

Submission
No 60

INQUIRY INTO HOME SCHOOLING

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 27/07/2014

Partially Confidential

Position: Head Coach / Owner

1) How long have you / your organisation been working with the Home Educating community?

I have been working with several children from the Home Educating community for around 12 months now.

2) What kinds of activities have you / your organisation been involved in with the Home Educating community?

I am a Sports Coach and I have been responsible for arranging sports activities for the children on a regular basis once or twice a week for 12 months. I have become good friends with the kids and parents and got to know each of these families very well. We all live locally in Manly and the surrounding Northern Beaches area so we see each other quite often.

3) What comments would you make about Home Educated kids in your workshops/classes? (Behaviour, learning capabilities, learning styles etc)

In my opinion, the behaviour of the Home Educated kids is exactly how it should be at their age. They are energetic and curious and this is how children are supposed to be. I really do not see a huge difference between Home Educated children and children educated in the public school system. The only discernable difference I have noticed over the last 12 months is the home schooled kids sometimes have a different learning style to the public school kids. A few of them require a little more time to discuss WHY we are doing an activity before we begin but after I have explained they are happy to start.

I believe this stems from their natural curiosity and desire to think things through and understand things for themselves. Although this can often take a little longer to explain before we start a new group activity, I believe the ability to think things through is a highly useful skill. This ability to think for themselves will only assist them in their future academic life and their natural curiosity and inquisitiveness about the world should be fostered and encouraged as much as possible.

The ability to think for yourself and make your own decisions is a great strength to have, especially in a technological world that is changing at an ever increasing rate. I believe the ability to think for yourself will become a skill that is extremely useful and in very high demand when these kids start looking for a career in 10 to 20 years time. The ability to work things out in your head without a calculator or an iPhone/smartphone is a rare skill these days but the ability to make up your own mind and form your own opinion and ideas is even rarer!

Indeed, in my own personal experience, there were many technology classes that I took part in at primary school in the 1980s that in hindsight were really not very useful for my future working life. Mainly because the technology available in the 1980s has now become completely obsolete.

For example, the ability to program in BASIC on a BBC Micro Computer is a skill that I have never had to re-use. I was educated in the UK so I'm not sure if these old machines were available in Australia but the hours spent learning an archaic programming language on a computer system that is now defunct could potentially have been much better spent building skills in other areas.

Of course it would have been impossible for my primary school teachers to provide us with more useful and applicable knowledge into how to code an iPhone or create a Website in AJAX because this technology had not been invented.

My point is that the ability to think for yourself is a fantastic skill for any child to develop. Particularly because the jobs in which these kids will be employed have not been invented yet and the world they will inherit will be vastly different from the world we live in today.

Home Educated kids appear far more adept at thinking for themselves and I believe this will be a huge advantage later in their lives.

4) How do you find the interaction amongst Home Educated kids?

The Home Educated kids interact with each other well and are no different to any other group of children.

5) How do you find the interaction of Home Educated kids with yourself (and / or your instructors)

They are friendly, polite and generally good fun to be around.

6) Are there any further comments you'd like to make about your experience with the Home Educating community?

I have no reservations in supporting the Home Education Community and their work with kids. I respect the work they do and I would have no hesitation in home schooling my own children one day or sending them to an independent home school.

Kind regards,