

## INQUIRY INTO HOME SCHOOLING

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Partially Confidential

SUBMISSION TO COMMITTEE ENQUIRING INTO HOMESCHOOLING IN NSW

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Any further enquiries: Mr and Mrs Daniel and Michele Vieira

The terms of reference of the Inquiry into Home schooling are to inquire into and report on home schooling in New South Wales, and in particular:

**(a) the background of home schooling including comparison of practices with other jurisdictions in Australia and New Zealand,**

This has already been researched by the Parliamentary Research Service.

Please refer to e-brief issue 7/ 2013

**(b) the current context of home schooling in New South Wales including:**

**(i) outcomes of home schooling including in relation to transition to further study and work,**

Access to university via many alternative pathways has become much easier. Most homeschoolers cope well with university study since they have become independent self-motivated students through homeschooling.

However access to apprenticeships, TVET courses and vocational study through TAFE proves much more difficult for homeschoolers than for school students, especially since raising the school leaving age.

I have made a table to give you a sample of the real “outcomes of homeschooling” students who have completed homeschooling and are now adults.

See below:

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First name	For which school years you were homeschooled	Currently working as or qualified to....	How did you get there?
Steve	3- 12	Senior secondary teacher	BA from Monash University via Open Learning Australia then Dip Ed UNSW Targeted graduate gaining F/T perm. teaching position in Sydney on graduation
Cait	1- 10	Registered Nurse	Enrolled Nurse study through CIT while working in Aged Care. Completed 5 years at local Base hospital, then BNurs through UTS then two years' work at Sydney Adventist Hospital
Brij	K - 12	Primary School teacher	BA from Griffith University via Open Learning Australia then MTeach through Sydney University, currently teaching K - 2 at a private school
Frank	K - 11	Trade qualified fitter/machinist	Completed fitter/machinist apprenticeship through Blue Circle Steel, then worked in Moree and now working in mining industry
Elizabeth	K - 10	Event Management	Double Advanced Diploma Hospitality and Tourism Management through Kenvale College. Worked for 2 years at Ken-thurst Study Centre

Emma	K - 12	General Practitioner	Bachelor of Medicine through Newcastle University after completing 8 Open Learning University units all with High Distinctions. Emma received the University medal and took out 5 of the 6 medals available, topping her class in Medicine.
Felicity	K - 10	Early Childhood educator	Diploma Children's Services NSW TAFE and Cert IV Learning Support Currently working through In-Home Care in Sydney
JP	K - 10	Carpenter	Completed carpentry apprenticeship in NSW and the ACT. Now working in the building industry
Luke	K - 10	Motor mechanic	Completed pre-apprenticeship course then obtained an apprenticeship which he has now finished and is working in the industry.
Pat	K - 12	Viola player in symphony orchestra, also soloist and performer	B Mus (Hons) Brisbane Uni
Mick	K - 10	Electrician	Completed several engineering units through CQU then went onto an apprenticeship through Blue Circle now working in mining industry

Mary-Rose	K - 12	BA, currently completing further study in dance therapy	Completed several units via distance education then transferred to Macquarie Uni and later completed BA through Campion College
Chris	K - 10	Electrician	Apprenticeship through Blue Circle, currently working in rural Australia and in Canada Received Apprentice of the year award in his final year
Monique	K - 12	Registered Nurse	BNurs through Avondale College, currently working Sydney Adventist Hospital
Monica	K - 12	Undergraduate student	Monica began university at 16 and is studying her first year in a Liberal Arts degree with the aim of being a journalist. When she was 15 she completed 2 OUA units gaining a credit and a high distinction for them
Eva	K - 12	Secondary teacher	BA through Monash University via distance education
Rosa	K - 10	Jillaroo and wool classer	Grad Dip Ed (Sec) Studied wool classing and jillaroo courses through local TAFE
Marianne	4 - 12	Computer programmer	Completed degree from RMIT through OLA
Natalie	2 - 10	Retail manager	TAFE Diploma then on-job training
Zenith	K - 11	In the navy	TPC at TAFE then straight into navy

