

Written evidence submitted by Ms Gill Purchase

YOU MUST CONSIDER THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN WHO ARE HOME EDUCATED.....

I have been home educating my daughter for over five years. Like many I found the current school system out-dated and it was not an environment in which would thrive.

Home education has been perfect for her and this year she would have sat her GCSE Higher Maths and English Language GCSE's (one year ahead of her peers) as a private candidate at a local independent school. Because of the CV19, she has not been able to. There is only one school in the area that accepts private candidates and the cost of each exam is approximately £150.00 – which is non-returnable once you have registered in January to take the exam in the summer.

Unlike her schooled peers, she did not take formal mocks or has any teacher or tutor assessments to submit – I'm sure all Head Teacher's would be dubious of any assessment's given by the child's mother – so she will not be able to receive a grade. She will now have to sit these, along with three other subjects next year – even though she has done the work and is more than ready to do well in these exams now! Two years of study has been wasted.

You need to consider that my daughter is not alone, there many thousands of HE children who have prepared to sit GCSE's this year have been impacted by this and discriminated against - as no-one has given any consideration to them or put any provision in place for them to sit there GCSE's.

In order to stop this, I would urge the Select Committee to consider making it easier for private candidates (PC's) to find exam centres - by making all local secondary schools accept them. In Wokingham none of the state schools and MAT's accept them. If, as suggested by Sally Collier in a response to Tom Hunt, Head Teachers can have '*reliable evidence*' of work done, what exactly is '*reliable evidence*' and what format should it take, there needs to be guidance on this – for both schools and parents who home educate. If, in the highly unlikely event that a Head teacher agrees to do this, will parents be charged extra for this on top of the normal exam fees? If so, there might/ will be parents who cannot afford the additional charges, so the child will not be able to take the exam – you have thus created 'exam poverty'.

It is hugely disappointing that in Ms Collier's response to Mr Hunt, there was no mention of the fact that home educated children are also private candidates. What is even more concerning is that appears from the transcript that only three minutes of discussion was afforded to them.

It is blatantly clear there is no understanding of how this has impacted the children in the home-ed community and what home education is. My daughter is lucky in that she can sit these exams in future – many others are not! Don't you think you must consider there needs to?

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