

Submission
No 75

INQUIRY INTO HOME SCHOOLING

Name: Ms Katie Nagy

Date received: 7/08/2014

Partially Confidential

Thursday 7th August 2014

The Director

Select Committee on Home Schooling

Parliament House

Macquarie Street

Sydney, NSW, 2000

(email:- homeschooling@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Re: Legislative Assembly Select Committee Inquiry into Home Schooling

Dear Director,

I am writing to you in regards to the Inquiry into Home Schooling. I have only just started homeschooling my two daughters; my oldest is aged 10 (in Year 5) and my youngest is aged 7 (in Year 1) at the start of this present year. Prior to 2014 my daughters both attended a private Anglican College, and although it was extremely hard financially we wanted the very best for our daughters and took their education very seriously, being involved in every step of the way through their learning & school experience. However we had a few issues along the way with the school & teachers over the past 6 years and would work really hard in sorting out these issues so our daughters would continue to receive a good education and have a happy, safe & healthy school experience.

Last year my youngest daughter whilst in Kindergarten was continuously bullied throughout the whole year from a number of girls in her class. This was on going and although we tried every attempt to solve this issue, the bullying continued and nothing was done about it. My daughter [redacted] a very happy bubbly full of life little girl, she wouldn't hurt a fly, was kind sweet & caring to everyone she came across. Due to this continual bullying [redacted] went into a shell, she was no longer happy & bubbly, she dreaded every single day going to school and would cry most mornings and then again when I picked her up telling me of the events that took place during the day. And this also affected other areas of her life outside of school, when she would fall about constantly over the littlest thing.

After delving deep inside, constant family conversation & discussions about homeschooling & a final breakdown of my daughter pleading to me at the age of 6; 'What is wrong with me?' because she felt it was her fault she was bullied. We made the hard decision of applying to the BOS for the registration of homeschooling. We went through the registration process & we got approved to homeschool our daughters.

I have been homeschooling my daughters now for the past 7 months. As mentioned before I believe that it is extremely important for my daughters to receive the very best education possible so that they have the best opportunities in life & to be in the happiest, safest & healthiest environment whilst receiving that education. My husband, my oldest daughter _____ my youngest daughter _____ & myself feel extremely strongly & believe with all our being that they are indeed receiving both the best education possible, to receive the best opportunity in life & in the best environment by being homeschooled.

Our homeschooling experience is following the BOS NSW syllabus and making sure both my daughters achieve the necessary outcomes needed for each of their stages of learning, we achieve this through a variety of resources, through the BOS website & resources, educational learning websites, additional material of reading level books, numerous textbooks, library resources, videos, you tube, research on the internet and books. We carry out experiments based on our topics learnt in Science, we are creative & imaginative through art, music (singing & instruments), dancing and role playing. My daughters have participated in social events with other peers through their dancing & singing lessons, eisteddfods, swimming lessons and also in homeschooling gymnastics and we want to participate in more activities, incursions & workshops through the Sydney Home Educational Network. At the end of every term & completion of each topic covered my daughters sit for tests of that topic to see their progress & understanding of the topic we've learnt about before moving on for the next term. And we also have our family excursion at the end of the term to experience in real life what we have just learnt about; for example:- HSIE topics for Year 1 – Term 1:- Workers in the Community, we visited the local Fire Station; & Term 2:- Transport, we visited the Transport Exhibit at The Powerhouse Museum & went on the Thirlmere Express to the Trainworks Museum. HSIE topics for Year 5 – Term 1:- Gold, we visited Bathurst Goldfields; & for Term 2:- Global Environments (Rainforests), we visited Minnamurra Rainforest. SCIENCE topics for Year 1 – Term 1:- Living Things, we went to Dubbo Zoo; & Term 2:- Hot & Cold, we visited The Powerhouse Museum and saw the 'Tritton' Show. SCIENCE topics for Year 5 – Term 1:- Out of Space, we visited The Deep Space Centre in Tidbinbilla; & Term 2:- Switched On, we watched the 'Zapped show' at the Powerhouse Museum. And I am in the process now planning our next excursions for the completion of Term 3.

In summary my daughters are achieving the necessary & beyond outcomes in their learning stages, they have completed & covered more information in the 2 terms we have been homeschooling than what they have previously achieved in a whole year when they were at school. My daughters love learning and wake up every day excited to start school and see what we will be doing for the day's work. We are all thoroughly enjoying sharing this amazing learning experience together. Most importantly within the first term of us starting homeschooling my youngest daughter _____ has resumed to her normally happy bubbly & outgoing self, she has regained her confidence and self-esteem while at the same time loving every single minute of learning through practical, theoretical and personal experiences. This gives me the utmost satisfaction in knowing that I have done the right thing for my daughters in choosing to homeschool them both, giving them the best quality education & experiences at home & out in the real world, while at the same time giving them stability, security & above all happiness.

I am not asking for much in my letter, I would like that the homeschooling community & students be offered every opportunity to gain & have access to resources and materials for learning, have access to necessary support if & when required, as well as have the same open choices to further education and career opportunities for the future as like the students attending schools have, and if at all possible some financial help would also be appreciated. But above all of these needs I believe the most important should be that a parent be allowed to have that choice of being able to make the decision of homeschooling or attending school for an option for their own child and based on their own personal circumstances & situations. I know that from my personal experiences & from what my daughter has gone through, having changed to homeschooling this has benefited my daughters in every single way, their learning experience, their enjoyment of learning & most importantly their happiness & well-being. Please don't take this choice away from parents, please allow homeschooling to be an option for every single parent who needs this for their child/ren, like we do.

Thank you for your time in reading my letter & I truly hope & pray that you will listen to my pleads & understand my families circumstances & situation and the importance of homeschooling to my whole entire family.

Yours sincerely

Katie Nagy