

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 282
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Subject: Advocating for Individualised Education in Homeschooling

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed changes to homeschooling legislation, particularly the requirement to follow a specific curriculum. As someone deeply committed to my child's education, I believe that these changes would undermine the very reasons why many families, including mine, have chosen to home educate their children. Our collective experience highlights that personalised programs not only facilitate exceptionally high-quality education, but also foster levels of engagement and achievement that transcend the limitations of institutional curricula.

The essence of homeschooling lies in the opportunity it provides for personalised education that honours the child's unique interests, strengths, needs, and learning styles. By crafting the curriculum to suit the child, we can ignite a passion for learning, foster intellectual curiosity, encourage critical thinking, and nurture individual talents. Individualised education cultivates a holistic approach to learning, where real-world experiences, interdisciplinary studies, and personalised projects play integral roles in the educational process. This dynamic approach not only fosters academic excellence but also equips our children with the skills and competencies necessary to thrive in an ever-evolving world. Furthermore, the constraints of a one-size-fits-all approach do not account for learner diversity, meaning that many outliers are left behind and struggle to keep pace, or are held back and prevented from reaching their full potential. Tailoring learning to the individual child provides them with the high quality education that they deserve, one that sets them up to thrive.

As a homeschooling parent, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative impact of this approach. My child learns best with a topic-led learning style where he'll become deeply immersed in an area of interest that will often cross multiple learning areas. Rather than merely memorising facts and figures, I support him in exploring the topic in ways that resonate with him personally – ways that are memorable, and tangible, and inspire more curiosity. A flexible curriculum allows me to follow my son's interests, use his strengths to provide a framework for his learning, and nurture his love of learning, all while meeting his unique sensory needs and preparing him for the complexities of the real world. And he is thriving, both academically and within himself! Adhering to the Australian Curriculum would render this impossible for my child. It would both stifle his passion for learning and hinder his ability to pursue education in a way that best suits his needs.

I implore the committee to recognise the value and efficacy of individualised curriculums in home education. In a landscape where alternative educational pathways are readily available, we should embrace the richness of educational diversity and empower parents to choose the educational approach that best serves the needs of their unique children. By understanding the personalised educational approaches within the homeschooling community, we can work together to create policies that support children's individual learning needs and ensure that every child has the opportunity to succeed.

Thank you for considering my perspective.

Sincerely,
Emma Codd