

HOME EDUCATION WALES

Annual Report

2023 ~ 2024



Why do families home educate:

This probably the most asked question year in and year out, the answers are different for every family and cover a vast spectrum. Some families feel they can provide a better education than schools, some disagree with the topics taught in school, many families have children with additional needs that they feel will thrive in an environment with smaller groups. The number of reasons is endless and all of them are valid.

How do families educate their children at home:

Well some families sit children down and teach their children in similar way to the school system, this differs from school in the numbers of course 1 parent to 1/2/3/4 children even is far more efficient than 1 teacher to 30 children in a classroom.

Other families may directly teach some subjects and follow the interests of their children to integrate other subjects.

Educators have known for a long time that children don't need to be sat at desks to learn science and maths for example but will learn them from gardening, cooking and shopping.

Some families only follow their children's interests which can include work books, visits out and all the activities already mentioned. This kind of family learning model has been shown to be very effective.

All of the styles mentioned work very well and encourages children to grow into adults who are capable of becoming critical and creative thinkers.

So what about socialisation:

There is a common misconception that children who are home educated don't get to socialise and that children need to play with children the same age.

In reality children vary in so many ways and like to socialise in many different ways. Some like to play with children their own age, those with additional needs may prefer older or younger children, more mature children may want older children to interact with, and affectionate children may prefer younger children or babies. All children benefit from having interactions with people of all ages after all only school children are limited to interacting with others based on their date of birth.

So what do we do:

Well we provide lots of opportunities for activities at the Grange Pavilion that encourage play and interaction for both children and their families. We committed to do this with the absolutely minimum cost to families so everyone can afford to come and join in and we always provide soup or similar to help with the cost of living crisis.

In this year Donna has taken SHEW (Spirit of Home Education Wales primarily aimed at normalising home education) forward as her priority along with focusing on our teen members.

Aimee has focused on running activities in Caerphilly and has been significant in supporting Donna with SHEW.

Ianna and I have stayed focused on our Cardiff venue and the smooth running of our activities there.

Rhi has added to our repertoire with her highly skilled activities teaching forest school to all ages.

And we have all supported each other and been involved in running trips and activities.



Cardiff projects

Across the year we carried on developing and growing our very popular sessions at the Grange Pavilion centre in Cardiff - welcoming an average of 30 families weekly until the autumn, when we moved to fortnightly to give members time to access other sessions we run. Our numbers then rose to an average of 40 families per session as we created more outside space to allow for more to join.

During this time we hosted workshops from Water Aid, Dogs Trust, sport and Dance Fit and also ran themed sessions such as Studio Ghibli and fashion; while celebrating various traditions like Mayday, Day of the Dead and EID. We also offered regular classes in music band, science club, role play games like DND, nature and even ukelele to name a few! We always have toys, Lego, crafts and play!

These sessions were funded by the national lottery and magic little grants.

Regular home ed sessions around Cardiff were also held by us at red dragon bowling, Cardiff story museum, geek retreat and the national museums, with trips to local places like pizza express to make pizza and chapter arts for fun sessions like bug hotel making and their cinema

screenings. These were either funded by parents or the providers.



HEW also undertook some joint events at the Grange for a mix of home ed and local children during weekends and school holidays including a seed to feed project, winter warmer, Easter and story theatre. The money raised from those sessions helped cover a gap in our rent budget between lottery bids.

We also helped develop the area called Harmony Corner at the Grange, co creating a wonderful children's space for play and imagination.

HEW Trips and Workshops

During April 23-24 we ran frequent workshops and trips at many other locations. We access education or group rates to bring costs down to an accessible amount for members.



This included a group trip to London in April 2023 where children attended Shrek Adventures, the Lion King theatre show and Kidzania where they could undertake a variety of jobs for the day, it was a huge success and we are returning to London October 2024.

Other trips included Legoland, Quasar, and Bowling.

Other theatre trips included Aladdin and snail and the whale.

Workshops included classes in pottery, magic, seeing how money is made at the royal mint, a visit to the medieval village at Cosmeston Country Park, Clifton Suspension Bridge, and climbing at Boulders.

We also had several Christmas trips to Role Play Lane, RCT mines and Jack and the beanstalk pantomime.

Lastly the teens had a visit to a skills academy in Cardiff to see what they had on offer post 16.

