to do it myself!

I feel it is appalling that more investigation in not being done into how the schools are failing children with anxiety. They seemed pretty clueless how to support our son and we had to fight to get them to offer any support.

We are struggling in the sense that he is so broken by school that he is still recovering and not ready to do any formal work



'SKIPPING SCHOOL' - OUR REALITY

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We both enjoy home education so. She learns so much and we are able to focus on all that she enjoys and we do such a variety of activities.

We are currently going through a second round of consultations with schools in order to secure a suitable placement.

We told the LA about him doing online school - they were not happy. They said online school wasn't suitable! Then it became irrelevant once we got a special school place.

My son would like me to deregister him from the school & provide online/home tutoring, but I know the LA should be able to fund/provide home or online tutoring so I am sticking with my pursuit for now

N/A Daughter on 14-16 year provision and partly home educated

No help from local authorities on how to start or where to get info and support. De-Registered as a last resort

Not applicable

Fighting over as we did get a place

The difference in our son in the 6 months he has been home schooled is amazing. Our singing, dancing happy son has returned ! My child will removed from school during year 11, and will be sitting GCSEs independently this year

HE was a philosophical decision as a family, however has been incredibly beneficial for one child who has SEN.

Best thing we ever did. I would not want to go back.

It should be made more clear to parents once they are ready to start school that home education is an option. This would of suited my daughter and my older children with SEN needs better than going through a school system which has in turn left them all with their own issues and lack of qualifications

Feeling at my wits end and then stumbling across home education couldn't have worked out better! With a child that learns in a completely different way, home education let's him learn at a pace and way that is suited to him 100% ensuring he's not only learning he's also mentally in a good place!

My child is them self again. Happy, confident and learning well.

Child too damaged by school and resistant to learning. Going at his pace but broke and need to work. Not really in financial position to Home Ed how I would like.

I wish we did it years ago. I now home educate by choice. Even if SEN support was provided in school we would not reverse our decision. We have seen how wonderful home education is and will never return to the teach-to-test culture.

We have dropped a salary to provide the right home education. We would like some financial support or help with some of the costs of home education.

Whilst we are successful, home education has had a massive impact on wages/jobs etc causing financial challenges. HE wasn't our first choice.



'SKIPPING SCHOOL' - OUR REALITY

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We are paying for one-to-one tuition weekly, for English, Maths and Spanish, (just under £100 per week) and finding we have a bright boy. Have access to home ed classroom lessons which we have tried, but he cannot concentrate in these lessons at the moment

We are now under hospital and Home tuition by local authority. Plus own provision of red Balloon of the air

Wish I had done it sooner.

We are only week 2 into home education, its currently going well.

Currently considering home education until can get EHCP for secondary school

There was no choice

Getting an EHCP is the very start of the battle getting people to believe in it and follow it is another issue entirely. The best bit about Home Ed when you have had so much "Help" all be it with the best of intentions; is to simply be away from the professionals and all the pressure to put your child and yourself back together again and then pick up the pieces from there. School has been the worst and most traumatic constant issue for my family. It's like bashing your head against a brick wall, it's great when you stop. HE was something my kids requested and we are supporting their choice to feel safe and happy which is paying dividends in every way.

It's hard as costing lots of money to give my children the support they need

I did not choose to home educate but was forced into it by having no suitable provision available. However now I am lucky to have financial support to home educate via the EHCP and it is working better than I think any school could provide

I off-rolled my child, online educated successfully and arranged effective counselling. When she was ready to re-join teens of the same age she integrated more successfully because she had been educated by people who understood how to approach children who had been bullied.

my child was sharing the lea teacher who was funded to support another child, my child needed daily chats after school and in the morning, the lea said she cannot be supporting us more than the other child who was funded, even the parent of the child put a complaint in .

Home education suits my daughter, however I feel that there should be money available to support her additional needs. We are home educating as there was no other suitable provision for her.

I am registered also

No school to go to they are all full section 19 code of practice you cannot allow this to happen,

I voluntarily deregistered my child because I can do a better job than the school!

Home education has been a blessing in disguise

I feel more support is needed but only started home educating recently and yet to speak to la.



Not Fine in School

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We are Home-educating, although daughter needs recovery time to regain rest and confidence. She feels she has failed, and 'can't do school'. We are hoping to get her into a small nurturing private school. We are lucky.

I am receiving help from a tutor on certain subjects to home educate but at a cost of £700 a year, without including books supplies etc it comes to much more

Our LA is aware - only because the children act ant require performance licenses to work (licensing dept notified educational dept)

Would still like support.

Although I am a trained teacher I am struggling to meet my child's educational needs (I am secondary trained and my child is Year 2). There is no support / guidance in my area to help me understand what / how I should be teaching my child.

The Education Welfare Officer is involved and is trying to assist me in getting support but it is a very slow process with no guarantee of any support at the end of the process.

We need an EHCP to access another SEN setting (MLD) where our daughter can continue to thrive. Without an EHCP she cannot even successfully access mainstream education.

Three children, actually.

I am not deregistered but have no provision from school so I am home educating with him still on roll.

Home Education has completely changed my mind as I was apprehensive before starting. It is customised, dedicated education. The average attainment rates of Home Educated children verses state is extremely high. Please see Paula Rothermel's research on Elective Home Education at the University of Durham. Also there has been more results from children who are Home Educated in the US with attainments of Maths and English at GCSE level at 86%. This is a huge difference to the average attainment of what the state produces. Socialising has not been an issue, Home Education is not school at home, we are always out and about. My child has no issue bring up conversation with people. Conversely we are finding "school going" children who do not communicate, as if they need permission to talk to others, perhaps that other children outside of their own school are not worthy talking to, or even not within their peer age group at school.

My child's current school are providing the home education

I got an appropriate setting for my child through SENDIST Appeal Service. The LA "forgot" to fund schools for children with social, emotional & communication vulnerability who function 1+ year's above age academically when receiving the appropriate support in section F of the EHCP.

Currently in process of finding SEN setting

We want support from LA to fulfil EHCP through a PB or flexi schooling

I have tried college but a change in such a huge environment was clearly not going to work I tried juniper schooling but without EHCP in place he wouldn't get support college said same as he would have to be put in mainstream with no support he wouldn't cope

Schools are not designed for children with ASD



'SKIPPING SCHOOL' - OUR REALITY

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The LA know my daughter is studying at home they were supposed to have a review in December as yet no contact.

I feel my sons school isn't doing what it should to support children with additional needs. my son has been receiving 1:1 support on and off since September and a lot of adjustments made to help him cope in the school environment (part of his one plan and other thing that weren't on his one plan). the staff are under a lot of pressure and are being told to stop support and therefore our children (my son being one of them) is being failed.

Non elective home ed. But in reality safeguarding our daughters mental health from further decline caused by attending school. Happy children learn so currently home ed is our only option.

Our daughter has an EHCP which was not adhered to so our only option now is to go personal budget and home ed as her School trauma is too severe for her to contemplate another school right now. Sadly we trusted the private specialist school but they were only interested in the money they would receive. An extortionate amount considering the poor state of the building and second hand broken musical instruments in their music room. Reliant on staff donations but it costs £55-80k to attend. HHH on border between Devon and Cornwall. But you didn't hear it from me!

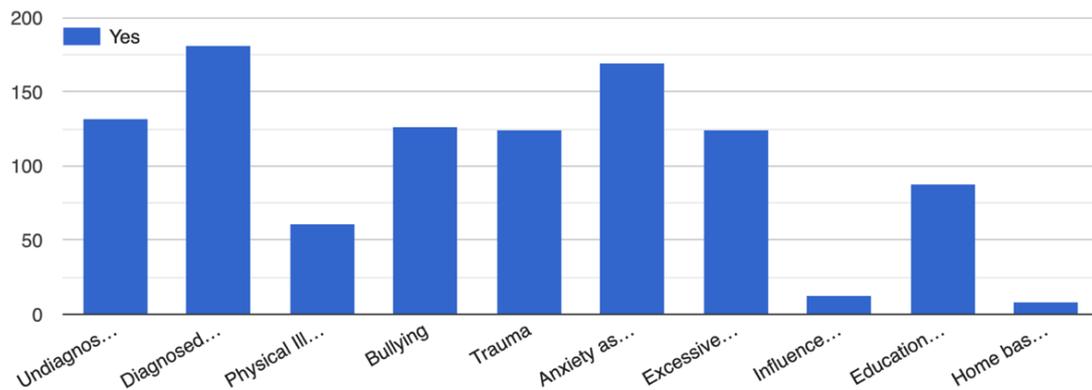
There are no alternative schools for my child in the area.

'SKIPPING SCHOOL' - OUR REALITY

Survey Results

Q. 5

If your child is/was struggling with attendance what do you feel are/were the underlying causes?



132 = Undiagnosed SEND

182 = Diagnosed SEND but needs remained unmet

61 = Physical Illness

127 = Bullying

125 = Trauma

170 = Anxiety as a result of academic pressures

125 = Excessive anxiety but no specific condition (other than anxiety-related) diagnosed

13 = Influence of social media or online gaming

88 = Educational disaffection

9 = Home based factors

17 = Other

Do you have any further comments?

As part of the assessment process, he has been diagnosed with a severe language disorder, executive functioning difficulties, sensory processing difficulties and being diagnosed for autism. Yet prior to this year, he was receiving no support and none of these issues had been picked up.

The trauma was school based due both at the final school and previous schools

Head refuses to deal with the bullying

Multiple conditions both physical and mental

Anxiety caused by being isolated in school



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Potential High Functioning Autism which was masked really well at school until Year 3. Trauma has also been caused from forcing our son into school for a number of weeks when school advised us to do this

Masked superbly so blamed parenting

Child involved in terrorist attack in Manchester

Even consultant certified physical illness, visible on x-ray was marked "unauthorised", without my knowledge. Even when I had to collect him from school to commence urgent treatment- also marked unauthorised.

