

What Is Suitable Education?

This document is designed to offer calm, clear guidance for parents in England about what is meant by 'suitable education' in the context of home education.

It is intended to reassure parents and reduce unnecessary worry. It does not provide teaching or legal advice.

The Legal Meaning of Suitable Education

In England, parents are legally responsible for ensuring their child receives a suitable education, either through school attendance or otherwise.

The law describes suitable education as education that is appropriate to a child's:

- Age
- Ability
- Aptitude
- Any special educational needs or disabilities (SEND)

There is no single definition of what suitable education must look like in practice.

“Suitable education isn't about meeting a checklist — it's about growing learning from steady roots, at a pace that suits the child.”



Local Authority Contact

Local Authorities may contact parents to ask how they are providing suitable education.

Parents are not required to accept home visits and can choose to respond in writing. Parents decide what information to share and how to present it.



Suitable Education and SEND

For children with SEND, suitable education must take their individual needs into account.

This may mean:

- Reduced demands
- Flexible pacing
- A focus on wellbeing and regulation
- Adapted approaches to learning

Prioritising emotional safety and wellbeing is a valid and appropriate part of suitable education.

What Suitable Education Does

NOT Require:

Suitable education does not require parents to:

- Follow the National Curriculum
- Teach the same subjects as schools
- Use formal lessons or textbooks
- Replicate school hours or routines
- Have teaching qualifications
- Achieve specific outcomes by a certain age

Education does not need to look like school to be suitable.

A Reassuring Reminder

There is no single correct way to provide suitable education. Education can change over time as children grow and circumstances shift. Parents are allowed to review, adapt, and develop their approach.



Time to Settle and Adjust

When families begin home education, it is normal for there to be a period of adjustment.

Children may need time to rest, recover from stress, or rebuild confidence. This time is not wasted and can form an important foundation for future learning.

What Suitable Education CAN Look Like

Suitable education can be flexible and responsive. For many families, it may include:

- Learning through everyday activities
- Reading, conversation, and discussion
- Exploring interests and strengths
- Practical life skills
- Creative activities
- Time outdoors
- Emotional and social development

Progress may not always be visible immediately and can unfold over time.

Steady Roots Homeschool Support provides parent-focused guidance and reassurance. We do not provide teaching or educational provision.

© Steady Roots Homeschool Support 2026 All rights reserved.