Peter	6 - 12	Gardener/Groundsman	Completed some OLA units then studied horticulture at TAFE.
Michelle	K - 10	Graphic artist and delicatessen manager	TAFE studies and on-the-job work training with Woolworths
Reuben	K - 11	Priest	TPC at TAFE then completed commercial cookery course then entered seminary now a priest
Thomas	5 - 10	Seminarian	Completed electrical apprenticeship. Studied two units through OUA, then entered seminary studies to become a priest.
Jeanne	6 - 10	Personal Assistant	Completed secretarial studies at TAFE then worked as a legal secretary
Nicholas	2 - 10	Apprentice upholsterer	Completed a number of TAFE courses before obtaining upholstery apprenticeship
Isaac	K - 12	Aerospace engineer	Pursued interest in Science throughout homeschooling then offered a scholarship with NASA
Brendan	K-12	Mechanical engineer	HSC studies through OTEN then offered a cadetship with BHP while studying his degree
Anthony	K-12	Violin player, music teacher	Completed first year of music degree at ANU then

Jean	1 - 10	Secondary teacher	transferred to the Conservatorium to complete his degree Completed bachelor of Arts with first class honours and Masters degrees through University of Armidale
Elizabeth	K - 10	Bachelor of Media and Communications	Armidale Uni
John	K - 10	Bachelor of Biomedical Science. Currently studying post-graduate Medicine	Armidale Uni
Isabel	K - 10	Secondary teacher	Completed bachelor of Arts with first class honours and Masters degrees through University of Armidale
Paul	K- 10	Lawyer	Armidale university now in private practice
Madeline	K-10	Veterinarian	University of Armidale
Daniel	6 - 12	Bachelor of Arts Master of Arts Currently doing a PhD	Lecturer and tutor Notre Dame university
Michael	4 - 12	Bachelor of Education now secondary PE, PD & Health teacher	Notre Dame univeristy
Sarah	2 - 12	Secondary teacher	Completed BA through Wollongong university then Grad Dip Ed.
Genevieve	4- 12	Primary teacher	Completed Unitrack year then Bachelor Education with UWS
Miriam	K - 11	Registered nurse	Completed TPC at local TAFE then completed BNurs. Working at Sydney Eye Hospital



Lucy	K-12	Enrolled nurse	Initially trained & worked in hospitality before entering a traineeship as an Enrolled Nurse.
Michael	K-12	Computer programmer	IT degree through RMIT via OUA. Now working in the industry in the ACT
Tim	K-12	Electrical engineer, Air Force	Completed first year at UNSW then transferred to Air Force. Completed degree as an officer
James	K-12	Bar attendant	Working in clubs as a bar attendant
Daniel	K - 12	Apprentice carpenter	Worked as a diving and gymnastics teacher before obtaining apprenticeship as a carpenter.
Lauren	K-12	Early childhood and primary teaching student	Through OUA
Tess	K - 12	Manager boutique gift shop	Working in McDonalds and local fire brigade
Ben	K - 12	Farm Manager	Completed six units through OLA then transferred to BAG through UNE which he studied while working as farm hand

**(ii) financial costs**

All costs involved in educating our own children are born by the parents. In recent years the Back to School Allowance has been provided for registered homeschoolers, but this is also given to school children and comes nowhere near covering the total costs involved.

No government funding is given to the parents to help with the cost of teaching our children, even though we must be saving the government thousands of dollars every year. No tax concessions are afforded parents who homeschool their children. So what does happen to the money allocated to our children for their education?

The only cost to government is that associated with the running Office of the Board of Studies and the biannual visit of the Authorised Person– but presumably this is considerably lower than the offices of the Education Department.

A serious and unjust loss of income occurs when the child turns 16 and FTB is removed. School children's parents do not have this done to them.

Another cost is the income lost due to the commitment to educate our own children – most homeschoolers making the sacrifice to live on a single income.

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**(iii) demographics and motivation of parents to home school their children,**

We initially lived in suburban Sydney when we started homeschooling. After three years of this, we moved to 50 acres in the country so as to enable an educational, healthy, family lifestyle.