I've covered this above

He has CFS, anxieties and undiagnosed autism.

SENCo and head wouldn't try to understand.

Diagnosis of autism received last week after 2 years of assessments

Without EHCP school do not support sanctions every day impacting immune system and diagnosed Sen unmet

Bullying from school staff led to a school phobia and fear of adults.

School had no clue when it came to pathological demand avoidance and so caused higher anxiety

My son is in a mainstream school who have admitted that they can't cater for his needs.

We have a specific diagnosis from CAMHS. But my child refuses to engage so have been discharged.

Under CAMHS for ASD assessment

Trauma from school restraining not dealing with SEN needs effectively

High functioning ASD not understood. Lack of knowledge and understanding by staff at school

The lack of support and understanding caused my son 7 years of severe anxiety and now he has no self-esteem or confidence. The way he has been treated is disgraceful.

We were told it was behaviour at first only to find out two years on when self-harming he was autistic with sensory difficulties

Large mainstream secondary. Only diagnosed end Yr 7

School too busy, noises & claustrophobic

Separation and social anxiety

I saw the school refusal coming but not the crippling anxiety. I spoke to school several times when I first became concerned. My son told them he felt changing tutor would help. We were ignored and told that no tutor would want my son in their group if his behaviour didn't change. This behaviour was due to unmet needs and not defiance. When school refusal started I literally begged



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school to send someone to the house to see the effect the thought of attending was doing to him. To see what we were up against. I was met with responses of there being no capacity. By the time they sent someone...a week later...it was too little too late. Even once they had seen it for themselves several times it didn't stop the school referring us for a fine for non-attendance which we quashed but only with help from a local autism advocate.

Schools are too big and too noisy

Above not applicable

ASD pathway . Anxieties around school environment , too big , too many people and lots of classroom and lesson changes .he felt unsafe .

School said he was fine.

Very high school based anxiety, not recognised and met with little understanding.

Schools are NOT working for send kids. I am close to home educating my third kid due to building trauma of unmet needs

My son was bored and not challenged much in school. he finds it hard to show what he knows in writing. He needed to be outside a lot more.

Never had issues with child going to school until they suspended child and refused to educate for 3 years. Records show this and that my child left early to get to school and enjoyed education. Childs now severely disengaged with extreme anxiety.

Diagnosed dyspraxia and now on ASD pathway

Not appreciating the amount of continued support

My child is very bright but dyslexic, I feel that the curriculum is too difficult for any 8 year-old as it is impossible for my child

Needs not understood or met, forcing to comply with standard behaviour policy, use of restraint, additional anxiety and trauma caused at first school. Recent ASD diagnosis, long awaited confirmation.

My son coped Ok at school years R, 1 and 2 where he had a level of 1:1 and small group support. Then the school became an academy and sacked all the support workers and so removed all his support. His year 3 teacher said he couldn't learn without 1:1, he still couldn't count aged 7, she also said he had SEN but CAMHS refused to assess despite referrals from school, NHS paediatricians, GPs, Ed Psych (private). He now has diagnoses of ASD/ADHD/dyscalculia.

School put him on part time timetable due to serious physical illness (vomiting repeatedly daily and fainting among other symptoms)

My son has diagnosed PDA/ASD/ADHD and it is almost impossible to find a school that understands PDA and is prepared to put PDA strategies in place (schools say if they made reasonable adjustments to meet his needs they would fail their Ofsted -I have been told this by many schools!

My son is still traumatised by what has happened to him at a previous school



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Diagnosed far too late, by which time lots of anxiety towards school. Mainstream school treated him as a burden & "persuaded" us to send him to an alternative provision school to avoid being expelled. Still waiting for EHCP & now year 11.

She cannot cope in the mainstream environment. She can't find her way around the school despite being there three years she doesn't know where to go to get to lessons. She watch tv with subtitles for two years, if a teacher says what to do at the start of the lesson she can't follow it then doesn't know what to do. All the noises distract her and she has to mask all the time. She almost broke down. Turned into a person I didn't recognise. Since she's stopped going she's 95% better. She's signed off due to the emotional impact school has on her.

The actions of the headteacher and inappropriate punishment instead of support.

School have refused to take any responsibility for any of the issue, rather have insinuated it is my daughter's inability to cope.

Anxiety (health, school, trust, justice) are main triggers. Pastoral worker did more harm than good and evidently needs more training.

Parents and schools are being forced into this position due to a lack of funding, lack of appropriate schools and focus on policy rather than children's needs

At first we forced our son to school which is what they say you should do. Worst thing we could have done. He was physically exhausted, highly anxious and bored.

If school had of took action from year 1 when I flagged up concerns her anxiety wouldn't of increased to point it has. She used to love learning but now in year six she has lost that and now Sadly withdrawing from lessons . Normally a well behaved child in school but due to all the historical bullying, social conflicts and high anxiety etc she is developing an attitude of resentment due to being forced into school every day despite being ill and the trauma she feels she has been through over the last 5/6 years !

Because our child masked his ASD, he refused all support the school were offering. However, that help was only suitable if the person was ok with letting people know their diagnosis. Things like desk help cards to hand in/show a teacher or going to a support classroom (he didn't want his mates to know he was going there). All we wanted was for the school to reassess his sets (too much pressure for him even though quite academic) and they refused to put him down a set or 2 in English. We also wanted them to reduce his timetable or at least make it a bit more flexible...which they said they couldn't do.

Poor transition from primary to secondary on part of the secondary school fuelled his anxieties and pushed him over the edge

Accused of FII/MbP so not taken seriously.

Unmet/undiagnosed SEND was the original trigger and trauma to Anxiety and other SEMH issues

Disability (hearing related) not illness

Chronic pain and anxiety due to not being believed when in pain at school

The schools/LA just do not listen to you as the person who knows your child best.

Maybe sensory defensive

significant issues diagnosed but school support inadequate leading to a rapid decline in mental health



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My child is transgender (and 'in the closed') and did not feel that school was a safe environment; this impacted on their academic performance

Too much noise, too many people, too many sensory issues. My son wanted a classroom of his own

Moved to Middle school & couldn't cope with environment, since diagnosed with ASD

They did not cope at school. Needed love and attention and time to follow their interests.

Some SEN identifies but 2 year battle to get further diagnosis which was too late to support school attendance or get extra strategies in place

Our daughter had excessive nose bleeds and fainted daily due to the anxiety and pressure of the school culture and curriculum

We are awaiting ASD diagnosis/mental health treatment

My son had poor attendance due to the school not allowing him to attend, he would arrive at 8:50 and by the time it was to take registration at 9:00 he was sent home and they refused him on the grounds, I was never given sufficient reasons as to why they refused him on the premises and that they would get the police to force my son off the grounds. They would then refuse to allow him to return up to a week at a time without any work to be done at home. I was being pursued by the warrant officer for my sons poor attendance which I could not change due to the school refusing access and not working with me but against me being accusatory and using bullying and manipulative tactics. They took a disliking to my son and wouldn't believe his behaviour was different at home and that the factor to some issues was that he was going through puberty a lot earlier than his peers.

Child is adopted and was additionally diagnosed with PTSD as a result of attending a mainstream school, home education was recommended and supported by CAMHS

My son has had minor concentration problems in the past. He has a slight physical problem with hands, which makes it difficult for him to write at speed. State school didn't help, so sent private for a term, which started to cause anxiety problem. Private school unsuccessful as he had some concentration problems in class, so they asked us to take him out. Had to battle to get him back into previous state school, which added to anxiety, which turned into a breakdown

Not struggling

Became refuser due to pressure of year 6 SATS

My child's safety or welfare was never thought about from the schools point or view but when my child came home with cuts and bruises which happened in a lesson, enough was enough my child's LIFE had to be put first.

Awaiting ASD dx

Appalled

You don't really have the right box here. My sons attendance was low simply to attend CAMHS and Paediatrician for diagnosis of ASD, ADHD and Dyslexia but school mark that as an absences which quickly drops below the threshold. Although my son was bullied in school he suffered in silence until the school recognised and then they kept him in class for his own protection when they couldn't stop the children. In another school attended for a matter of weeks the 3 teachers who didn't believe in the diagnosis by CAMHS or the Hospital staff as all kids are the same so they decided to shout at him in class until he cried which from that point on he would



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throw up every time he arrived at school. After 3 weeks it was clear it was anxiety but apparently the class teacher and head teacher all agree the kids in that class are all a bunch of cry-babies. So we decided nobody deserves to feel like that in work or school. Only thing that we had in our favour was and is there are no issues outside school.

Had my child gone to school educational disaffection and bullying would have been likely. Child has a very unusual " profile"- being highly intelligent with a high functioning vocabulary and reasoning ability but VERY slow processing speed , leading to much frustration and to being out of step with peers. HE allowed us to avoid the obvious disadvantages of a formal classroom environment with this SEND .

Lack of SEN support

N/A

Emotionally mistreated by teacher and teaching assistant. HT ignored it

My daughter moved to special school due to learning difficulties. Bullying at the special school has caused severe trauma and this has led to anxiety.

Schools say OFSTED pressures them to focus on attendance. Nowadays attendance and academic results focus give schools tunnel vision. A body can be sitting in a classroom but if they are not well, anxious, bullied, send, disengaged from education or other, none of the lesson may be digested. Attendance officers are delighted that they tick the box. The fact that no information has been retained gets blamed on someone else. Education is meant to be about the WHOLE person. Successive governments have undermined teachers / teaching and been too focused on certain numbers. The pupils are PEOPLE NOT MACHINES. In home education and in our own experience, a change of environment meant a child could progress in leaps and bounds. Look at FINLAND!!!!

Professional not listening to us as parents.

