

HEAH



Home Ed Alliance Hub

Open Routes For All Learners CIC

Family Guide

Empowering Families Through Inclusive Education,
Movement, and Mentoring
A Free Community Guide by Shellisha Shann, Founder & CEO

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Dear reader,

Welcome to the HEAH guide. I'm Shellisha Shann, founder
of the Home Education Alliance Hub C.I.C. and I'm so glad
you've found your way here.

I created HEAH because, like many of the families we
support, I've faced the profound challenges of navigating

rigid systems, enduring long waiting lists, and experiencing a lack of understanding for children who simply don't fit the mould. I know what it's like to feel unheard—and how powerful it can be when someone finally says, “We see you. We've got you.”

This guide isn't just about the services we offer; it's about connection. Inside, you'll discover practical support, compassionate insight, and a vibrant community that genuinely cares. My deepest hope is that this guide offers you hope, clarity, and the assured next step on your journey—whatever that may be.

Let's rebuild confidence, connection, and community—together.

With warmth, Shellisha Shann Founder & CEO, HEAH C.I.C.

Why some Families Need HEAH

Across the UK, more families than ever are seeking alternative ways to educate and support their children.

The escalating challenges of school refusal, rising exclusion rates, and persistently delayed Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) support have left countless families feeling exhausted, judged, or abandoned by the very systems meant to uplift them.

We understand the lived reality: You may feel profoundly isolated and overwhelmed, unsure where to turn. You're navigating arduous assessments, confusing policies, or repeatedly being told to "wait and see."

You passionately want to honour your child's unique needs—yet feel like you're constantly fighting for their right to thrive.

Mainstream systems often fall short due to:

A fundamental lack of trauma-informed or sensory aware practices.

Inflexible learning models that struggle to genuinely support neurodiversity.

Insufficient mental health and emotional regulation support tailored to individual needs.

Protracted waiting lists for crucial assessments, provisions, or therapeutic interventions.

HEAH was created to purposefully fill these critical gaps—offering real solutions, delivered by real people who have personally walked this path. We seamlessly blend education, movement, therapy, and mentoring into an empowering, holistic model that supports the entire family.

About the Founder

Shellisha Shann is the visionary driving force behind HEAH. As a registered social worker, qualified personal trainer, and experienced teacher, she brings years of dedicated expertise in supporting families profoundly affected by school exclusion, SEND, and trauma. As a parent of neurodivergent children herself, she intimately understands the pressing gaps in provision—and the urgent need for flexible, holistic approaches.

Shellisha created HEAH not just to provide services, but to build a movement of support that extends far beyond traditional academics. Her work uniquely brings together invaluable lived experience and robust professional expertise to champion family-centred, trauma-informed alternatives to conventional education.

Our Mission & Vision

Our Mission: To provide flexible, therapeutic, and truly empowering support for families educating children outside of traditional systems.

Our Vision: A United Kingdom where every family feels confident, connected, and supported in their child's learning—whether at home, in transition, or beyond school walls.

Safeguarding & Operational Excellence

At HEAH, our unwavering commitment is to create a safe, supportive, and highly professional environment for every child and family we serve. Our rigorous safeguarding and robust governance practices are integral to everything we do.

Our Standards Include:

Enhanced DBS Checks: All HEAH staff, mentors, and volunteers undergo thorough enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and regular renewals. We ensure every team member is rigorously vetted.

Robust Safeguarding Policy: We operate under a clear and comprehensive safeguarding policy, which includes precise procedures for handling disclosures, reporting any concerns, and escalating issues efficiently and appropriately to ensure children's utmost safety.

Dedicated Safeguarding Leadership: Our Founder & CEO, Shellisha Shann serve as HEAH's Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL), ensuring consistent and expert oversight.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD): Our team's expertise is continuously enhanced through regular, indepth training in safeguarding best practices, traumainformed care, and inclusive strategies specifically for supporting neurodivergent and SEND learners.