Our motivation to homeschool came from two driving forces: the desire to give an education in harmony with our beliefs and the opportunity to work at each child's level in each subject, accelerating or breaking down as appropriate to enable more comprehensive learning.

**(iv) extent of and reasons for unregistered home schoolers,**

There are many families who are afraid to register because they feel they will not "pass inspection". Some families believe it is not the state's business to give them approval to teach their own children. Other's fear increased requirements being placed on them by government officials. There would probably be at least as many unregistered as registered homeschoolers in NSW.

When the Education Reform Act of 1990 first made homeschooling a legal option, many families who were already homeschooling did not register fearing the authorities were trying to ferret them out so they could later clamp down on them. The numbers increased in registering as this did not occur and as people found out about homeschooling.

When the guidelines became mandatory another wave of homeschoolers went underground, especially those who feared further restrictions especially after attempts at negotiation failed.

Once again when the NSW syllabus was mandated as the minimum curriculum instead of the previous curriculum guidelines, those who realized what was happening went underground and have stayed there. Unfortunately, most people did not realize the change until the 2012 when Authorised Persons began insisting on linking learning to NSW syllabus outcomes and other school-like requirements.

The latest reaction to the Information Pack has caused another exodus of registered homeschoolers and a serious decline in those who would have registered.

**(v) characteristics and educational needs of home schooled children,**

Homeschooled children are, like their school counterparts, a mixed bag. Some are very bright academically, some are not. Some are creative, some are not. Some have special needs. Some are hands on learners, some auditory. Some need structure, some thrive in a less formal setting.

Parents assess each child, learn their most productive learning style, and try to implement a program which meets the needs of the child, ensures progress in their education and is attainable within the family setting. This takes time and trial and error but most children progress in most areas most years. But because parents are, by and large, in for the long haul, any lack one term or year can be made up another.

Parents who have children with special needs are able to access information, support and ideas through the internet, their own research and networking as well as through medical and allied health professionals like occupational therapists, speech therapists, physiotherapists etc... Often such parents use dance, music etc... in ways that would be impossible in a classroom setting.

**(vi) comparison of home schooling to school education including distance education,**

Each family, and even within families, the method of homeschooling varies. Some families have a school at home approach with desks and set timetables. Some do some subjects individually, and some together. Others use the child's interest to develop a unit-study type approach either for that student or for the whole family, at appropriate levels. Some again let the child follow their own interests and schedules but allowing exposure to a great range of educational opportunities.

Some families entirely source learning materials themselves. Some use textbooks or packaged curricula. Many families use the internet extensively.

Opportunities to use outside the home resources are frequently used. Teachers in specific areas like woodwork, music, and art, tutors, sports coaches etc... are all used to a greater or lesser extent. Opportunities for community group work settings in specific areas like Science are more often used. Also, one-off opportunities for other educational pursuits are often made use of for example the recent bicentenary of the crossing of the Blue Mountains. It is much easier to organize an excursion for a family than in a school setting.

More often group work is across the ages to facilitate the program than in a school where similar age and stage children are taught together. So, the strategies employed in group work in schools to help slower students like scaffolding and brain storming occur naturally in a family to facilitate learning across the ages.

Unlike school, students can move through their schoolwork at their own pace and so can take longer or shorter times than their counterparts in school.

Time is not spent on classroom management, roll call, announcements etc... and one-on-one or small group instruction is more efficient – more like a tutoring situation.

Our older children have all completed distance education study and have coped without any problem because, by high school, they are often able to time manage and work independently very effectively.

Unfortunately as registered homeschoolers, even if we were prepared to pay for the privilege, none of our students is entitled to using the school distance education program. This is not accommodating a quality education since our children are denied access to educational opportunities that children in school can avail. We cannot afford to pay private tutors for all enrichment and some of the learning programs.