Our daughter is adopted and so the trauma related to the adoption combined with an autism diagnosis and an IQ in the normal range meant no-where could meet her needs

Minor anxiety leading to illness that disappeared when left the school system.

It's a broken education system, you need to listen to parents, fit CCTV in all special schools as mandatory, review Ofsted they have no remit, give LGO more powers, hold local authorities accountable, restructure policies, review

Pressure put on her for year 2 SATS when she was just 6 was enough to make her start bed-wetting, having nightmares and being visibly distressed going to school

Struggling for years after several pleas to get son tested for dyslexia and so on.

My child is PLAC and needs are largely emotional. Because he is capable academically school felt that he didn't need support he had had previously and started to withdraw it. That is when difficulties began.

My daughter and I are both Pagan. While my daughter attended school (a Church of England school) she was very regularly (on a daily basis) taught that what she and I believe is 'wrong' and that Christianity is 'right' and 'true'. Do you think this is right and just? Do we not have the right to practice our own belief without fear, prejudice or coercion as stated in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and ratified by Great Britain in 1951 ? Also my daughter was constantly being put into isolation for being disruptive and not one teacher attempted to find out why. She was being bullied and this was never addressed when brought



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up. 'She's just naughty and disruptive without cause' was all they said. Being 'naughty and disruptive' included not being able to sit still quietly for hours. My daughter is a kinetic learner not a statue. Furthermore, isn't it possible that some of this 'naughty/disruptive behaviour' was a way for my daughter to get herself separated from her bullies? After all if she is in isolation then she can't be bullied ! She needs assessing for special needs and was refused, I am having to do this myself. She was not being educated at school, she was being managed.

We felt he was too young. He was not happy and asked to be home schooled.

We have been waiting too long for a CAMHS assessment. In the meantime our child's chances of staying in school are dropping on a weekly basis.

Once ASD diagnosis given, school still didn't know what to do. Current testing climate is intolerable for children with SEN

Also Anxiety due to having support taken away.

Not all reasons for each child.

Generalised Anxiety, post traumatic reaction, severe school anxiety, depression from being in wrong setting and not having needs accepted or met

Developmental trauma and attachment difficulties and executive functioning difficulties

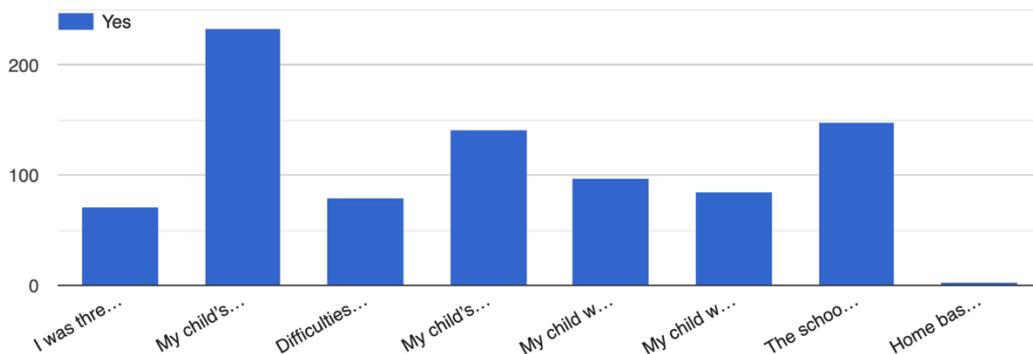
Attendance was fine

All the above, as stated this was 2016-17. The situation has been going on for years & is only now making it into the media.

Head teacher and other staff repeatedly telling my child he has mental health problems

Q.6

If you felt forced to home educate, what were your reasons?



72 = I was threatened with prosecution for poor attendance

233 = My child's health/mental health was deteriorating

80 = Difficulties or delays accessing CAMHS

142 = My child's SEND was not recognised/not supported

97 = My child was not receiving any sort of education

85 = My child was being bullied and the school did not intervene effectively

149 = The school were difficult to work with and/or ignored my concerns

3 = Home based factors

Do you have any further comments?

We have considered home schooling but as yet do not home school. My reasons for considering home schooling relate to my decision as a parent to prioritise mental health. Anxiety, extremely challenging behaviour and the ability of mainstream education settings to meet my child's needs.

I feel I should've home educated from the start of my sons education

School isolated my child without telling us.

If EHCP doesn't help us with the support our son needs we will be home educating as it will be our only option for the sake of our son's mental health.

Daughter took overdose which led to me removing her from the school she attended

We sought help long before de registering but it just wasn't there due to cuts. Two years on We are still awaiting help.



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I am seriously considering home educating my son. He has been out of school for 4 months with no help or education provided. He is a different child now he isn't attending. He is happy, he is safe, he is secure, he is calm and he is starting to want to learn again.

Home educating but still on role

We considered Home Education at the time our child was struggling at his previous school.

The school went out of their way to push my son out and treated him badly, upheld by Governors complaint.

My son has ADHD, ASD and dyspraxia. He also suffers with anxiety. Which has now affected his sleep routine.

Impact on mental health (due to complex mental health issues including anxiety) effected also by bullying

Daughter became distraught about school and didn't want to live anymore due to bullying and teachers not listening when she did ask for help.

I am not in a position to home school because I work full time and I'm a single parent which is why I've had to fight and push for the right school

Do not HE

Whilst I am not officially home educating, the alternative online provision my son receives means he can only access this supported. With no other option I am that support. I have taken this role as I have no other choice if I want to help my son achieve some kind of education.

Schools need to listen to parent concerns

N/a

I couldn't let the system destroy them anymore

Forced by the Local Authority and the school but they have hidden this by naming a expensive special school he has never been enrolled at

No home ed yet however feel we may not have an option as there are no suitable establishments available locally for a girl

No option, fresh start needed, complaints process being followed

I was concerned for the safety and welfare of my child whilst in school.

School seemed fixated on our son just being on the premises, initially refusing to let him do a reduced timetable. (target on attendance??) At one point we had nine days where they had no support in place for our son and meant we had no one to pass him over to and therefore he stayed at home. This was the tipping point in him not being able to cope with his anxiety. We documented our journey as evidence and got good support from SENDIAS and York LAT. After many meetings with school we could see clearly that our son was not going to get the support he deserved. We are now embracing Home Education and it is amazing!

I have considered home schooling due to all of the above factors but i am not in a position to not work. This means my children are forced to go to school where they are bullied, singled out, anxious which adds further to their issues



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We tried to home educate when nothing else was being offered but that wasn't the right solution. Fortunately our son is currently able to access a flexible timetable.

I was told by one teacher 'I see over 200 students in one week -I cannot possibly read more detail than the one page profile'.

I don't want to home educate as I believe he'll get a better education through school however I feel his mental health is more important and if home school is what it takes then I will do it because he's being failed by the school and CAMHS

N/A

Though we aren't currently Educating at home he is getting no education and we feel the same pressures, outlined above, as other parents.

Despite a diagnosis of ASD, and clear recommendations from the experts, the school SENCO and teacher were unsympathetic and obstructive in giving the right support. When we informed the teacher that our daughter's mental health was seriously deteriorating, she ignored us for a week, was hostile and unapproachable. When we politely told the head teacher he said the teacher is French, what do you expect?! I believe the lack of urgency and action was a result of their subtle off-rolling. They knew what they were doing.

I told them before she started that she would need support. They got their Head of SEN to call me to discuss. Then did nothing to support. I met with the form teacher and Head of SEN 2 weeks in because she wasn't coping. They promised several aspects of support. And did nothing. I warned them again after Christmas that I was worried that she wasn't coping. They said she "looks fine". Two weeks later she ended up in A&E and I deregistered her.

I felt I really had no other choice.

Attendance, attendance, attendance! All they are concerned with is % not getting to and sorting the causes

I'm temporarily doing HE whilst trying to get my son back at school but school don't seem bothered that he's not attending and LA don't seem to want to know either. I'm not really doing any kind of effective HE and am fighting against ever doing it formally and in fact am telling the LA he's not getting any education at present and that it's not my responsibility but their duty - my role is to raise and parent him and not educate him as well!

School did ask me if I'd considered home educating

I'm not currently home schooling but my son only attends school 2 hours a day currently so I try to home school when he's at home.

P totally refused at age 14

My son was in a very dark place at the age of 7 due to the lack of support and endless excuses rather than a diagnosis, leaving him feeling very stressed, inadequate and as he told me regularly, Stupid! So far from the truth, when taught in a way suited to him.

Schools would not consider part time attendance. My child did not cope full time.

After 6 weeks at school my son was having panic attacks and night terrors. Since deregistering he has had NO panic attacks and the night terrors are negligible.



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Although my daughter is still registered in school, I have had to educate from home due to absence as she is ill and no provision to educate provided by school.

I was threatened with prosecution and when talking to the attendance officer I was told that it was my responsibility to make sure my son was in attendance at school and the school wouldn't allow him to attend was not a factor nor an excuse. A teacher took a look at my son and told him to get out with no reasons which would cause anyone to be frustrated, never mind a teenage boy going through puberty earlier than the average. He was refused entry onto the grounds for days at a time without adequate reason. I was on the phone with them at one point when they rang to inform me they were sending him home they didn't mute the phone when they were speaking with my son in undermining tones and then proceeded to lie to me regarding his response and tone, when pulled up for this I was told that I was lying as they mute the phone. They refused to work with me and chose to work against us to get rid of my son.

My child was not able to concentrate fully on learning due to her medical diagnosis that was unsupported at school.

There was limited support e.g. he could be in a Nurture Group between 9:30-10.15 on a Thursday only.

No forced

When my child had written down thoughts about committing suicide whilst in school and the school brushed it under the carpet.

My son is waiting for EMDR trauma therapy due to the way teachers treated him. He has ASD, selective mutism and severe anxiety and a teacher still dragged him out of z classroom for not speaking to her or looking at her! Severely traumatised by ignorant teachers not meeting his needs. Oh and he had to interact with 27 different adults in school over his 2 week timetable which is not appropriate for someone with ASD.