Data Protection & Confidentiality: HEAH is fully GDPR compliant. We treat all personal and sensitive information with the utmost care, ensuring strict confidentiality and robust data protection in every interaction.

Comprehensive Risk Assessments: Every HEAH sessionwhether delivered online or within the community - is subject to thorough risk planning. This meticulous approach ensures we consistently maintain a safe and supportive environment for all participants.

Our safeguarding practices are more than just a policy; they are a solemn promise to the families we serve. At HEAH, safety, trust, and integrity form the unbreakable foundation of every interaction we have.

Our Core Service Strands

The HEAH offers four distinct yet interconnected service strands, meticulously designed to provide holistic support for families:

1. HEAH Pathways: Alternative Education (Key Stages 1–4)
2. HEAH Foundations Pathways (Functional Skills Tuition)
3. Family Fitness & Well-being
4. Mentoring, Coaching, & Advocacy

Our Core Service Strands

Our flagship programme offers part-time, traumainformed tutoring and mentoring for children disengaged from school due to exclusion, anxiety, or SEND.

All sessions are thoughtfully delivered in safe spaces, seamlessly combining movement, creativity, and emotional coaching to genuinely re-engage learners.

Each child enters a structured pathway phase meticulously tailored to their individual needs:

ROOTS (typically ages 5-7, KS1–KS2): This initial phase focuses on establishing emotional safety, building trust, providing sensory support, and nurturing early learning skills within a gentle, supportive environment.

BRANCHES (typically ages 7-11, KS2–KS3): Here, the focus shifts to engaging thematic learning, fostering positive peer interaction, developing self-regulation strategies, and

embarking on curiosity-led projects to build knowledge and independence.

HORIZONS (typically ages 11-16, KS3–KS4): This phase is dedicated to preparing young people for the future with confidence, covering essential life skills, college preparation, self-advocacy, and career awareness to empower their next steps.

BLOSSOMS (typically ages 16+, KS4+): The consolidation phase, where learners cultivate identity, resilience, and personal achievement. This includes practical skills for future education or employment (e.g., portfolio building, interview preparation) and opportunities for mentoring roles and peer leadership.

Family Fitness & Well-being

We believe that movement and mental health matter. That's why we offer a holistic approach to family wellbeing:

Monthly Health & Fitness Packs: Each month, we provide a themed Health & Fitness Pack tailored for each Key Stage. These packs include easy-to-follow movement and mindfulness activities, family-friendly workouts, and well-being reflections for both parents and children, designed to help families stay active, grounded, and healthy together.

Family Fit Club: Our unique parent-child wellness and bonding programme uses rhythm, movement, and play to significantly improve emotional regulation and strengthen connection. Suitable for all ages and open to both HEAH and non-HEAH families, these dynamic sessions foster well-being and profound relational healing in a fun, non-clinical environment.

HEAH: Family kitchen: these welcoming, inclusive online cooking experiences bring families together through food, fun, and shared learning. Specially crafted for home educating families, carers, and

young people particularly those navigating additional needs, sensory sensitivities, or emotional-based school avoidance (EBSA) these live, interactive sessions via Zoom offer budget-conscious, nutritious recipes, downloadable resources, and sensory-friendly adjustments. It's a wonderful opportunity to learn new skills, build confidence, and connect with other families in a supportive online community, leaving you feeling nourished, empowered, and more connected.

Mentoring, Coaching & Advocacy

This crucial strand provides trauma-informed 1:1 support for children or parents, specialised SEND coaching, comprehensive EHCP guidance, and compassionate mentoring.

This invaluable support helps families confidently navigate challenging transitions and complex systems with enhanced understanding and clarity.

Membership Options

We understand that every family's needs and budget are unique. Therefore, HEAH offers flexible membership options meticulously designed to make our vital services as accessible as possible.