**(c) regulatory framework for home schooling including:**

**(i) current registration processes and ways of reducing the number of unregistered home schoolers,**

The Education Reform Act 1990 first allowed “legal” homeschooling in NSW. With this we began homeschooling in 1991. This is our 24<sup>th</sup> year of homeschooling. When we first began, the requirements placed on us by the government were minimal. We were given minimum curriculum guidelines for each of the subjects we were required to teach and were visited by an Authorised Person (in those days usually a Board Inspector) who assessed what we proposed or were doing. We were free to develop our own programs, curricula, times and places where we provided education. We were free to teach above or below the child’s “expected” stage by age.

Homeschoolers were told that their learning programs were to be developed which *may (but need not) be taught in accordance with a syllabus developed or endorsed by the Office of the Board of Studies and approved by the Minister.* (quoted from the original Education Reform Act 1990)

Please see the appendix for the minimum curriculum guidelines originally used.

Later, the Board of Studies tried to make the minimum curriculum guidelines mandatory, but they failed since they were shown to have not consulted with homeschoolers before instituting these changes.

Over the years more and more paperwork requirements have crept in – even those we were assured would never happen. For example, in 2004 a Board of Studies Creative and Practical Arts Inspector and Authorised Person, held a series of



meetings around NSW to tell us about the Outcomes which were being introduced in schools and their effect on us. He assured us that this is what the inspectors would use to assess our programs as complying with the NSW syllabus and that we would **never** be required to use Outcomes. (After these meetings the minimum curriculum guidelines became mandatory instead of suggested since they could now tick the box of consulting).

In 2011, the Information Pack required us to use the NSW syllabus, by simply changing the "minimum curriculum" to being the NSW syllabus.

However, the Information Pack in 2013 now makes using NSW syllabus Outcomes mandatory. So, instead of determining the best possible education for our children and spending time researching and implementing that, we now have to become very familiar with the NSW syllabus and its Outcomes and waste time adjusting the reporting of our programs to these changes to no educational benefit for our children.

Such changes have increased homeschoolers not registering and has also stopped families from using homeschooling as their educational choice.

The paperwork now involved does not help provide a better education for our children and takes away our time spent actually educating them. For example, preparing for my last registration consumed more than 200 hours of useless paperwork. In studies in the US, the results of homeschoolers on standardized tests have been compared and have found no difference between those states with strict regulations and those with minimal regulations. So, empirically what is the point of increased regulation?

Parents spend time assessing where their children are at with each subject and assessing where they need to go and researching and planning how to get there. This is FAR more important than making sure our programs fit with the current NSW curriculum.

Since the Federal Government is enquiring into the National Curriculum, the NSW syllabus could all change anyhow. Parents need to be free to make the educational decisions they can see is best for their children today and in the foreseeable future. Government has a responsibility to ensure all children are adequately prepared to fulfill a useful place in our contemporary society. Reading, writing, Maths and a basic civil awareness is the basis of that responsibility. Listing subjects that should be taught is reasonable. Expecting parents to be blown around with every wind of educational theorist's models is unnecessary to provide a quality education.

So, if the government really wants less unregistered homeschoolers, the answer seems obvious. Do not take on a regulatory role but a supportive role. Make registration easy. Help parents to do the best job they can. Allow access to resources that schools have like TVET courses, and distance education. Have a separate homeschoolers' website not in amongst things that only pertain to schools. Put on it helpful links, articles, resources.

If individual families find homeschooling doesn't work for them, they can easily cross back into the state system after giving it a try. Assume the best in most parents.

**(ii) training, qualifications and experience of authorised persons,**

Initially most APs were Board Inspectors. Many of these have said that prior to 1991 they were instructed to “set those parents straight” who wanted to homeschool their children by finding fault with what they were doing and requiring them to go to school or have legal action against them. (From a retired inspector)

Attitudes did change slowly after this as the APs realized many parents were doing a good job of educating their children and the minimal requirements of the BoS allowed families to develop appropriate programs. Initially facilities’ suitability for learning was assessed such as did the toilet flush and were the windows of a sufficient size to allow ventilation and light – but these practices were quickly dropped.