Not currently home educating but these factors are influencing my thinking

Home Educated 1 so at request of my son I took on the others too.

Wanted to home Ed for my child's emotional wellbeing

My child wasn't challenged enough, she is very able. She was sat next to lower ability children so she can 'teach' them. My daughter was bored as the school's main priority is to get kids onto a mid-level but ignore more able/talented children. The whole school is a mayhem due to headteacher's behaviour. My child was humiliated by teachers a number of times

My son spent his reception year on reduced hours, sometimes only 1 hour per day. He was almost entirely isolated and excluded from his classroom and peers because of

A perfect storm is brewing: Cuts to CAHMS / EWMS; Cuts in council budgets so there is less early intervention / support for families; cuts to benefits so both parents work and children who need attention don't get it; teachers leaving the profession; teachers not being taught enough about mental health; difficulty getting CAHMS / EWMS support unless a child is suicidal or can engage in a satisfactory way - all the rest get sent back; all this will gradually create a bigger crisis in the next couple of years. Studies have shown that EARLY INTERVENTION is quicker, more cost effective and takes less time to implement than if problems brew for a child and they only get help or diagnosis later in life. WHY oh WHY are we allowing this to happen to a whole generation of children when the theory about the benefit of early intervention has been proven. Political SHORT TERMISM !

my child was reminded lots by the SEN teacher, that if she didn't come to school that mum would get in to trouble, 6 years old.

My daughter was so distressed by attempting school that I was worried what the outcome would be if I kept her in the school system.



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They even banned me from the class room because I had the nerve to complain.

Complaints system flawed, schools close ranks deny dismiss and defend, so do the Govenors, slandering me with being called vexatious all because I've requested an investigation into how my son was so badly attacked and nobody has done anything, incl police, social worker, LADO, Ofsted, no one has remit you sent back and forth between departments and get no-where. I will be glad to let you know I can't claw back my child's time, my son came home from school regularly with bruises and from adults! Then I get ordered to take him back I would rather go to prison! My baby was neglected and abused and no one helped,

If schools had tested my son when first asked they or I could of out things in place lot earlier to help son and he may not have struggled so much educationally. More needs to be done to stop bullying

We home school as didn't get into desired and was offered a really rubbish one school

My school is considered good for SEN. It worked well for my son's older brother, however his learning difficulties are more apparent.

Used CAMHS but no diagnosis of ASD given. School phobia instead!

See above.

Not home educated just yet, but looking in to it

Whilst we felt forced to a degree it was still an informed choice and the best one for our child.

We would have preferred flexi schooling so we could ease him back in but that was not an option.

I was totally shocked at the schools unwillingness to listen and to try to help me understand why my daughter was refusing school.

Again, not the same reason for each child.

I'm home educating but still on school role all of above apply as to why my child can't attend school

Medical tuition could no longer.

My child mental health is improving now she does not have the demands of school every day.

We send our children to school expecting them to be in a safe place and be educated and have fun. My child, academically was ahead of peers. He was bullied for helping the less able. He felt he could not join in with the bullies so it made him alone. He was unfairly told off when teachers who had other children to look after didn't realise he was helping others to catch up and was told off along with the ones he helped. He stopped helping.

The school agreed my child was suffering and supported his ability to work at home.

I did not feel 'forced' to home educate but chose to as my son struggled with bullying, the anxiety and depression that caused and was not receiving the education he needed.

I asked for an Assessment of Special Educational Needs in 2008. I requested an EHC Needs Assessment in 2015. In 2016 the EHCP process was dragged out to 80 weeks before an accurate, post Tribunal Final EHCP was issued. This saved my LA a fortune at my child



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& family's expense, while using bullying. Multiple medical professionals stated that it was not in my child's interest due to suicidal ideation from school experiences & unmet SEND to attend education until the needs were met through a well co-ordinated EHCP.

I told school (for the reasons I've ticked) I was going to keep her at home (due to anxiety) she is still on roll though.

Can't continue for much longer

In case of oldest school were not providing a sufficiently challenging curriculum, for youngest it was his mental health

I feel that HE at that time was what brought my child to be a A* student as we did a varied curriculum and he was very bright

The local authority provided medical needs teaching at home rather than him being home schooled by me,

LA tried to force me to home ed, not suitable for my son

We have section 19 provision after a fight. New SENDCO at her school very good but the damage is done

on verge of home ed so answered above with that in mind

I want my son to be in school, to socialise with his friends and to have a good education, but it has got to the point where his mental health is more important and I am currently home educating on days where my son cannot get into school. plus the schools actions with the time curfew make things very anxious for my son to be able to get there on time (we had been making 10/11am most days but he was in school most days) whereas now he's been in 1 day in last 2 weeks.

In our final meeting with school an EWO was invited at the last minute who told us we wouldn't get a medical sign off or referral for our daughter but her attendance was an issue. School told us they had done all they could do. We are not stupid we read between the lines.

Although she is on roll we access home education activities for social and learning opportunities and this gives her quality of life

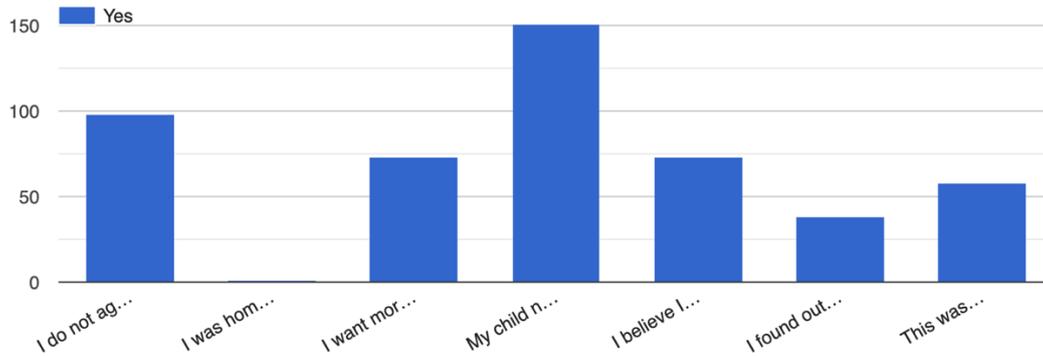
I am not home educating yet and it is not the best thing for my child but I feel I am being forced into it by the school.

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Q.7

If you have chosen to home educate because you wanted to, what were your reasons?



98 = I do not agree with the current mainstream schooling system/National Curriculum

0 = I was home educated myself and wanted my child to have the same experience

73 = I want more flexibility in the subjects my child is taught

151 = My child needs a different learning approach or environment

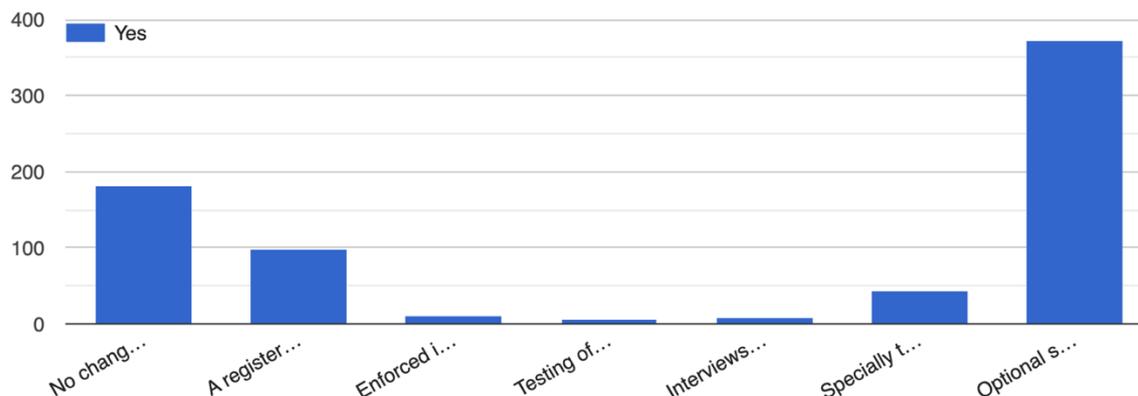
73 = I believe I can better educate my child myself

38 = I found out that home educating is an option and wanted to try it

58 = This was my child's choice and I think he/she has a right to choose

Q.8

Do you think there should be:



181 = No changes to the current home education regulations

99 = A register of all children being home educated

11 = Enforced inspections of home educated children, requiring significant additional funding

6 = Testing of all home educated children

8 = Interviews with home educated children during inspections

43 = Specially trained home education inspectors

374 = Optional support for those parents who are home educating

Do you have any further comments?

A tightening up of LA procedures to ensure that they know the current rules and don't send scaremongering letters or try and enforce visits. SEND training for all EHE officers is essential.

Our children are already registered, from having a birth certificate. Home Education is the default setting. School is the option.

My child, traumatised from school, would not fare well under an inspection. Would a school allow me as a parent to sit in my child's classroom and assess how they are taught? So why should a random person assess how I teach my child at home?

Even CAHMS said "home is his only safe place". I feel strongly some funding should be provided

There needs to be an alternative to the education system is schools. Not all kids are round pegs!

I would like to have support or be given advice about other groups or organisations with home education

Home schooling should be funded with the money their child would have had in school. More if there is SEN



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Sufficient help and support when needed is all that is required. Schools should be held accountable for failing SEN children

The school should be held to account formally for every child that is registered for home education having previously been on their roll

Whilst the current situation is not ideal it could be easily fixed to make it suit my sons needs more closely. A tutor to assist rather than me (I can no longer work). The right kind of provision can quite easily be provided in a bespoke way with imagination and it doesn't have to cost an LA the earth! It is unfortunate that everything comes down to money and we all know there isn't enough but if they stopped forcing kids to fit their perfect little boxes then maybe (most likely) many of our kids would be faring much better in the system they say gives our kids an education!