Wellness & Community Memberships (Per Family: 1 adult & 3 children or 2 adults & 2 children)

These memberships are ideal for families primarily interested in joining our Family Fit Club or accessing our vibrant community support without formal education sessions.

Community Member – Free:

Gain access to our informative newsletters, a wealth of free resources, and exclusive invitations to local events.

Wellness Member – £35/month per family: Includes one weekly Family Fit Club session + access to valuable digital wellness tools.

These options are specifically designed to support each child individually needing alternative education or therapeutic mentoring.

HEAH Pathways – £85/month per child: Includes one weekly therapeutic tutoring session +one weekly mentoring support tailored to their pathway.

HEAH Foundations Pathway - from £250 per term:
Functional Skills tutoring - Targeted support in English and Maths for learners 11+.

- Small group sessions or 1:1 tuition (from £25/group session or £35/1:1 session)
- Entry Level to Level 2 Functional Skills Tuition
- Flexible support for home-educated and exam prep learners.

Core Connect – £120/month: Our comprehensive combined offer for families who desire both our unique education and wellness support, representing our best value.

Mentoring & Advocacy – £40/month per child:

Provides dedicated 1:1 mentoring, essential EHCP/SEND support, or specialized coaching for either a parent or child.

Optional Add-ons:

- 1x weekly HEAH Pathways session (education)
- 1x Family Fit Club session (wellness)
- 1x weekly mentoring session Full access to parent support, our exclusive group chat, and digital tools.

- Additional child for Fit Club: + £10/month
- 1:1 Parent Coaching Session: + £25/session
- EHCP review support: +£40 per review
- Printed Weekly Home-Ed Resource Packs: +£15/month

HEAH: Family Kitchen sessions:

- Single online family session (1 household) £7.50

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Each session runs approximately 90 minutes via Zoom, with links and materials sent ahead of time.

Where We Work

HEAH operates as a truly flexible, community-based service, profoundly committed to meeting families

where they are. We currently deliver our impactful sessions primarily across South London. We are also proud to offer secure online options, making our services accessible to families beyond these geographical areas.

We deliver our engaging sessions in diverse, accessible settings:

In local parks and invigorating nature spaces, connecting with the outdoors. In welcoming community halls and conveniently hired venues, ensuring local access; and online platforms.

This dynamic, mobile model allows us to remain deeply inclusive, highly responsive, and firmly rooted in the real lives of the families we proudly serve, effectively reaching those who may not be able to access traditional services.

Where We're Headed

We're growing - with clear purpose and in direct response to the evolving needs of the families we serve.

Our ambitious future goals include: Expanding our community-based and online delivery across both London and Kent, thereby reaching significantly more families in need.

Building a dedicated team of highly skilled, compassionate, trauma-informed educators, mentors, and fitness coaches.

Developing a permanent multi-use space that will cohesively bring together our education, wellness, and mentoring strands under one accessible roof.

Forming strategic partnerships with schools, funders, and local authorities to significantly increase accessibility and ensure the long-term sustainability of our vital services.

Introducing accredited learning pathways and structured outcomes for our older learners, meticulously preparing them for brighter and more confident futures.

HEAH's long-term vision is to firmly establish ourselves as a leading, scalable model of alternative education and family wellness—a model that is deeply grounded in authentic community voice, profound professional expertise, and invaluable lived experience.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Here are answers to some common questions about home education and HEAH's services:

Q: What is home education? Parents take full legal responsibility for their child's education instead of sending them to a school. This approach allows for immense flexibility and truly personalized learning tailored to the child's unique needs and pace.

Q: Is school refusal legally supported? There is no specific legal definition of "school refusal" in England and Wales. However, parents have the legal right to deregister their child from school at any time and elect to home educate them. We can offer guidance through this process.

Q: Is HEAH: Open Futures Learning Hub a School?
No, HEAH: Open Futures Learning Hub is not a school. We operate as a Community Interest Company (CIC), providing flexible, referral-only

alternative provision. Our aim is to support homeeducating families and young people exploring non-traditional learning paths. We don't offer fulltime statutory education.

