

Written evidence submitted by [member of the public]

[Note: This evidence has been redacted by the Committee. Text in square brackets has been inserted where text has been redacted.]

Submission to Parliamentary Committee Regarding Homeschooling

From: [family name and place]

Date of Submission: 6th November 2020.

We have been homeschooling since [date] and plan to do so until [date].
[children and dates of homeschooling]

My response to the Committee's invitation for written submissions is as follows:

- **The duties of local authorities with regards to home education, including safeguarding and assuring the quality of home education;**

I believe that the home is the safest place for children, and their parents are the children's strongest and most passionate protectors and advocates.

Within the context of Elective Home Education, children naturally develop valuable understanding relating to teamwork and management skills which form the basis on which academic instruction can be most effectively received.

Many life skills are successfully taught within the home, especially due to the more favourable ratio of pupils to teachers.

Parents can perceive and respond accurately to the individual strengths and weaknesses of their children, so better academic outcomes are achieved due to swift and focussed responses to educational opportunities and challenges.

- **whether a statutory register of home-educated children is required;**

I believe that the Education Select Committee ought to continue to trust parents to care for their children. There are many instances of the failings of state-provided intervention whereas Elective Home Education is predominantly successful for achievement of social and academic skills.

Implementation of a statutory register is not a good use of the resources of the state.

A register is not a proven method to improve child welfare, as has been seen in many tragic circumstances of failure of the social services.

- **the quality and accessibility of support (including financial support) available for home educators and their children, including those with special educational needs, disabilities, mental health issues, or caring responsibilities, and those making the transition to further and higher education;**

I believe that families who choose to home-educate (ours included) have already demonstrated their dedication to the welfare of their families by sacrificing the earnings of at least one parent. However, financial recognition from central government of such sacrifices would be welcome.

- **whether the current regulatory framework is sufficient to ensure that the wellbeing and academic achievement of home-educated children is safeguarded, including where they may attend unregistered schools, have been formally excluded from school, or have been subject to ‘off-rolling’;**

The primary expectation of our family from a regulatory framework is to continue to permit families who choose to home educate to cherish their children as described (education ‘otherwise’) by the 1944 Education Act.

Elective Home Education is one of the ways in which we may express our dignity as mature citizens to contribute to the wellbeing and development of our society.

Elective Home Education should not be confused with illegal practices or instances where children have been failed by the state education system.

- **the role that inspection should play in future regulation of home education;**

We do not welcome intervention and inspection from the state. We believe that we have the best understanding of our own children, in part because they are our own flesh and blood. The state ought not to stray into areas of personal expression and religious conscience by attempting to regulate the home.

- **what improvements have been made to support home educators since the 2010-15 Education Committee published their report on ‘Support for Home Education’ in 2012; and**

We have not received any support from the state, and the 2012 report has not changed this.

- **the impact COVID-19 has had on home-educated children, and what additional measures might need to be taken in order to mitigate any negative impacts.’**

Our children’s education has not been interrupted by COVID-19 because we are all within the same household. This has demonstrated that family institutions are more robust in the face of disruption compared to state institutions.

November 2020