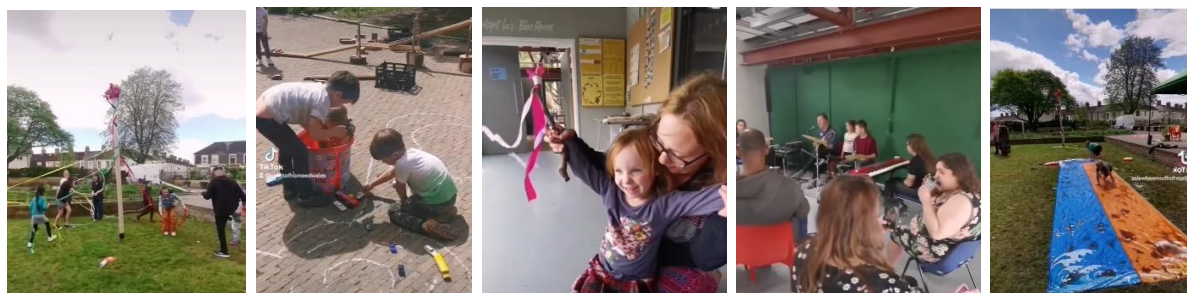
The children and volunteers wear their HEW or SHEW logo clothing for a lot of these trips- helping to normalise home education as a legitimate choice,

Without our volunteer's work, members could not access most of the above cost wise and the trips it would not be offered to the public.

SHEW – Spirit of Home ed Wales



Spirit of home ed has been attracting families with its different events and trips as it celebrates the choice to home educate.



May Day celebrations where we celebrated home education at the Grange Pavilion with crafts, games and a maypole.



Our 1st Teen Prom was also held at the Grange Pavilion in June with over 30 teens attending, it had a masquerade theme, DJ and mocktail bar.



Alton Towers in July 2023.



We held our 2nd SHEWFEST at the Grange Pavilion on Fri 21st July 2023 which attracted many families to take part in the activities that were put on.



We had a Halloween Party in Barry Oct 2023.



We took a group of teens to Thorpe Park in Oct and a trip to the Harry Potter studios was organised in November with children and teens also attending the script to screen workshop.



In Nov we also decorated a Christmas tree for SHEW at Margam Park, children made the decorations and families attended to help decorate the tree.



We held our 2nd Autumn Fayre at the Grange Pavilion where families could take part in different craft activities, attend a conference and watch the teen band perform.



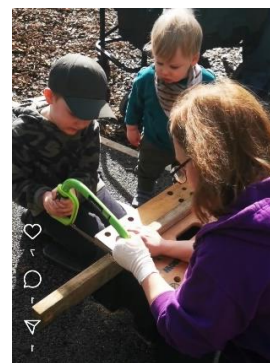


In Feb 2024 we went to Bluestone which attracted over 100 families, we celebrated with various activities and a buggy convoy.

Vale of Glamorgan



Everyones Garden in Barry started running forest school sessions in Nov 2023, teen campfire cooking started in April 2024 and free monthly open days with free forest school, gardening and graffiti which will be an ongoing project.



Our Christmas open day in Dec 2023 was a great success with home ed families and residents attending, with a visit from Santa too!



Cookery lessons.

In March 2024 x6 teens started attending cookery sessions at the Hub in Barry, Led by our volunteers Craig and Rhian who have been sharing cookery skills with the teens. The purpose of the project is to work towards an event that Donna has coordinated under SHEW, the event is being held in Dec 2024 and will be a family Xmas Gala, the teens will be cooking a 3 course meal for families to enjoy, we'll have live music followed by a disco and raffle.



DND sessions started in Sept 2023.

David has been running DnD sessions in Barry at lost and found society, these sessions have been successful and still running. We tried to attract other teens that didn't want to play dnd with board games and craft but sadly the

numbers were too low so we have just stuck with the DND sessions David is running.

Porthkerry Lodge.

Porthkerry meets went really well but due to the organiser having a fire and losing all the resources it was decided to close these meet ups in July 2023.

THE COMMITTEE



Rhi Louge	Chairperson
Ianna Melody Numen	Trustee
Donna Heyler Rapley	Trustee
Aimee Conway	Trustee
Jayne Palmer	Trustee

FINANCES

Year start	£3,184.69
Income	£20,813.88
Expenditure	£20,629.01
2024 Start	£23,369.56

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE NATIONAL LOTTERY

THE GRANGE PAVILION

VOLUNTEERS

RHIAN & CRAIG COX

KATIE WATERS

ROSE ROWSON

ELEANOR HOLLAND

ELEANOR BOWERS

CATHERIN GENT

DAVID MUMFORD

DAWN BODEN

SARAH HOOK

CHARLOTTE

NATALIE JONES