

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee](#)
Subject: Concerns Regarding Proposed Changes to Homeschooling Legislation
Date: Monday, 11 March 2024 5:06:13 PM

Dear Committee Members,

As a homeschooling working parent of children with disabilities, I am deeply disappointed by the proposed changes to homeschooling legislation. For many children with disabilities and neurodivergences, homeschooling is not just a choice but a necessity—an opportunity to create an environment where they can thrive at their own pace and in their own unique way.

I want to be very clear. What I say here is in no way a reflection of the teachers. The teachers that have taught, included and championed my children when we were enrolled in mainstream education have been stellar. The teachers and staff who have worked directly with my children have our utmost gratitude for their professionalism, expertise, and support.

School isn't the same for everyone though. Our little girl didn't want to go to school. And every single day we took her anyway. School is one of the most embedded aspects of society. It permeates books, and movies, and music, and office chat. It is completely intertwined with the identity of being a parent. It was not a decision we took lightly to turn away from that.

During every school holiday we watched our daughter settle into home life and her spark would return. She played with her brother. She made up elaborate games, creating animal shelters with magnetic tiles and insisted we adopt an animal after writing up their bio. She read books and painted pictures with her Mumma, and she filled our home with her giggles and endless stories (did I mention endless).

As the school holidays ended, she withdrew. If we mentioned the word 'school' she would lose all verbal communication. She was met at the front gate every morning by a safe ally that we had cultivated and still she begged us to take her home. On the drive to her first day of Year 3 she tried to open the car door and jump out of the moving car.

I think it's important that you ask yourself if the situation I have described in this letter is a unique one. Children with disabilities often face significant challenges in traditional school settings, where rigid structures and standardized approaches may not accommodate their diverse needs. Homeschooling provides a lifeline for these children, offering the flexibility and personalized support they require to learn and grow in a safe and nurturing environment.

The proposed changes to legislation risk further marginalizing children with disabilities by imposing rigid curriculum requirements that may not be suitable or feasible for them. Rather than serving as a guide for excellence, the national curriculum operates as a minimum standard document designed for teachers who undergo years of training to interpret and implement it effectively. I firmly believe that I can provide a high-quality education for my children without being shackled by its restrictive, limiting, and shallow constraints. I aspire for more—more creativity, more depth, more relevance, and more individualization tailored to the unique strengths and interests of each of my children.

I urge you to consider the voices of homeschooling families and to respect our autonomy in educating our children. Let us continue to provide them with an education

that values their unique strengths, interests, and talents.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Kellyanne Powney