Home is a child's 'safe space' inspectors should not invade that space!

I agree that children should not just disappear from the system, that makes sense. I do however feel that if funding was at a proper level for SEND and CAMHS was also adequately funded there would be a huge drop in children being educated at home. Schools are being run like businesses which leaves little room for pastoral care and nurturing which is having a huge impact.

My selection of ' specially trained HE inspector is in context of current approach. I.E. they shouldn't be comparing HE to a school-based education! Again form misbehaving and long answers by me! Commissioner should check out the likes of Sir Ken Robinson

I think there needs to be a register so that the la can see who these children are and why can't the school meet their needs . Is there a pattern in the schools and are some schools persistently not making reasonable adjustments for these children.

Optional support might be helpful for parents who have been forced into this situation.

I would love a change in the system so we could choose which subject to attend, where we attended them, parents allowed to join in, more subjects like animal welfare, no school uniform, funding for some courses and def for exams.

More training of SEND from LA home education officers. An understanding of different learning styles and that children don't need to write things down to learn them.

Support with no threat behind it

Fully funding any form of EOTAS regardless of EHE or being forced or child being off rolled and regardless of if a EHCP is in place or not. LAs to provide data to DFE and Ofsted of pupils off rolled without a deregistration letter off parents. Register of all children off roll whom the LA can't provide deregistration letters for, this should include data of which parents have been prosecuted. The children's names that show up as having no deregistration letter and no referrals to prosecute for attendance should be red flagged immediately as illegal off rolling and should be investigated immediately and weekly payments should be issued direct from each LAs funds to that parent until they have fixed the situation

My child is known to GP, OT, CAMHS, dentist, school for 8 years, LA due to EHCP. He is now more visible than ever given he is no longer hiding in his bedroom every day. Support would be nice. Funding would be even better.

However... As the LA can't cope with the current job, and are doing a c**p job of it, I don't believe anything can change.

I have specifically decided not to home Ed. I don't know enough about the current regulations but a register seems sensible but not to the detriment of further impact on funding.



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GPs could be made aware, contact with services via GPs

If you are going to test home Ed children with Sen then it is essential for them to have an Ed Psych assessment first so their needs and levels can be ascertained

the Government needs to sort out schools first, where is it going to get the money to potentially do all this monitoring. Will it come from the education budget which will potentially make schools worse

It is disgusting that people are judged for home educating when they are rescuing their children from a broken system that is breaking them. Put money into our disabled children's children, create a system where they can be educated without being damaged and broken and most people won't choose home education

There should be more support and intervention to help parents before they feel they have no choice to home educate their child.

My son requested online learning at home to gain his English and Maths Qualifications at home, via personal budget

EHE children should only be interviewed if the Govt is also going to be interviewing children who attend mainstream state and private schools, otherwise what's the point.

Home education inspectors would have to have extensive SEN and Mental Health Training

Although I don't see a problem with children all wing registered with the LA as long as this doesn't entail a cost to parents or intrusive measures or enforcement of national curriculum requirements or testing. I don't think it is clear in certain reports or tv shows that once a child is at school they can't 'go missing' those children do have to be registered with the LA. It is only those who never start school who do not need to register.

I think children should be registered and the reason why documented so the government are accountable for in many cases forcing this to happen. Home schooled children should be given a budget to enhance their opportunities to participate or allow parents who work to be able to do this if right for their child

If schools weren't so results driven my child could cope better by not being forced to do subjects seen by them as pointless and put more energy into relevant ones

Home education families need financial assistance and some need also tutor help . I for one would need both .

One annual visit ref. How the kids are progressing and to offer support is fine. Monthly inspections are not fine.

I do think home educators should be inspected somehow to ensure the safety of the child as some children are in danger as those families can currently use home education as a way to stop their abused child being seen. Families where they are visited and there are no safeguarding concerns should be offered support where they need it but should be able to decline any support if they are doing well on their own

I would like to see a register if all children in the UK specifying if they have access to an NHS doctor/dentist and what form of education the parents have chosen to adopt.

A register and inspection will keep vulnerable children safer but needs to be trained SEN inspectors.

Surprised that the LAs do not keep records of children off rolled. Testing if done should NOT be more onerous than standard testing. Testing should be available online and should be appropriate to the SEMH of the child.



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I don't have a problem with registration or support. I do have a problem with the "one size fits all" attitude and that same authority being the one to tell me how to educate my child. In my opinion, if there were to be greater visibility, it should be working WITH the HE community and led by people who truly understand and accept the diverse needs of children. At the same time they seriously need to focus on the lack of support in schools and the rubbish that they spout about "educating the whole child" while going on to focus heavily on academic results and league tables. None of which was mentioned as an issue or recommendation in the report!

Our schools need fixing

The LA's need to concentrate on the state of the schooling system as a whole because it is failing children, hence parents being forced into or choosing to home educate their child for a wide variety of reasons. The government/LA etc need to open their eyes and their minds and find the best ways to educate each and every child as an individual not just a tick in the box.

the reasons for HE are so vast - any system needs to be flexible enough to take this into account

Most 'support' offered by LAs is actually inspection and criticism. Research what 'support' people need and what provisions they need instead of imposing misguided frameworks and policies that are counter-productive.

There should be a clampdown on those Local Authorities routinely acting in an ultra vires manner, and there should be more support in terms of rooms for hire and exam centres.

I understand the potential child protection issues behind the calls for a register

Given my son is autistic, he would have great difficulty and much anxiety about a stranger coming into our home and talking to him. How would then decide what they need to look for, at what level a child should be at. If they expect these children to take tests, are they going to fund home educators the same as school. Will they pay for iGCSE.

School completely failed my child in sooooo many ways, when I de registered my child and took him out of school they clearly no where they are we have regular appointments and are very insight, I do not need the very people that failed my child checking him off of their tick list or trying to tell us how and what to teach them.

Many parents are struggling and need help, not the additional pressure of inspections and monitoring. Also children should have the right not to have a stranger force their way into their safe space at home.

There are already sufficient regulations and laws in place to safeguard children. Social services and Local Authorities need to use the law properly instead of constantly blaming someone else.

GCSEs should be funded, a support package could be provided, a base in each county could be provided for support and as a space for families to use.

All schools should be required to accept home-educated students who want to sit GCSEs that the school is offering, and home-educating families should not have to pay for this. (Having already paid taxes we currently have to pay a second fee, and schools accepting external candidates are hard to locate.)

Schools to be supported to consider flexi schooling.

Have seen many cases of very well home educated children in a short time



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The majority of EHE parents I know give a broad and balance curriculum to their children .

Don't change something that isn't broken.

I am home educated because my school will not provide work for daughter because that would seem like they are condoning her being off school

Those families feeling they have no option but home ed due to child being bullied / anxiety etc should be offered help & support if they want it & access to free exams .

I think if it were possible to be sure that a register would be where it all stops then I would be ok with that as knowing a child is being home educated is not an issue. But I DO NOT support the people that failed my kids coming to our house and quizzing my kids without my presences (or another adult member of the family or friend) to see if I am failing when I have made more progress in 2 years than they have in 5 and more importantly questioning if my kids are safe when I have never failed my kids but the education system has failed them in every way, even to keep them safe from abuse. If anything happened to my kids at home like what happened to them in school, social services would be removing my kids from my care but in school a safe guarding officer walks in for a chat and nothing else happens. Shocking!

The only " support" required is to make the school system fit for purpose for those who choose to use it and to signpost truly ELECTIVE Home Educators to the wealth of knowledge, experience and support in their local EHE community. All other " support" will create a monitoring of EHE, removing a vital freedom, especially for those who feel school can never be a best fit for their child.

My son finds people coming to our home extremely stressful. We have been de-schooling for 15 months and a test or requirement to follow curriculum would be harmful to his recovery from school trauma. There should be evidence to suspect neglect if authorities wish to investigate - as social services have the authority to do.

I think that families wanting their children on school should be given help before things get bad enough to want to take them out. Better Sen support and more accountability. This means much stronger advice and support from SENDIASS services and most I'm Ofsted needs to step up and a) inspect Sen provision b) penalise poor behaviour support and discrimination. Also measure the schools effectiveness at supporting emotional wellbeing

Once again the government's attempt to introduce monitoring or a register is like looking at the problem from the wrong end of the telescope. Ministers and MPs and especially the Children's Commissioner should listen to the issues. Home educating families are not a threat or a place for radicalisation, abuse, knife crime. Whilst there is the occasional exception, home educated children are not truanting; or going up chimneys, or attending extreme environments or lacking social contact. I have come across many examples where bright kids who did not 'fit' the school model have gone on to have successful exam results, go to university, start successful businesses, even become world leaders.

we have had a few visits from our local Lea, we show lots of evidence of our work and learning journey, I am proud of my child's work and welcome this, but this is not welcomed by my child who is 12 years old now, the school system has left her with a social anxiety and she would herself refuse to be involved with any visits.

The wrong question is being asked. Parents are responsible for their child's education. Most parents choose to outsource this responsibility to an external provider, school. If parents are no longer choosing this option, the question needs to be ask: Why? What is wrong with the educational provision in school, that means parents are no longer willing to use this provision? Anything else is just a smoke screen to try and hide the failings and the massive underfunding of the education system. Rather than creating an unnecessary and expensive list of innocents, more should be being done to offer optional support to home educating families and to address the issues as to why parents are fleeing the education system.



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It's not a nanny state, and if govt focus more on supporting the teachers, then they wouldn't have as many home ed families to worry about. We don't need visits and intervention, we can get along just fine. We have access to reams of peer support and L.A. back up if needed. Focus on improving schools and not panicking about how others do.

