

Understanding Education Other than at School (EOTAS)

Everything you need to know– a guide for parents/ carers/ young people.

Welcome to your EOTAS guide.



Hello and welcome!

This booklet has been created for families– parents, carers, and young people, who are exploring or already using Education Other Than At School (EOTAS). Whether you're just starting to look into EOTAS or you're already on the journey, we hope this guide helps you feel informed, supported, and confident.

EOTAS is a flexible and personalised way of learning for children and young people who can't attend school. It's designed to meet individual needs and can include a wide range of educational approaches. We know that choosing a different path can feel daunting, but you're not alone and there is support available every step of the way.

Inside this booklet, you'll find clear information about what EOTAS is, how it works, and what it can look like in real life. We've included answers to common questions, practical advice, and stories from families and young people who've experienced EOTAS themselves.

Whether you're a parent or carer advocating for your child, or a young person wanting to understand your options, this guide is here to help you feel empowered and hopeful about the future.

Contents

04

Introduction to EOTAS

05

Understanding EOTAS

06

Legal Understanding

07

Getting started

08

Types of EOTAS
provision

09

Personalisation and
planning

10

Information on
Funding

11

Roles and
Responsibilities

12

Resources and
helpful information

13

Frequently asked
questions for
parents/ carers

14

Frequently asked
questions for young
people

Introduction to EOTAS



EOTAS stands for Education Other Than At School. It's a type of education provided for children and young people who, for various reasons, cannot attend a mainstream or special school.

EOTAS is not a one size fits all approach, it is tailored to meet the individual needs of the learner. This might include:

- Tutoring at home or in the community
- Therapeutic support (like speech and language therapy or mental health services)
- Online learning
- Access to specialist provision or activities that support learning and development

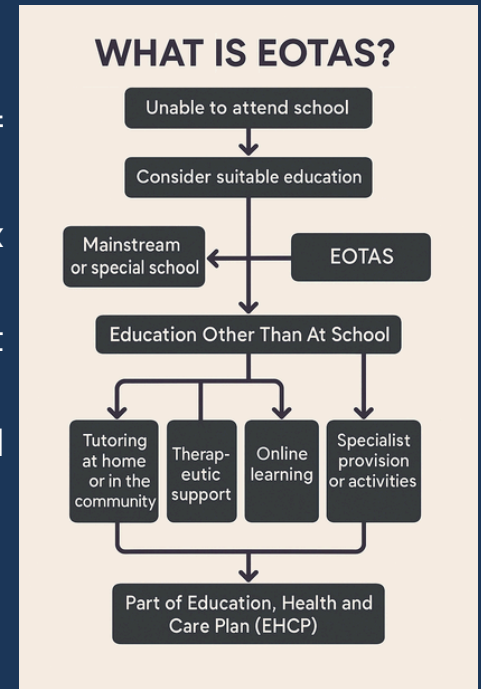
EOTAS is usually arranged by the local authority and is often part of a child or young person's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). It's designed to make sure that every learner receives a suitable education, even if school isn't the right setting for them.

It's important to know that EOTAS is a legal and recognised form of education, not homeschooling, and not a temporary fix. It's a fully supported alternative that can help young people thrive in ways that work best for them.

Understanding EOTAS

EOTAS is usually considered when:

- A school placement has broken down or is at risk of doing so
- The child or young person's needs are too complex for any available school setting
- Therapeutic or specialist support is needed that cannot be delivered in school
- The child or young person is unable to attend school due to mental or physical health challenges



There are many reasons why school might not be the right place for a child or young person. These can include:

- Mental health challenges
- Sensory processing difficulties
- Anxiety or trauma
- Medical needs
- Lack of suitable school provision
- Experiences of school-based exclusion or distress

EOTAS is designed to be flexible and personalised, so that education can happen in a way that works best for the learner.

What can EOTAS include?

EOTAS can look different for every child or young person. It might include:

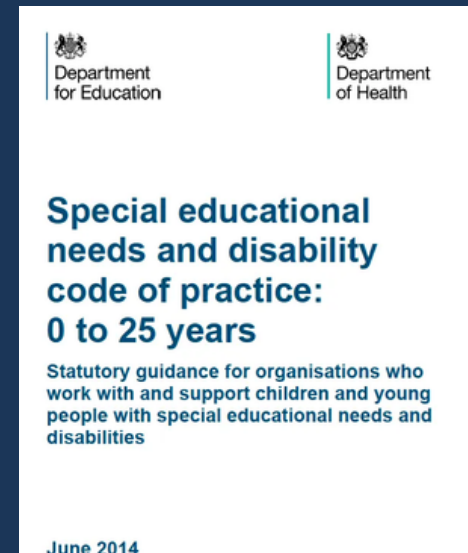
- Tutoring at home or in the community
- Online learning platforms
- Therapeutic support (e.g. speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, counselling)
- Specialist activities that support learning and development
- Access to vocational or creative learning opportunities

Legal Understanding

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) states that local authorities must make arrangements for children of compulsory school age who cannot attend school, ensuring they still receive an education that is:

- Efficient
- Suitable to their age, ability, aptitude
- Responsive to any special educational needs they may have

EOTAS is one way of fulfilling this duty when a school setting cannot meet the child or young person's needs



EOTAS is defined under Section 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

This law allows Local Authorities (LAs) to arrange education outside of a school setting when it is inappropriate for the child or young person to be educated in a school.

