

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

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The Australian Curriculum is an incredibly complex document that has been tailored to educate children in schools. Many schools employ curriculum specialists to interpret and implement this document. As a homeschooler, we don't have access to this level of expertise. In order to implement this, we would need to base our learning off over-simplified textbooks, rush through topics and stop the practical, hands-on nature of our learning. In a 1:1 setting, this is not a high-quality education. As an active participant in the homeschool community, we participate regularly in multiage learning co-ops and group activities. We regularly capitalise on instruction and lessons from other parents, community members and experts in their fields. Sometimes, this sparks interests and passions within our children and we are able to go away and deeply explore an area of interest. Enforcing the Australian Curriculum will severely limit this opportunistic learning and stifle the ability for us to form multi-age groups as the topics they will be investigating would be dictated according to their year level. As a parent of a neurodivergent child, we have spent hundreds of hours consulting with numerous specialists and allied health experts to determine how to best educate our child. We have liaised tirelessly with his/her former school to try to implement these recommendations. Unfortunately, what my child required was just not able to be achieved by their school. My child learns best with a project-led learning style. This enables him/her/them to become deeply immersed in an area of interest and this will often cross at least 5 key learning areas. Adhering to the Australian Curriculum would render this impossible for my child, and to this date, has been the only learning style that he/she/they have engaged in. Researching and facilitating home education takes a lot of time and energy, but we have decided to follow this path with our child because they just don't respond to the Australian Curriculum. As a parent, it would be substantially easier to just enroll my child into distance education but we have already discovered that this method of learning would be detrimental to my child and our family. Drawing on our experience with traditional schooling and learning methods, we would be unable to successfully follow the Australian Curriculum. As a homeschooling family, we have tried using the Australian Curriculum to educate our child, both at school and at home. It just doesn't work for our child. To this date, we have been fortunate to have the flexibility to choose how we provide a high-quality education for our child, and our once struggling and disengaged child is now thriving. According to recent research collected by the Home Education Unit (2022), two of three home educating families have chosen to do so because of an underlying disability or health issue. For these children working the Australian Curriculum is not providing them a high-quality education or meeting their immediate needs. They have chosen this avenue because of the flexibility it affords. This enables families to educate and care for their children in a manner that suits their learning style. Most of these students have left mainstream schooling because they could not learn in a traditional learning style.