I feel that funding should be there especially when there is no available safe or suitable education

Inspections and monitoring would only cause problems for my son, as he learns in a different way

'Optional' being key. In a lot of cases, forced monitoring or inspection could cause more harm than good

Forced inspections would only serve to cause distress to me & my family who are all doing just fine

I meet a lot of parents who have been off rolled and they need to be able to access help and groups that are better able to deal with their issues

Will never comply with parent licensing or a law abiding minority group

Testing may be useful for me as a tool to provide info for his EHCP

Definitely NOT enforced monitoring but access to support if required and funding options for those wishing to take exams or access resources

Frankly the Govt can't afford these options and the kids known to be at risk can't even be protected

If you want to implement inspections people would need to be very well trained which I cannot see happening as Sencos do not understand!

Home Ed regulations should stay the same. Everyone home Ed's in a different and unique style. It would be wrong to standardise home Ed.

By definition there is already a register, anyone de-registering from school is known to LA

Current law is sufficient.

register of children for safety and access to early years health services e.g health screening

Real support, teaching materials and advice would all be welcome.

The media seem to have been very good at coupling up Home Education with children who are/have been at risk when really the child at risk has previously been registered at school and had been logged with social services that there was an issue. We do not check on parents on their parenting, where "parenting" is a form of guidance and education in life and being a person. We do not need to check on our education skills as there is so much out there: museums, places of interests, geographical locations, books, online, all of which facilitate learning. Importantly learning at a rate that suits the child (whether slower or faster). Please stop putting a Home Education label on things to make it seem "weird". Home Educated children also make it to university and start their own businesses. There are many routes. Home Educated children have the advantage of knowing themselves and assured of how to get there.



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Tests, interviews and forced inspections re apply the pressures on children many home educators are trying to escape. Young children often say in an interview what they think an adult wants to hear so can be misleading.

I do not see why LAs should get to "fail" children with SEND, off-role them & then get to make hoops for families to jump through to further hide their own failings. Many families in this country who choose to home educate over the last 30+ years have done a wonderful job. Many of the worst cases of abuse in the media were to children who were on school roles; not home educated children.

Support is crucial no child wants to seem different and have loads of new faces and opinions telling parents what to do this is what causes trauma PTSD which he now has both

If the funding goes to the parents, they should receive the same as schools do per child.

My children are registered with LA and have yearly meetings

Why can't there be option of half and half - main subject at a centre and home rest of the time

If LA helped child with support and met needs to the right school this would help

In a truly corrupt system that fails and discriminates against our most vulnerable children Parental Rights to home ed should be preserved since it is often our kids only safe harbour. I dread to think of the outcome if this was removed. As parents we know our children best and we know the system our family is traumatised by the system.

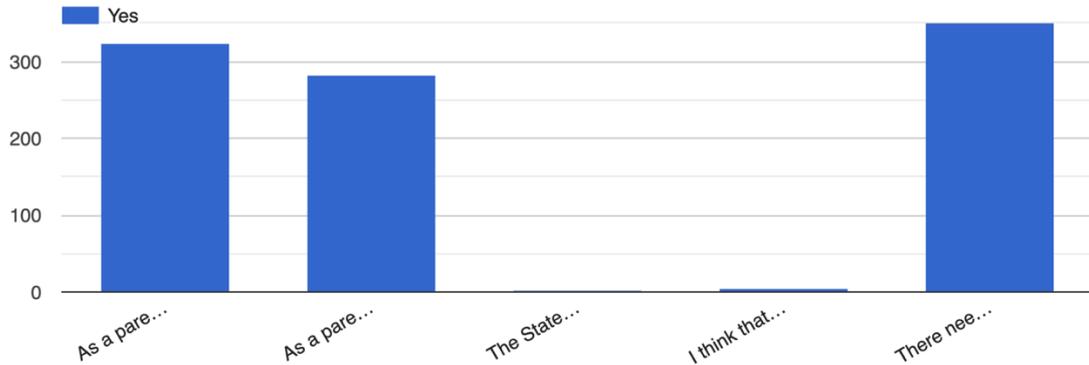
School system and government policy is at fault not home edding parents. The idea of a register is the epitome of the parent blame culture (which serves only to budget protection) that we all endure.

Find support for home educators and seek to understand the community - build links with them in positive way and understand issues do you don't encourage people to avoid agencies - authorities need to show they respect home edding and reasons for it and demonstrate they won't abuse their powers but genuinely assist where needed. Authorities need to understand difference between home Ed and missing from education.

I think a register is a good idea to keep track of vulnerable children but there needs to be training for those professionals involved too,

Q.9

Choosing educational provision:



324 = As a parent I believe it is my **RIGHT** to choose my child's educational provision

283 = As a parent I believe it is my **DUTY** to choose my child's educational provision

0 = The State should decide which type of educational provision a child needs

5 = I think that all children should be in school

350 = There needs to be a wider choice of provision so that different needs are provided for

Do you have any further comments?

There are no schools in my area for Aspergers/ hf asd

There need to be flexible schools. They are too rigid and fixed, they are like prisons. They are more obsessed with attendance rather than education.. They prefer a child to be broken and traumatised and not learning, as long as their name appears on the register. Academy mainstreams zero tolerance policy is discriminatory for SEN

Any system based on compulsory attendance is wrong in my opinion. Children should be able to pursue their interests and learn in a way which suits their unique needs.

SEN kids are fundamentally non conformists. School encourages conformity but our brightest minds can and will not conform. Why aren't they being catered for? Never mind catered, NURTURED!

I have a child who is academic and unfortunately both SEN schools and Mainstream schools do not meet her needs.

Schools have a duty not to roll off problem children



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I don't think that currently there is a provision that would have been right for my daughter.

Parents must have the choice because we know our children best.

As above. Less homework, less school hours, more choice for kids in their learning

As long as it is not detrimental to the child's wellbeing or choice.

EOTAS needs to be seen in a more positive light with more support as its often the most beneficial for the child in certain situations and the only option long term for that child plus can be financially the better option

One size clearly doesn't fit all. Inclusiveness is great if an establishment is suitable for the individual needs, otherwise it ends up being exclusion as you don't 'fit' and feel 'different' without support and guidance and UNDERSTANDING of needs. Being 'fine' in school doesn't mean someone is fine... always more sides to a story.

I would rather not home education because I would like to go back to work, but I fear that the state cannot meet my child's needs and is harming a generation of children

My son is extremely intelligent (passed 11+) but has been unable to cope in mainstream secondary school due to ASD and anxiety. There are no suitable schools for him to attend.

Children with PDA deserve an education-more schools need to adopt PDA specific strategies so more PDA children can have needs met in schools -see PDA society report on this

A parent understands what a child can do and can't what their strengths and weaknesses are yet we are repeatedly or listened to and not given the same respect as professionals who only see our children in certain situations for limited periods of time or in the case of autistic children see the "mask" that they provide for them to see. Listen to a parent if the right support and help is put in place early on so many children wouldn't be so damaged mentally and emotionally.

Staff in mainstream schools need more training to understand and meet the needs of children with SEND.

It's my right as a parent in that I know my daughter better than any professional, but I can only work within that right if I have her central.

If my son had not been able to go back to his current school then we would have had no options. There are no other schools nearby that offer emotional support, Sen support AND high level academic support.

They need to offer more support to home Ed families for those that want it. They also need to build more small specialist schools as there is a gap in provision. Mainstream school is NOT the answer for all SEN children and should not be forced into one. Parents should have the power to decide their options and this should be respected and provided.

The gov't. are ploughing a lot of funds into building new grammar schools when what is actually needed is many, many more autism schools for high functioning children. Schools where the sensory environment is carefully thought out and subjects are taught in a much more flexible and relaxed way. When I say more autism schools, I mean at least 4 per county so everybody has access within an appropriate distance from their home.

My other son was at mainstream, Asperger's with EHCP. It failed because teachers could not accept he was autistic and treated him as a naughty child. I don't think most had even read the EHCP



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I choose school environment firstly but my child's physical and mental health are more important so if needs can't be met then an alternative should be sought.

I believe, that ideally all children should be in school, but that some children cannot go to schools which are designed for the majority, Most schools have to be designed for the majority.

I need help

I think all children should have equal access to school in a SAFE environment that respects neurodiversity. But equally should have the right to an education outside of school if that works better for them.

There seems to be a huge gap in the market, for those kids who aren't particularly academic but don't have SEN

school system fails some children with SEN badly and wider provision is essential for the children who do not currently fit in their system

There needs to be a far greater variety of types of schools that cater for different needs and SEN. Currently autistic girls who are academically capable are almost entirely neglected by current provisions. And that 'choice' should not be an illusion of choice - that some suitable schools may exist, does not mean families have access to them for many reasons. There is little choice, or even acceptable provision.

There are not enough specialist schools for academically able children who are unable to cope at school. To my knowledge, my LA has nothing except a couple of over-subscribed autism bases

There needs to be provision for children with ASD who are academically able

Definitely needs to be greater variety of provision. Definitely not one size fits all now. Last button didn't seem to work.

Current school curriculum does not meet today's changing needs .schools cannot afford (even if they are willing) to meet individual needs

My son is academically able but the special schools don't cater for someone of his ability. Also if he had an appropriate school we would not be in the mess we are in. Children should not have to completely fail in school before they get any recognition of needing additional support.

School places more importance on education than mental health. I should not have to sacrifice her education for her mental health, nor should her education cost her her mental health.

It is also my child's right to have an education suitable for her

I know my child best and I will be the one there for the rest of their lives picking up the pieces not the professionals moving up the career ladder.

School budget cuts have led to a real lack of inclusivity. Not only does this force children out of school but it severely damages them first. My son needed a fairly low level of support- he didn't receive it and now, due to the anxiety and trauma caused he will need a full time 1:1 in a specialist school, costing the government a fortune. Instead of removing the freedom to EHE, improve inclusivity in schools. Children will grow up thinking people with SEN cause trouble and are the future adults who will avoid my son in the community - it's a downward spiral.