Key legal points include:

- EOTAS is not elective home education. It is arranged and funded by the LA.
- If EOTAS is agreed, Section I of the EHCP is left blank (no school placement), and Section F must fully specify what will be provided, by whom, and how often.
- The decision to provide EOTAS must be based on professional evidence, such as input from educational psychologists, medical professionals, or therapeutic providers

Getting started

If you believe that school is not the right environment for your child or young person, and they have special educational needs, you may be able to request an EOTAS package through their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Step by step guide-

1- Have or apply for an EHCP- EOTAS is usually only available to children and young people who have an EHCP. If you don't yet have one, you'll need to request an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment from your local authority.

2- Gather evidence- You'll need to show that school is inappropriate for your child's needs. This might include:

- Reports from educational psychologists, therapists, or medical professionals
- Evidence of distress, anxiety, or school refusal
- Records of failed placements or exclusions
- Statements from your child or young person, if appropriate

3- Build a proposed EOTAS package- Create a clear and detailed proposal for what education could look like outside of school. Include:

- A weekly timetable of activities and learning
- Types of provision (e.g. tutoring, therapy, online learning)
- Qualified providers and their roles
- How the package meets the needs outlined in the EHCP
- Cost estimates (if requesting a personal budget)

4- Submit your request- You can request EOTAS:

- During the drafting of a new EHCP
- At an Annual Review
- Through a reassessment of needs

Make sure your request is evidence-based and clearly explains why school is unsuitable and how EOTAS will meet your child's needs.

5- Work with the Local Authority- The local authority will consult with schools and other settings to determine whether education in school is truly inappropriate. If they agree, they must:

- Leave Section I of the EHCP blank (no school placement)
- Fully specify the EOTAS provision in Section F
- Fund and arrange the agreed package



Types of EOTAS provision



EOTAS is not a one size fits all and it is about creating a personalised education plan that meets the unique needs of a child or young person who cannot attend school. No two packages are the same, each one is built around the learner's strengths, challenges, interests, inspirations, outcomes and life long goals.

Here are some of the most common provisions-

1- Tutoring- This could be delivered at home, in the community or online. It could be delivered 1:1 or in a small group. It will cover the core subjects (English, Maths and Science) or other areas of interest. The tutoring is often provided by qualified teachers or specialist tutors with experience in SEND

2- Therapeutic support- This may include Speech and Language therapy (SALT), Occupational Therapy (OT), counselling, play/ drama or art therapy or mental health support. This provision helps support emotional, sensory or communication needs. This provision could be integrated into the weekly learning timetable.

3- Online learning- This often involves structured platforms or virtual classrooms. This could be self paced or include live sessions. This type of learning can be used independently or support the tutoring element of the provision. This will include resources like videos, assignments, quizzes or forums.

4- Creative or vocational learning- This will be activities like art, music, drama, technology, sport or based around individual interests such as animal care. This part of the package is to develop confidence, resilience and encourage engagement.

5- Community based learning- This could be learning in libraries, museums, local centres or enrichment activities such as visiting National Trust. It could also include mentoring or supported group sessions with suitable peer group. This provision encourages social interaction and real world learning.

6- Specialist SEND provision- This provision is tailored support for specific needs e.g. Autism, Trauma, ADHD and will be delivered by professionals with expertise in neurodiversity and inclusive practice. This can include emotional regulation, sensory integration and life skills.

Personalisation and planning



One of the biggest strengths of EOTAS is its flexibility and personalisation. Every child or young person is different and their education should reflect that.

Personalisation means designing an education package that:

- Matches the learner's needs, strengths, and interests
- Supports their emotional wellbeing and development
- Helps them work towards realistic and meaningful goals
- Takes into account their preferred learning style and pace
- This might include a mix of academic learning, therapeutic support, creative activities, and life skills development.

An EOTAS package might include:

- 3 hours of tutoring per week
- Weekly Speech and Language therapy (SALT) sessions
- Access to an online learning platform to complete independent learning on Coding
- Art therapy every Friday
- One weekly group mentoring sessions
- Outdoor learning twice a week e.g. forest school

When planning an EOTAS package, families and professionals work together to create a bespoke timetable and support plan. This should be:

- Detailed- specifying what will be provided, by whom, and how often
- Flexible- able to adapt as the child or young person grows and changes
- Outcome focused- linked to EHCP outcomes and long-term goals
- Regularly reviewed- this is usually reviewed through Annual review process but you are able to request changes if learners needs have changed or a provider is not working or new opportunities or interests arise.

