

P-05-922 Withdraw the proposed home education guidance & P-05-923 Are you listening to us? Home Education Rights and Respect!, Correspondence – Home Education Barry to Committee, 24.06.20

I'm very sorry this is such a late response. With covid and myself being stuck abroad things have been a little slow on the charity side of things.

I thought it would be best to respond later rather than never.

I'm in agreement with the petition and feel that the new guidelines are not acceptable as they stand. I feel that they don't take into account the rights of a child.

I strongly believe the school system needs to be looked at in more depth and we need to be asking why so many children are being pulled out of school to home educate. Money, time and investment needs to be ploughed into improving the environment, exam pressures and subjects that are on offer. We need to stop trying to fit our children into the same box, they're all different, they're all natural learners and we need to end the exam culture that is causing so many anxieties in today's teenagers!

As a home educator I would like the privacy of our home respected and our human right to home educate to not be questioned but instead respected and supported in far more positive way than the guidelines that have been proposed.

I'd like to see more opportunities created for home educated children so that they don't have to be accused of being hidden let's open more doors. For example I am currently in talks with a local college about GCSE opportunities for external candidates. This isn't straight forward and it will cost us money, money we will likely have to be raised through the charity. This shouldn't be the case, there should be access to these qualifications for all children no matter where or how you study for them! The funding is there for every child and the access should be open without all the red tape, tick boxing and control mechanisms.

Charities such as HEB have been created by home educators to help and support families new and looking to home ed. They are safe places that work hard to put on as many experiences and opportunities to try as many new things as possible. These places need to be supported and respected. There is a reason they exist and that is because families do not feel pressured to send their child back to school. LA's frequently cannot help families and instead find ways of sending children back to school. We need to celebrate this diversity and stop thinking that every parent is guilty before proven innocent, just because they home educate. Most importantly I'd really like to see LA's educated on the different philosophies of education, as I said one size doesn't fit all and we can all learn in so many different ways and not just in the methods that are offered in schools today. With better understanding of home education will come respect and when there is faith and respect you may find families will be more open and not so protective.

Make schools better and people will start to have more faith in the system.

Many Thanks
Donna Rapley