The recent APs with whom I have been associated have mostly been very encouraging. Our most **helpful** Authorised Person was one who noted resources and activities that other families were using and spread the word around. He also suggested approaches to teaching when a child was struggling. Unfortunately his contract was not renewed because his computer literacy was not deemed sufficient.

There have been a couple of exceptions where APs have made unreasonable requirements on families. For example, in one local family the father is a senior Maths teacher at a local high school but the AP said that she did not believe that they could deliver a senior Maths program (the child was 15 and so “younger” than the age expected for the 2 unit Maths that she was studying) and the family had to be inspected again in 6 months rather than being granted the 2 years’ registration that they normally received, and which all the other children received.

Previously, if APs in these settings have identified weaknesses in a family's delivery of education e.g. not enough Australian literature, they have alerted us to this. This has been helpful to provide a balanced education for our children. However no-one I know was ever given a short registration period for this lack prior to 2011. It was just highlighted and checked up on in the next visit.

Really is there a need for so many visits anyhow? Initially it may be useful to have someone come and check you are set up and give you suggestions for improvements. Then a later visit, maybe a year or two later, could occur to see how things were going and to offer any advice on actually educating the children at hand rather than on complying with the state's syllabus. Once a family is on a roll with homeschooling and doing it successfully, why not let them just notify that they were continuing and leave them to it?

Authorised Persons need to be people who can see and think outside the box. They only need guidelines, like the original Education Reform Act specified, so they can get a feel for the education being delivered. They need to understand that much of the classroom management and reporting and paperwork that goes on in schools is superfluous in a family setting. The goal is to set children up with the tools to be lifelong learners and with the knowledge they will need to fulfill an adult role in contemporary Australian society. The pedagogy of homeschooling should be left to the parents to determine. No-one loves the children more than their parents. No-one wants the best for their children more than their parents. Let them find their feet and get on with it. There is more than one way to educate a child.

**(iii) adherence to delivery of the New South Wales Syllabuses,**

Syllabuses come and go with the whims of political parties, political correctness and perceived deficiencies in previous systems. The initial requirement that homeschoolers may develop programs which fulfilled minimum curriculum guidelines was well and truly sufficient. This allowed the government to ensure that future adult citizens can take their places in contemporary Australian society and that each child was being educated. However, the requirement that homeschoolers must follow the NSW syllabus is unnecessary and unhelpful.

Most homeschoolers inadvertently adhere to most of the NSW syllabus over time. Parents tend to be teaching "for the long haul" and so the procedure by which competence in numeracy and literacy is achieved, learning about local and international events now and in the past and their significance, being exposed to and growing in ability in the arts, as well as growing in understanding and use of Science and Technology are all part of the overall program. However, the emphasis placed on each aspect may vary according to a system of priorities other than the NSW syllabus.

When [redacted] went around to explain to homeschooling parents the effects of the introduction of syllabus outcomes, he said that we would **never** be required to use these ourselves. We could if we liked, but were not bound to. He said that these outcomes were what the inspectors would use to assess how our children were going in their education. Could they see a progression in their learning and ability?

**(iv) potential benefits or impediments to children's safety, welfare and wellbeing,**

Many parents have removed their children from local schools because of bullying.

Many others have children who had specific needs which could not be met with them away for most of the day or in a school setting.

The local society is well and truly able to report any suspected abuse, neglect or serious issues. Most homeschoolers maintain an active presence in society and can readily be seen. And we all have neighbours.

It is the [primarily]<sup>1</sup> the domain of Family and Community Services to oversee child protection – not the Board of Studies and not the Education Department, just as it is the role of the local council to ensure homes are safe to live in (adequate lighting and flushing toilets). These areas are not the domain of the Board of Studies.

Many children are safer in the family home than at school where they were bullied.

Children who have been through trauma often need special nurturing to overcome the adverse situations they have experienced.

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<sup>1</sup> Select Committee on Home Schooling, public hearing transcript 5 September 2014, pp 49-50 and Answers to questions on notice, Mrs Michele Vieira, p1.