Information on Funding

Who pays for EOTAS?

- EOTAS is funded by the Local Authority as part of the EHCP. Many of the providers will be paid direct by the Local Authority.

Personal budgets-

- Families can sometimes request a personal budget to arrange parts of the EOTAS provision themselves. This must be agreed by the Local Authority and be detailed in the EHCP.
- The Local Authority will have a policy which outlines the personal budget holders responsibilities.

What costs are covered in an EOTAS package?

- Tuition, therapy and agreed resources will be covered in the package.
- Sometimes technology will be included e.g. laptop, software, if specified in the EHCP.
- Travel costs and specialist equipment may be considered if essential for provision.

How is funding requested for an EOTAS package?

- This will be discussed during the drafting of an EHCP or as part of the annual review.
- Families should provide clear cost estimates if requesting a personal budget.



Roles and Responsibilities



Local Authority is responsible for:

- Arrange and fund EOTAS provision as specified in the EHCP.
- Ensure providers are qualified and meet safeguarding standards.
- Review provision regularly through annual review to ensure provision is appropriate and is meeting the young persons needs.

EOTAS providers are responsible for:

- Delivering agreed educational and therapeutic support.
- Maintain safeguarding standards and report concerns.
- Communicate progress and challenges to families and the Local Authority.

Parents/ Carers are responsible for:

- Provide a safe environment for sessions.
- Support engagement with EOTAS provision and activities.
- Report any safeguarding or wellbeing concerns promptly.

Young people are responsible for:

- Engage with EOTAS provision and activities as agreed.
- Share feedback about what works and what doesn't work at reviews and if an issue arises.

Safeguarding responsibilities-

- All providers must have DBS checks and follow safeguarding policies.
- Parents should report concerns to the Local Authority SEN team immediately

Resources and helpful information



Here are some helpful links and resources if you are thinking about requesting an EOTAS package-

SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Services)

This is a local services that offers free, impartial advice to parents, carers, and young people about SEND, EHCPs, and EOTAS.

IPSEA (Independent Provider of Special Education Advice)

This provider offers free legal guides, template letters, and advice on EHCPs and EOTAS. A great place to start if you're unsure of your rights or need help with appeals.

Local Authority Information

Each Local Authority will have a website that contains a clear overview of EOTAS and within the Local Offer provisions that are available in the local area to support an EOTAS package

National Autistic Society

A welcoming space where parents and carers discuss EOTAS, share advice, and connect with others who've been through similar experiences.

Facebook groups?

There is online community groups that can be accessed such as EOTAS / Personal Budgets via EHCP UK or Education Otherwise Than at School (EOTAS) Support for SEN Families

SENCO Services

Support can be provided by SENDCO Services, all information can be found on the website www.sendcoservices.co.uk

Frequently Asked Questions for Parents/Carers

What is EOTAS and who can access EOTAS?

EOTAS stands for Education Other Than at School, it is a type of education when young people can not attend an educational setting due to significant needs. EOTAS is usually considered for young people with an EHCP when school attendance is not possible or suitable.

How is EOTAS different to Elective Home Education (EHE)?

EOTAS is arranged and funded by the Local Authority, whereas EHE is managed, arranged and funded by parent/ carers.

What does EOTAS include?

It can include tutoring, therapy, online learning, vocational courses and other tailored support to meet the young person's needs.

Where does EOTAS take place?

It can be at home, in community settings, online or a mixture of these depending on the agreed plan.

Who delivers EOTAS?

Qualified tutors, therapist, other specialist providers/ provision commissioned by the Local Authority.

How many hours will the EOTAS package provide?

This depends on the young person's needs and what is specified in the EHCP. It should be appropriate and sufficient for their age and ability.

Will the EHCP still be reviewed?

Annual reviews will be organised by the Local Authority and still take place annually to check progress and make any adjustments to provision.

What if EOTAS is not working?

Contact the Local Authority SEN team or caseworker.



Frequently Asked Questions for Young People

Will I have to go back to school?

You could do as EOTAS can be temporary or long term, this will depend on the circumstances, progress and next steps.

Will I get my qualifications?

Yes, EOTAS can include GCSEs, functional skills or vocational qualifications depending on your EHCP/ aspirations/ next steps.

Will I have a say in my learning/ choosing my subjects?

Yes your views should be included in planning meetings, where you can share your interests and goals. The EOTAS package should include core subjects, such as English and Maths, and options that match your aspirations.

Can I meet other young people?

Some EOTAS packages include group sessions or social activities, this will be decided in the preparing of your EOTAS provision. If this is what you would like make sure you share this at the planning meetings for your EOTAS package.

Will I have a teacher?

You will have tutors or specialists who teach you in a way that suits your needs and supports the outcomes in your EHCP.

What happens if I have a tutor or activity I don't like?

You will need to speak to your parent/ carer or SEND team/ caseworker. Changes can be made if things are not working.

