

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.]

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

Section 7 of the Education Act places the responsibility on parents and NOT on the local authority to ensure that children are in receipt of a suitable full-time education. Local Authorities should play a supportive role for those who electively choose to Home Educate if requested. The purpose of home educating is not to replicate a school environment and local authorities should respect this. With regard to safeguarding, the local authority should only act when it has “reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm” (Section 47, Children’s Act).

In assessing the quality of Home Education, it should be remembered that the National Curriculum is designed to teach large classes en masse and that in a home setting, children can learn at their own pace and with their interests at heart. A seven-year-old who hasn’t chosen to write yet shouldn't be deemed “behind” or receiving a poor quality of education when other areas of interest are followed in depth, although not listed in the National Curriculum. It’s also worth noting, that every topic chosen for study is able to support learning in numeracy and literacy rather than having to conduct specific activities or drills in these areas.

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

It isn’t! Statutory registers should only be used for professions requiring oversight and for criminals – parents choosing to home educate do not fall into either category.

- the benefits children gain from home education, and the potential disadvantages they may face;

Children benefit hugely from being able to follow their own interests and in being able to use the world as their classroom. Learning takes place in surprising places – a car journey taught my daughter how to subtract based on roundabouts – and the ability to be outside and in nature connects children powerfully to our

environment and world. I believe that by spending time outside they are fitter, mentally stronger and able to learn to be the custodians of our planet – skills far more pertinent to the next generation – in addition to becoming numerate, literate, analytical and creative. Home educated children can socialise with individuals of all ages and are, in my experience, more confident communicators than their school educated counterparts. I can see no disadvantages to their future, Universities are increasingly recognising the self motivation to study that comes with being home educated rather than having to learn certain things to pass exams.

- 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;

The same support should be available to home educating families as is available to school educating families.

- 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’;

Unregistered schools and off-rolling should be addressed outside of Home Education as the schools causing the problem are the source. The Education Act provides sufficient regulatory framework for Local Authorities to act under section 437.

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

It shouldn't - OFSTED purpose appears to be to create league tables of school performance, the measures of which are largely academic rather than happiness of the child. Home Educated children are not required to be assessed in this way as they are not having to provide a return on the Taxpayers investment unlike schools and OFSTED.

- 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

I have only been Home Educating since [date]

- 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.'

I'm unsure what negative impacts you would see specific to home educated children as a result of a Global Pandemic? Certainly, none would have been seen or felt by my children given that they have been fully able to undertake our programme of study with limited interruption unlike those children attending school.

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