If you would like to find out more about your local home education community then you might like to visit one of the many Facebook groups, including Home Education UK and Home Schooling UK, where you will be able to chat to other HE parents and be pointed towards groups in your area. Alternatively, you can visit the following websites for more information on home education in the UK:

www.edyourself.org
www.heas.org.uk
www.education-otherwise.org

“Imagination is more important than knowledge.”
- Albert Einstein

Home Education England & Wales
Dispelling the Myths

The number of families choosing to home educate in the UK has risen dramatically in recent years. Many parents are concerned by the amount of testing and homework that children are required to do in conventional education, others feel that their child’s individual needs are not being met by the one-size-fits all system, some find that issues of bullying are not being adequately addressed. Whatever the reasons, more families are turning to home education as an alternative to schools and HE communities are thriving. Despite this, there are still many misconceptions regarding home education, this leaflet aims to dispel some of the more common myths.

“It's not our job to shape children, but to nurture who they really are.” - Naomi Aldort
Myth: Home educated children are not socialised

Truth: With over 50,000 children being home educated in the UK and the number constantly growing, large communities of HE families are forming all over the country enabling children of all ages, backgrounds, cultures and beliefs to come together to both socialise and learn. HE children have the benefit of regular socialisation with children of all ages rather than just those who happen to have been born in the same year. In this way HE socialisation is a closer reflection of the real world and promotes respect and appreciation of others regardless of differences. For this reason bullying is very rare in HE communities.

Myth: Home educated children can't go to university/get jobs

Truth: Many home educated children go on to study at university and obtain jobs in any field from art to zoology! Some universities allow home educated students to apply through other means (e.g. portfolios or non-standard qualifications), whilst many HE children go on to take GCSEs and A-levels either through distance learning or community college, often starting these qualifications earlier than school children and spreading them out. The Open University is also a popular choice. HE teenagers tend to do well at degree level as they have the benefit of years of self-motivated learning.

Myth: Home educators have to follow the national curriculum

Truth: There are many ways to home educate. Some families choose to follow the national curriculum but most choose to learn based around what their child happens to be interested in at the time. This has the fantastic benefit of having no time limits on learning. If a child is particularly interested in a certain subject then they are free to explore that topic for as long as they wish without it coming to an end once the term is over. It is far easier for a child (or adult!) to learn when they are enjoying themselves and have an interest in the subject, and there are many resources available if you want extra help and advice on working skills such as numeracy and literacy into any theme.

“Learning is not the product of teaching. Learning is the product of the activity of the learners.”
- John Holt

Myth: Home educated children stay home alone all day

Truth: With home educating communities thriving, most areas now have regular social meet-ups, sports clubs, arts groups, special interest classes and more! Many families get together to arrange group discounts when visiting places of interest, and as they are not restricted to weekends and school holidays they are often able to plan educational trips (or even holidays!) at a considerably reduced rate, enabling them to spend more time than ever out of the home. Of course, many home educated children attend clubs and activities alongside school children during their evenings and weekends too! Most home educators consider real world learning to be of huge importance and believe that this is best achieved by experience rather than the limitations imposed in a classroom.

Myth: Even if I wanted to home educate, I'm not qualified to teach

Truth: If you taught your child to walk and talk, to know right from wrong, to be kind and compassionate, then you have already taught them far more complicated things in life than long division! Most home educators see themselves as learning facilitators rather than teachers. Children are surprisingly adept at learning under their own steam when they are following something that they are interested in, but if you do feel that your child needs extra support in a particular subject and that you are not able to meet this need, there are plenty of other HE parents available to help. Many HE parents put on classes and activities in areas that they have experience in (including ex-teachers!) so there is always someone out there who can help. Home educated children also have the benefit of considerably more one-to-one time with an adult than they would get in a school, and with so many learning resources and support groups freely available online it has never been easier to help your child to follow their own educational path!

“Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood.”
- Fred Rogers