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Academisation has led to a situation where many schools are not accountable to stakeholders, the LA, parents and pupils have no say or control over policies which place a higher value on academic achievement than the wellbeing of our children. The Children's Commissioner should focus on making sure that MATs are run with transparent governance and in the interests of all the children in the communities that they serve. A register of home educated children will do nothing to address poor provision in underfunded schools.

Not enough base units in mainstream

We are all conditioned to believe in schools.

Many parents have sacrificed their jobs / careers to help children who are 'not fine in school'. If the provision took account of real needs, those parents could go back to work and be economically active, face less health problems and take up less time and ££ for medication from the NHS; pay more taxes; need less benefits; have better mental health; be better role models for their children. The government is being too short-sighted by not offering suitable provision. It will come back to cause problems for future governments, but then maybe another party will be in power.... Education (like health) is for all. It needs cross party government working WITH teaching professionals and not impose unrealistic and misguided targets. Our country needs well trained, motivated, creative and productive young people to support the economy of the future and suitable educational provision is key to that economic future.

Our first choice was for our daughter to go to school, but unfortunately she falls 'in the gap'. Her needs are too great for mainstream but her IQ precludes her from special. So there really was no option if I was to follow my legal duty in providing her with an appropriate education but to home education her. There need to be more schools build to address the many children that fall 'in the gap' At the moment they are discriminated against because of their disabilities. They do not have the chance to go to a school that can meet their needs and that is so unfair.

I teach my child subject matter not always fully covered in school.

Not enough schools, choice, level of expertise or expertise. Home Ed works for some if you have support and a balance

Duty to provide, right to decide

My son really wanted to make it work at school, but the environment made it impossible in the end. There was not enough consistency of staffing, or flexibility with regard to provision. Staff always thought they knew what was best for him and I naively trusted them. SEN support was very slow in coming, he went into crisis and was close to suicide before the SENCO had even written a My plan.

I wish flexi schooling or part time attendance for formal schooling was a viable alternative to full time home education

I do believe some parents should not HE.

It would be great if there were more flexible schools where children could go part time

It shouldn't be a fight to get the support a child clearly needs.

If there were more schools who provide emotional and mental health wellbeing as primary focus then all children would be better supported



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Previously, I would have said I was in the schooling camp. But I realise now, people Home Educate for many differing reasons. I also realise that Home Educated children benefit from the time and experience life a lot more than their school counterparts. Schools at the moment cannot offer The individual support Home Education does. School creates (in many cases) a kept/prison like atmosphere where children cannot talk at certain times, restricted access to toilets and play. This creates an individual who is pressured and anxious. We have more children with mental health issues now than ever. Schools are consistently and regularly unsafe, mentally and physically. The world is changing, environmentally, economically and is more accessible than ever. Home Educated children are out there in the changing world, they talk and play with other children of varying ages. They are taking online classes and video conferencing with children in other parts of the world discussing philosophy, maths, Shakespeare. And they are visiting those places too.

Not all types of SEND are adequately catered for & that is why there is an increase in Home Education. Also, too many children are "excluded" unlawfully due to unmet/under diagnosed SEND.

No provision for children with autism. My two children need a very small setting, low sensory load and trained staff who understand anxiety.

The local authority that fail so many can't be allowed to have a say once a child is withdrawn, it's the last resort for many.

It should lie with a parent if a school can meet the needs of the child not the LA.

We never got support we struggled to even get help in exams until CAMHS insisted we even had MH GP write a letter insisting ECHP and SEN support as she was disgusted it wasn't in place we were still refused

Inclusion of children with SEND is a difficult topic, it works for some and not others. It is a lottery whether a mainstream school can/will meet a child's needs, usually dependent mostly on an individual teacher in the school driving it. There needs to be good, varied provision for children with SEND everywhere recognising that children's needs change as well so what is suitable at one stage of their life may not be suitable later. School should not damage a child's mental health but does in so many situations as children are forced to conform to a school's needs instead of the school accommodating the child's needs

We should have centres were u can go. That have set times so u can go. At the. Year groups time for main subjects

Home educating parents should not be the focus of Anne Longfield. The broken corrupt school system and its partners in health and social care need examining families who are already working harder than the average family supporting and loving their send children should not live in fear of the crooked system which should be there to offer support but actually does the opposite.

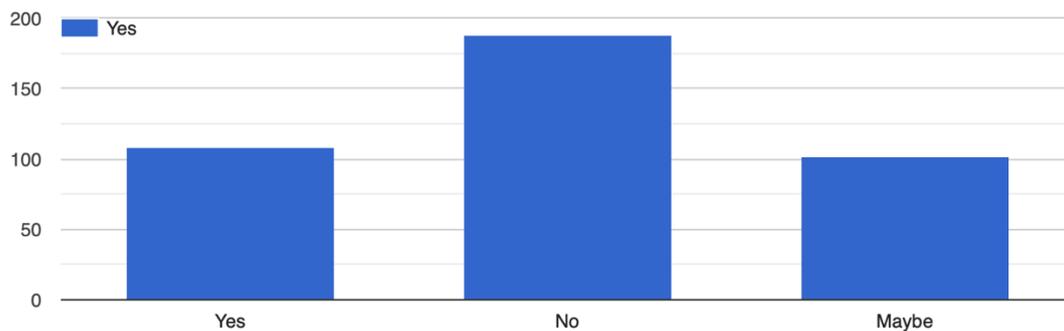
Without that right and duty I dread to think how mentally unwell my girls would be. It would be the difference between life and death I'm sure.

I want my daughter to attend school, but due to her ASD and Mental health issues mainstream is not suitable.

There isn't enough provision for academically able(ish) children who have conditions such as ASD/ADHD. Particularly at primary school age and especially so in rural areas

Q.10

If the right support was available in mainstream education would you still be home educating your child?



109 = Yes
188 = No
102 = Maybe

Do you have any further comments?

My child was too damaged by school to consider returning. Had the right provision been in place when she was in school, then yes, health permitting she would still be in school

Far too late now though. my son will probably never go to mainstream again. he is only 8, has an IQ of over 90th centile but is really broken by the system.

Please, please consider using experts who understand autism before making major policy changes.

Sometimes no matter how hard everyone works. School is not best environment to learn in.

My daughter had anxiety but was further traumatised by the way we were treated like criminals, threats of prison and fines and being taken into care were told by the headteacher to my anxious child when she had certified, medically proven anxiety. It was sickening and shameful. What has happened to schools that the care and education of a child no longer matters?

Although we did not choose to home educate, this is the best and most suitable place for him to learn and develop. It is not just support, it is sensory, environment, mental, physical and emotional support, which you would not get at school.

My child is unable to access the school building due to anxiety, so is unable to attend regardless of the support available.

With the right support he would be attending school full time, these are important GCSE years but he was forced to drop subjects and so this has impacted on what he could actually choose for options.



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Education in its current form marginalises vulnerable children

My son's PDA meant he was struggling with perceived demands even before getting into school

If my child had the right support for autism, bullying was dealt with effectively and she was happy then she would love to be at school.

Not for one second did we ever want this to be our child's life - she wants to be in school, school prevents it

I had to leave my job to stay at home with my son. I have found a job i can do part time from home which is far from ideal. I have had to claim Disability Living Allowance for him and Carers Allowance for me and so the impact of him being out of school affects the State finances as well as our own. It is scandalous that thousands, possibly millions of families are in similar situations.

I love home education and believe it is the best for our child (suspected ASD). The leaps of learning that take place when the child is happy and relaxed and able to follow their interests is staggering. The costs and commitment are high however. If a suitable flexi-school arrangement were available, we would consider that as good ones enable families to follow their ethos of education whilst gaining some of the benefit of a school environment and allowing that parent more opportunity to work on the school days. That all said, full home ed and all that goes with it (tailored learning, 1-1, lots of friends of different ages and backgrounds, part of an amazing community, access to such a rich variety of educational visits and activities that the most prestigious schools in the country would envy), is amazing

With the benefit of hindsight I think I would have home educated from the start, though this would have impacted on us as a family financially.

My son now has tutors via EHCP

One would def be at home, if the others medical needs and anxiety respected and understood, my kid might gain enough confidence to re-join.

Depends on what my son would choose to do.

If the right kind of support was available in mainstream school, my kids would probably be happy to attend school and that's where they'd be.

My son's needs are complex. He is very academic but with significant communication & sensory needs in the school environment. The only way mainstream would work for us, is if LA built very small secondary schools with staff who were appropriately trained. LAs are expanding schools. This will never work for us.

I'm not sure it's support. I feel it's a variety of teaching that doesn't involve sat in a class room for a high % of the day. It's fact that we all learn differently so why do we still have to attend a classroom environment and sit quietly and listen to a teacher. I know there are different teaching approaches, but I still feel our secondary school environment is too ridged.

School did not put any support in place despite significant early warning signs and requests from parents. CAMHS not involved in time. School broke my child and poor 'educational provision' provided by school whilst child at home. No places for SEN child in the area.



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Pupil Premium should be focused on the child it is for not the school, people who EHE should be able to access PP, even if it is through the VSH.

My answer would have been No if this question had been asked to me when Joe was in school. We have done one term in Home Education and I'm amazed at how passionate the children and their parents are about learning, Learning opportunities and experiences are vast. The children and parents I have met are bringing up caring and compassionate children who have a love of learning. For me Home Ed is an amazing new world that will provide my son with the best education and childhood possible.

The number of parents home educating is clearly increasing. Much of this is down to schools increasing failure to educate well and to keep them safe. There is too much focus on results and it is increasingly like a factory rather than getting to know individual children (I say this as an ex-teacher as well as a parent). This doesn't mean parents are forced in an unhappy way to home educate but that having felt they had no choice but to look into it are seeing the huge benefits and opportunities that home educating presents.