**(vi) Appropriateness of the current regulatory regime and ways in which it could be improved,**

Insisting that homeschoolers use and follow the NSW syllabus is excessive and unnecessary. It will not necessarily meet the educational needs of the child or help the smooth running of the family in seeking to educate their own children.

The Education Act states that parents are the primary educators of their children.

Parents can choose to use government or private schools to fulfill this duty or they can educate their own children themselves. Parents should be free to develop their own programs to meet the needs of their own children, which works for their own family situation and that advances their children's education.

While schools need a lot of paperwork to prove to parents and the state that they are actually doing what they were established to do, the same is not true for homeschooling parents. We know the strengths and weaknesses of our children and our programs. We are the ones responsible for educating our children and we take this seriously. We aim to improve our performance every year.

Really, a parent should only have to indicate that they are taking responsibility for educating their own children and that they will adhere to minimum curriculum guidelines over time in developing programs of study. If there is any need for more checking up than this, it should be in extreme cases where educational neglect is suspected.

While not having formal qualifications to teach in a school, homeschooling parents make enormous efforts to educate themselves, to find and provide appropriate resources, to present information in an appropriate and effective manner, to join with other homeschoolers or other groups in the local community to expand educational opportunities and to employ tutors if necessary to help in a specific area. All of this without funding, tax benefits or tertiary teaching qualifications.

Therefore I recommend that a return to the original situation of developing your own program in each of the Key Learning Areas as identified in the original Education Reform Act (1990) which *may (but need not) be taught in accordance with a syllabus developed or endorsed by the Office of the Board of Studies and approved by the Minister.* (quoted from the original Education Reform Act 1990). These guidelines are a good starting point for rookies and are sufficient for the government to fulfill its responsibility.



**(d) support issues for home schooling families and barriers to accessing support,**

Most homeschoolers are very good at networking – it's how we survive. For isolated homeschoolers, APs have been very good at making suggestions for contact. The internet has decreased isolation for many families and increased networking opportunities. New homeschoolers need support until they find their feet and fellow homeschoolers are the most logical port of call.

The educational support from officials which I feel would be most beneficial to homeschoolers would be in the form of access to such things as: distance education high school subjects; Open High School for languages; TVET courses for students wanting to pursue a trade; HSC subjects for those wanting this; and school and regional sports carnivals for those wishing to use these.

Financial support – registered homeschooling parents should still be able to receive FTB once their child turns 16 until they complete their schooling. Parents with children at school do – but homeschoolers don't qualify on a loophole – because the course of study needs to be aiming towards and being able to be accredited towards the HSC in NSW. Apart from a small range of subjects available by self-tuition, homeschoolers are not eligible to sit for the HSC or for its award. However our students are still full-time students. This is unjust.

Tax deductions should be available to homeschooling families for the cost they incur in educating their children. We receive no funding to do this and the government supports financially children in schools.

Of course if the \$10,000 per pupil a year (or whatever it is) that is allocated to school students were given to homeschoolers, we could be well-resourced like a school too and have “qualified” teachers for our children in those areas in which we struggle. But no doubt this would come at a high price – even more paperwork and compliance with more detailed curriculum requirements!

Access to universities is well established with many alternative pathways. Access to TVET or even many TAFE courses is not so straight forward. Support to allow our children follow their chosen career path would be wonderful.

**(e) representation of home schoolers within Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BoSTES),**

Of course the BoSTES, if that is to continue being the body overseeing homeschooling in NSW, should have some homeschoolers on their board.

But it would be better if a new body was set up to oversee homeschooling which was not so tied to the school model. One which could make appropriate individual assessments based on accurate knowledge of how homeschooling works and the inherent benefits and weaknesses.

This does not mean that children will suffer from not being required to do the same as children in school. It will mean an appreciation of different approaches to education. Already there are exceptions made from the requirement to comply with the NSW syllabus e.g. Steiner schools, Montessori schools and those using the International Baccalaureate. Why not allow homeschoolers the same flexibility. There are many APs currently or previously employed who could fulfill this duty.

and

**(f) any other related matter.**

I heard Dr John Kaye speak on the radio today about the concern the government has that Welfare recipients use the façade of saying they homeschool to continue to receive government benefits and the need to ensure that all children receive a quality education.