Instead, we focus on personalised tutoring, functional skills support, creative enrichment sessions, and well-being and life skills programmes. Our approach complements home education and other alternative provision placements by empowering learners with flexible, tailored support, rather than replicating a traditional school environment.

Q: What does 'neurodivergent' mean? It refers to the natural and valuable variations in how people's brains work, process information, and interact with the world. Examples include autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and sensory processing differences. HEAH celebrates and supports neurodiversity.

Q: How long are HEAH sessions? HEAH Pathways sessions are approximately 90 minutes. Family Fit Club sessions are approximately 60 minutes.

Q: Can my child join any pathway stage? Yes, with our dedicated support. We conduct an initial assessment to deeply understand your child's needs and recommend a suitable starting point, always with flexibility to move through phases as they progress and thrive.

Q: Do I attend Family Fit Club with my child? Yes—Family Fit Club is specifically designed to strengthen parent-child connection through shared movement and play. It's a wonderful, enriching bonding experience for the whole family!

Q: What areas do you currently cover? Currently, we offer in-person sessions across South London, with exciting plans to grow into Kent. We also offer secure online options, making our services accessible to families beyond these geographical areas.

Q: How do I book a Discovery Call? You can easily book a Discovery Call (a free, no-obligation chat) by visiting our website at:

www.heah-openroutes.co.uk or by emailing us directly at hello@heah-openroutes.co.uk.

We look forward to connecting with you.

Further Resources & Recommendations

At HEAH, we believe in connecting families with every valuable resource available.

Here are some trusted organizations and recommended readings that can provide additional support and insight:

Government & Legal Guidance:

UK Gov: Home Education Overview – Official government guidance on home education in England.

IPSEA: Independent Provider of Special Education Advice – Offers free and independent legal advice and support for parents of children with SEND.

Coram: School Exclusion Advice – Provides expert legal advice on education law, including school exclusions.

Charities & Community Support: YoungMinds – The UK's leading charity committed to improving the emotional well-being and mental health of children and young people.

Contact: For Families with Disabled Children – Offers advice, information, and support to families with disabled children.

Not Fine In School – A community-led resource offering support and information for families experiencing school attendance difficulties.

Recommended Reading:

The Explosive Child – Dr. Ross Greene: A groundbreaking approach to understanding and helping easily frustrated, chronically inflexible children.

NeuroTribes – Steve Silberman: The definitive history of autism and its profound impact on neurodiversity.

The Whole-Brain Child – Daniel Siegel & Tina Payne Bryson: Strategies for nurturing your child's developing mind and dealing with everyday struggles.

Let's Rebuild Confidence, Connection &

Community

Whether you're a parent seeking a new path, a dedicated educator looking to collaborate, or a passionate ally for change—thank you for being here. HEAH exists to fill the gaps, nurture the whole family, and offer a new way forward.

We see you. We hear you. And we are here to walk with you.

Take the next step with HEAH today.

Get in Touch

We're here to help. Reach out to us for a conversation, advice, or to get involved.

Email: hello@home-ed-alliance.co.uk

Website: www.home-ed-alliance.co.uk

Phone: 07513 249727

Testimonies

Shellisha was an incredible source of support and guidance throughout the Special Guardianship Order (SGO) process with my niece. Her involvement through the SGO Support Package made a real difference at a time when everything felt overwhelming. She provided clear, practical advice and emotional reassurance that helped me feel more confident and informed every step of the way.

What truly stood out was how Shellisha helped us navigate my niece's school refusal. She took the time to understand the root causes and offered thoughtful, trauma-informed strategies that were both effective and compassionate. Through her support, I was able to advocate for my niece's needs within the education system and feel empowered rather than alone. - J.G.