It would be helpful to have a section for parents who want to remove their children but are financially unable to as there are many that would

The school system is outdated and is not treating children as individuals and with the same respect afforded to adults in the workplace. It is my whole hearted belief that home education is the best way forward for my child and many children still currently in the school system. No government wants free thinking adults which is what home education produces. It is scared of losing control over the masses if too many children grow up with non-government mandated viewpoints.

The GP hasn't listened to our concerns making it very difficult to access support

I'm not happy with mainstream education and if it wasn't so difficult to access alternatives I would take my child out and home educate again for mental health and well-being

Absolutely not . My daughter has had an awful time in her primary years - Primary should of been the best years of her life building a good solid foundation. Emotionally and socially her need were not met . I will not allow her in to a mainstream again . It's either home learning package or small specialists ASD school

But there isn't and with cuts to money given to school this is just going to get worse. And my child in the meantime is struggling with his mental health and I will not let my child suffer with this long term because he will carry thing into adulthood which will become a massive problem

The Children's Commissioner got it very wrong. She needs to be asking SEND parents what schools are needed for their children. The answer she will get won't be cheap but it will be necessary if they want children with SEND to fulfil their education.

Children unable to attend school due to mental health concerns should be entitled to funded online education supported by the family. This is my wish and this would work well with my son.

I don't home educate but would if I had no choice, my daughters new school are being more supportive it may change if we can't get her in more.

Now we have seen how our daughter is thriving and learning in her own way and pace, we would not choose mainstream school again unless our daughter wants to return one day.



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I have discovered many benefits to home ed for my child, especially in flexibility of timing of exams and subjects studied, which are far better than those available in school. But we're only here because school let us down badly and the logistics of being a single parent with my own business AND home educating my child with no support are not inconsiderable.

Employers would be prosecuted for discrimination against disabled people but schools can get away with it

Education should be child-centred all needs been looked at and treated equally, not all disabilities are visible and these need to be addressed equally to visible ones,

Looking at the rate of decline of the school system, it's really to give an answer.

Luckily found a suitable school but if it doesn't work out then home schooling will be the next option

my child is isolated at home - it is far from ideal

Mainstream is not the answer for so many - increasingly so with rigid policies and a focus on academic testing - where has the joy in learning and discovering gone? Lost with that joy is the holistic development of young people, with the ability to think and act for themselves to function in the world.

Though I did request that my child continue to work towards GCSEs at home (the exams were only a couple of months away when the situation reached crisis point) and this was refused by the school.

I would now. The difference in my son is amazing. He has learnt far more than he did in school

Home education is awesome, it allows me the freedom to teach my children what they want, the freedom for them to be children and the freedom of choice full stop.

I would never place another child in a system that is so broken and damaging ever again. I have no faith left in the education system. I think the government should fix their broken education system instead of picking on a community who are delivering a child centred education to their children

Why learn one way, In one room when you have a whole world of opportunity, options and continual learning with the right attitude and individual help an understanding of your learning abilities and needs.

The decision to home educate is not a decision that is taken lightly. We know it's the biggest decision we could make for our children. We just want what's best for our children. School isn't best for everyone.

Delay in CAMHS interventions and their lack of support in school situation did not help.

If my children choose to try school at a later date I would like to think a suitable school was available and support would be available for their needs (ASD/ hard of hearing and ADHD).

If there was more flexibility in schools (or flexi schooling) then we would consider a return to school. The current situation is all or nothing so we choose to have no support from the government for our child's education.

Home Ed with an EOTAS budget is working well for our daughter (age 15, HE since Sept), she is a better place mentally and emotionally than she has been for years. It is taking a massive toll on us as parents however. It is relentless and exhausting. But it's



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still better than constant crisis management, which is what school life became. Running away, smoking, sexual exploitation, cyber bullying, physical assault, police investigations. Dreadful self-harm.

I choose this answer as I feel my son has progressed faster and to a higher level with home education than he ever would have attending mainstream school. He is enthusiastic and eager to learn to the very limit of the subjects he is taking. I feel he would never have progressed this far and to the level he is currently working at if he stayed in mainstream school as my daughter attended mainstream school and were failed by the system and even with the right support there isn't the finances available to go into the system to offer what home educated children receive.

If school had supported I honestly don't know whether it would have worked for her needs. All I know is I have a child who is well and happy, and that is the thing that matters.

We would still HE now if schools improved, as it's working really well. But we would never have started HE if mainstream education had supported my child's needs.

Home education is our only option at the moment due to mental health. I hope that he is in a position to rejoin school in the future, and as his birthday is the end of August I hope to drop him down a year

But everything that's available would be up to us to pay for .So we either EHE or go to private school

If schools were more flexible in curriculum & options then my daughter might choose to go .

However if the right support arrived now, No I would never send them back unless it was my child's wish. The damage has been done. Fail them once, shame on me, Fail them twice - HELL NO!

If the right support was there when he was at school I wouldn't be home educating. But I wouldn't send him back if the right support suddenly appeared.

If my oldest didn't have to come out for his mental health and to educate him there would not have been the domino effect for the siblings. But I am glad we are doing what we are doing and we won't be returning.

Now we are out we wouldn't go into that system. Skip it until college at 14.

I believe that even the very best school provision comes a poor second to the individual attention of EHE. I also believe that for some children, especially those with sensory and processing issues a school can never really be an environment that can be adjusted sufficiently for their needs.

The Dispatches documentary was very biased with intention to show all children are better off in school. This simply isn't true.

The state has caused this with the removal of funds from schools and SEND budgets. They need to abide by the law and accept the blame. Why should we fix their mess? They are grown adults they need to start acting like it and putting equality in education first.

Please READ these comments. Please LISTEN to the parents. Please INVOLVE parents and educators in education plans.

We started HE because our sons needs were not being met in school but now home educate because we believe it is the best thing for him and we chose not to send our younger son to school having discovered how wonderful HE can be.



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On a number of occasions I was ready to deregister my child, because threats of fines, stress of professionals not listening, my daughters mental health

It is not just about availability for education, there is so much more.

I do not appreciate the divert to mainstream clause shifting the burden that's not right either

My son would have a say in this decision if a suitable provision was available

My daughter has her own mind- if she was happy to go to school she would be there

That would be her choice

The state sector is too poorly funded to function in the interests of our children and their education

Schools break children

His will was to remain in school. He is a sociable inquisitive boy. I realise that school isn't for everyone, and everyone shouldn't be forced through the education system. But I feel very strongly that it should have worked for my son and he has been failed very badly.

My middle son is academically gifted but we can't get him into a school that will challenge him.

Having experienced home education then probably yes. If the right provision had been in place from the start and if the school hadn't been filled with nasty little weasels who treated my child badly then who knows.

Nothing beats one to one support which can never be given in mainstream schools.

I have had to give up my senior job in science to home educate. That really doesn't make sense in a civilised society with free education.

Although I have one son who is now in education, previously he was home educated due to the severe lack of support and understanding at his school. When looking for a new school for him - one teacher actually phoned me after our visit to her school and begged me not to apply for the place there because they will not accommodate SEND children!

Not HE yet!

Cannot answer this, as it is so unlikely.

School refusing to allow application for EHCP has meant privately paying for professionals to support my own application at a cost of 6k so far and legal fees to fight the threat of prosecution and protect our interests have cost 4 k so far . This has created debt and serious stress.

He will not go back to school now , but if things had been different over the past 10 years maybe I wouldn't have had to withdraw him

I fundamentally disagree with dumping 30 kids of the same age together to learn abstract stuff that they're not interested in. So unless there was a radical change to state education, I doubt I would be wishing to access mainstream education.



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My child has now returned to education due to the support in the EHCP. I did when my LA refused to provide EOTAS & ignored all the medical professionals involved. There is no accountability when LAs fail children with SEND.

I say yes now after 2 years of seeing it work but I'm not sure we would have started home education if the support or provision was right in the first place so would not have discovered how well it has been able to meet their specific needs

He has left school now we felt he could of progressed given a bit more understanding of his disability but at 16 nearly 17 when he left we feel his education was abandoned

Bullying would still be a factor,

If my child had a ASC diagnosis earlier may have helped her mental health deteriorating which could of helped with provision

We are not home educating although we have thought about it. Financially not an option for us. We will have to continue to struggle on with schooling.

Thank you for the work you are doing, I found Anne Longfield's take disturbing and divisive. The home ed community have saved my sanity by providing us with safe harbour. I feel like her report and Dispatches programme sought to pit Philosophical Home Edders against those off-rolled SEND parents. That is an ugly thing to do. Well done to Louise for taking part. I hope she and her family are ok. She is a Mum who obviously loves her kids and puts them first the way she was treated was disgusting.

My eldest daughter still wants to belong to a school and be like most other children. I hope she comes round to the home ed lifestyle as time goes on because I don't think it exists for her sadly.

We have 3 girls with Autism and 2 so far are home educated due to mainstream not having the understanding or resources to help and support our girls. EHCP deadlines are not being meet and EHCP contents are poor. I refuse to accept that we elective home educate our children when we had no choice for the girls best interests. Our eldest when at mainstream school was physically assaulting me numerous times a day as she couldn't cope. Since being deregistered 3 years ago this has stopped. There are not enough options and it seems the LA always want to put children with Autism into mainstream schools to present be it doesn't work first before agreeing to specialist provisions. I do have both girls registered with the home education team through choice. Our youngest is due to start school this year and there is no way she is going to mainstream school. For those parents who do not have a choice but to home educate there should be financial assistance to help support as we are saving the LA thousands a year and it's not through choice. We believe we made the best decision for our girls as the change in them since home education started has been amazing. We live in Devon, so please take a look as Devon Send was investigated by Ofsted and the report reads very poorly which it is . Thank you