I can understand where he is coming from. When our daughter attended the local TAFE to complete the Certificate III in Children's Services, anyone on welfare was able to do any course free. Consequently, many people enrolled in courses to tick the box so they still received welfare. Each year they chose a new one. Childcare was available at TAFE. Unfortunately these students, who were not really interested in the course, made life hell for the teachers. They had competitions to see who could make the teachers cry and leave the class first. They used physical and verbal abuse to intimidate students who wanted to learn. Our daughter went to work and completed her Diploma while working at her own expense rather than continue learning in such difficult circumstances.

Our AP also stated that not all homeschoolers are like those I know and that a wave have come along who really don't intend homeschooling their children. Of course, this is not acceptable.

However, why make life more difficult for those of us who are doing a good job (or are attempting to)? An experienced AP can tell if someone is genuine or just getting

their feet. Often new people need time to get their heads around all that is required of them, just as first year out teachers find in schools.

It would be good if the government were truly concerned about the quality of education received by homeschoolers if some local research was performed. Many studies would need to be done to provide a balanced report. Most research currently available is in the US and it is in favour of the education received in homes by homeschooling parents.

## APPENDIX

### **From the original Education Reform Act (1990)**

#### **Division 1—Primary education**

#### **Key learning areas for primary education**

7. For the purposes of this Act, each of the following is a key learning area for primary education:

- English; - Mathematics; - Science and Technology; - Human Society and its Environment; - Creative and Practical Arts; - Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

### **Minimum Curriculum**

#### **Minimum Curriculum for Primary Education**

The curriculum for primary school children during Kindergarten to year 6 must meet the following requirements from the Education Reform Act 1990 Part 3 Section 8 no.

1

- (a) courses of study in each of the 6 key learning areas for primary education are to be provided for each child during each year;
- (b) courses of study relating to Australia are to be included in the key learning area of Human Society and its Environment;
- (c) courses of study in both art and music are to be included in the key learning area of Creative and Practical Arts;
- (d) courses of study in a key learning area are to be appropriate for the children concerned, having regard to their level of achievement and needs;
- (e) courses of study in a key learning area are to be provided in accordance with

any relevant guidelines developed by the Office of the Board of Studies and approved by the Minister;

- (f) courses of study in a key learning area may (but need not) be taught in accordance with a syllabus developed or endorsed by the Office of the Board of Studies and approved by the Minister.

(2) The requirements of this section constitute the minimum curriculum for schools providing primary education

9. For the purposes of this Act, each of the following is a key learning area for secondary education:

English;

Mathematics;

Science;

Human Society and its Environment;

Languages other than English; Technological and Applied Studies;

Creative Arts;

Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

**Minimum curriculum for secondary education (Years 7 to 10)**

10. (1) The curriculum for secondary school children during Year 7 to Year 10 (other than for candidates for the School Certificate) must meet the following requirements:

courses of study in 6 out of the 8 key learning areas for secondary education are to be provided for each child;

courses of study in the key learning areas of English, Mathematics, Science and Human Society and its Environment are to be provided during each Year, but the courses of study in the other key learning areas need not be provided during each Year;

courses of study in a key learning area are to be appropriate for the children concerned having regard to their level of achievement and needs;

courses of study in a key learning area are to be provided in accordance with any relevant guidelines developed by the Board and approved by the Minister;

courses of study in a key learning area may (but need not) be taught in accordance with a syllabus developed or endorsed by the Board and approved by the Minister.

The requirements of this section constitute the minimum curriculum for schools providing secondary education for children during Year 7 to Year 10 who are not candidates for the School Certificate. *Education Reform Act 1990*

**This information was still published by the Board of Studies in their Guidelines for Registration in 1998.**

**However, in the current version it reads:**

(g) courses of study in a key learning area **are to be based on, and taught in accordance with, a syllabus developed or endorsed by the Board and approved by the Minister.** (emphasis mine)

This change in requirement is unnecessary for homeschoolers to provide a quality education. Check the research!