Shellisha didn't just offer support — she listened without judgement and helped me feel seen. Through Shellisha's approach, I gained not just advice but clarity and confidence in advocating for my child. Her insight around trauma and school refusal was exactly what we needed. - K.W.

I was scared all the time and didn't want to talk to anyone. But Shellisha made me feel safe. She didn't rush me or make me feel weird. Now I do lessons at home and it feels way better. I like learning again. - A.C.

Before I got support, I had no idea where to start. I was trying to get help for my daughter, who we believed had ADHD and possibly ASD, but everything felt confusing and overwhelming. The forms, the referrals, the school meetings — it was all just too much.

Shellisha took the time to really listen and helped me apply for a DLA, guiding me through every part of the form so I could explain things properly. She also supported me with the EHCP application, which I never would've managed on my own. I finally understood what the process involved and what my rights were.

When we got the diagnosis of Developmental Language Disorder, Shellisha explained it so clearly. I felt like I could actually make sense of it and talk to the school with confidence. She made everything feel less scary — and more like I had someone on my side who actually understood. The difference her support has made to our family is huge. I'd recommend Shellisha to anyone who feels lost or stuck with the system. - K.B

Shellisha has helped me in so many ways whilst going through a very hard period of my life. Her professional knowledge and insight into the issues I was facing, her advice, guidance, patience, and encouragement truly helped me to handle situations and have my voice heard. She is a person who goes above and beyond to support those she comes into contact within their time of need. - M.M.

I honestly don't know where we'd be without the support we received. I was completely overwhelmed trying to fill out the DLA form for my son, and I had no idea how to communicate with the school about his needs. From the very first conversation, I felt listened to and understood.

Shellisha helped me word everything properly, made sure we didn't miss a single detail, and explained every step so clearly.

She also supported me through meetings with the school—helping me understand my rights and giving me the confidence to speak up for my child.

Thanks to her, my son now has the right support in place and I finally feel like someone is on our side. I can't recommend her enough. -O.W.

As a family, we have personally known Shellisha for several years. She has become invaluable to us. Not only because of her warmth and honesty. But also her knowledge and passion for supporting families of disabled children. - T.H.

Shellisha has been absolutely amazing in helping both me and my daughter on our fitness journey. As i am getting older, staying fit can feel challenging with the demands of work, raising children and everyday life. Shellisha helped me and my daughter adopt fitness as a lifestyle, as a result I feel healthier and stronger and most importantly have reconnected with my daughter through health and fitness — and Shellisha made that possible for us!

She kept us motivated on the days when we felt low on energy and always knew just how to encourage us without pressure.

Thanks to her, we now share fitness as a bonding activity, which has brought us even closer as mother and daughter. When I started, I was a UK size 16, and I'm now a size 12 — and that's thanks to Shellisha tailored activities and workouts, and her amazing guidance on healthy eating. She didn't just train us; she supported and educated us every step of the way. If you're thinking about starting your own family fitness journey — whether you're new, returning, or just need support — I couldn't recommend Shellisha enough. She's knowledgeable, kind, and truly dedicated to helping you become your best self.

-A.M.

What stood out to me was how human and holistic the support felt. It wasn't just about paperwork or ticking boxes — Shellisha took the time to understand our family dynamic, our child's needs, and our hopes. - F.P

We felt completely lost dealing with school avoidance, but Shellisha stepped in with calm, clear advice rooted in real understanding. With her support we were finally able to take steps that honoured our child's needs without feeling alone or judged. - E.W

I used to feel really anxious and scared about school. Talking to Shellisha helped me realise it wasn't just me - and that what I was feeling made sense. She helped my auntie understand too. Now I feel more in control, and I'm learning in a way that suits me. -TG

School was too much for me, and no one really got it until I spoke to Shellisha. She listened, like really listened, and didn't try to force me to 'just go back'. She helped us find a plan that works. I feel like I have a voice now. - J.S.