

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

We have been Home Educating our two boys for 3 years, very successfully. We are appalled that the DCSF are now appearing to want to group MY family under the same label as families who are “abusing or neglecting their children” . For your information our children suffered abuse and neglect whilst they were attending state schools on many occasions, but I suppose that would have been seen as ok as it was in a school run by “experts and professionals”.

I consider it an insult, not just to my family, but those other (perfectly well adjusted) Home Educating families across the country. My kids are MY responsibility, NOT the states and we have, as a family, exercised our right to choose the style of education that our children learn best with.

We decided not follow the National Curriculum, quite simply because we don't agree with the “one-size-fits-all” manner of herding kids together like sheep and brow beating them into listening/writing about subjects which they have absolutely no interest in.

In our opinion schools kill children's love of learning, in many cases, and we wish to give ours as much freedom to grow and develop in their own time at their own individual pace. For example my son, who is 8, has just managed to grasp reading. He hated reading in school because they were pushing him too hard, too early and he was too shy to read aloud. Consequently he would not look at a book for well over a year after we deregistered him. With kind advice from other Home Educating parents (who were experienced in this area) we decided to back off completely and allow him to choose for himself how/when/what he tried to read. He liked comics and certain computer games so we provided him with ANY reading material that he showed an interest in, then left him to it. Three years later he loves reading and will sit, with his nose in a book, snuggled on the sofa and go through a whole book in an hour or so. This WOULD NOT HAVE HAPPENED IN SCHOOL!!! It also will not happen for Home Educators who choose this path if these new guidelines are enforced.

It is my belief that the Government have been instrumental in damaging children through schools for many years. There is proof everywhere you look these days that schools, across the board are failing our kids day after day, year after year. Can't they see that many children in the UK are depressed and angry from being forced through the state system?? I haven't got time to look up statistics now but I DO know that, just because a child has been to school in this country, does NOT mean they always leave knowing how to read or write!

If these new “powers” are given to Local Authorities and we Home Educators are forced into being “assessed/tested” in line with the NC then the state will, again, be responsible for yet thousands (and believe me, there are more of us than the Government realises) more children being stifled and prevented from becoming the creative, happy, free INDIVIDUALS that we, as RESPONSIBLE PARENTS, know they can become.

I recommend the DCSF should REALLY take a good look at state schools where kids REALLY ARE being left by the wayside and not interfere with genuine Home Educators who are raising the confident, independent, free-thinking adults of the future.

Thanks for listening, whoever you are!
Katie Bell. Proud Home Educating Mum.