

Submission  
No 87

## INQUIRY INTO HOME SCHOOLING

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date received:** 7/08/2014

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Partially Confidential

7th August 2014

To Whom It May Concern

I have been homeschooling my children for 18 years. Of my eldest daughters, one is now working as a primary school teacher and the other, who has just turned 21, recently completed a Masters of Communication degree at the University of Sydney. My eldest son has worked part time since the age of fourteen, and, having successfully completed three undergraduate units through Open Universities Australia, now intends to undertake an apprenticeship as an electrician.

We choose to homeschool for a number of reasons, including the fact that I believe I can better educate my children at home where they have personal tuition and access to quality resources appropriate to our ideals of a classic education. Like many other homeschooling parents, we have educated ourselves in the various approaches to teaching methods and formulated a curriculum that meets each child's individual needs and encompasses the learning and experience of our own family.

Our children are balanced, principled and well-socialised. They are articulate, confident and respectful of authority, despite being raised outside the mainstream education system. It is our experience that the freedom and security of a homeschool environment fosters both a love of learning and the strength to cope well in the outside world. Commendations concerning the characters and educational abilities of our children have come from university lecturers, neighbours, acquaintances in the community, local parishioners and passing strangers. We have met with no personal criticism of our family as a result of our choice to homeschool.

Homeschooling is a lifestyle option which can strengthen both family relationships and bonds within the greater community. Homeschoolers have been accused of being over-protective and also abusive or neglectful. We are neither. Our choice to homeschool is centred on our love for our children and our desire to give them the best that life has to offer. We protect them during their most vulnerable years in order to prepare them for an adulthood of healthy relationships and useful service to the broader society. We don't discriminate against those whose life choices are different to our own and we fully expect our children to be respectful of others' beliefs and opinions, whilst remaining faithful to their own moral code.

As an experienced homeschooler, I find the new regulations to be workable but somewhat restricting. I happily use them to check that my children's education is on track but the time-consuming requirements can limit the opportunities to explore and excel beyond the curriculum. I respect the right of the State to ensure that our children receive an adequate education but I feel that we should be entitled to submit our own curriculums for evaluation by the Board of Studies. Intelligent and committed parent-educators should, I believe, have the democratic right to make decisions regarding the content and outcomes of their children's education program, in order to better meet their current needs and allow them to contribute more effectively to society in the future.

In conclusion, I sincerely hope that homeschoolers will continue to be respected as regular members of society and not viewed with ignorant prejudice or misunderstanding. It is my added hope that parents will be credited with the intelligence to impart their unique wisdom and understanding to their children, and be allowed the freedom to encourage their children's unique curiosity and passions within the confines of a supportive State registration system.