Should home schooling be more closely monitored?

Are you teaching your children at home?

An attempt to find out how many children are educated at home found that the number in England could range between 7,400 and 34,400.

The results, from a study commissioned by the Department of Education and Skills, are inconclusive partly because there is no obligation for families to tell their local authorities that they are home educating.

Parents said bullying and inadequate local education kept their children away from school.

What are your experiences of home schooling and reasons for doing so? Are you worried about the lack of information on children’s education? Send us your views.

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COMMENTS

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In general I don't think home-schooling is best, just as I don't believe children staying at home exclusively with their mothers until they start school is best. When I gave birth to my daughter nobody gave me a teacher training degree, nobody taught me anything about child development. I don't agree that love is all a child needs - if not, what is the problem?

Jennifer, Chicago, US

Recommended by 5 people

Alert a Moderator

I always think parents who choose home education are

Alert a Moderator

Do home-educated children do worse in their exams?

If not, what is the problem?

JoJo Kavanagh, eSSEX

Recommended by 16 people

Alert a Moderator
scared to let there children out of there sight. Kids need to integrate with other kids. How can you possibly teach drama and PE to one child? Cut the umbilical cord for heavens sake and let your kids have a normal school life.

[mollymo37], Rochdale, United Kingdom

Recommended by 4 people

If I was bright enough to educate my children at home then I would do it. But saying that, schools have so many 'teaching assistants' now that they may as well be educated at home even it the parent isn't so academically bright. I'm sure there are many good teaching assistants, unfortunately there are as many who can't string a sentence together, and while local councils say this isn't so, believe me I a know a few, and I wouldn't let them train my parrot!

fancis thomas, glamorgan

Recommended by 9 people

Like most problems today it comes down to remembering that for all the good parents out there, there are also bad ones. In order to ensure the children with bad parents get a fair chance in life the good ones have to suffer from having a few rules and restrictions. I have never understood why any good parent would be so against attempts by the government to make sure their child gets a good start in life, whether it's with healthy school meals or home school reporting obligations.

Jennifer, Chicago, US

Recommended by 3 people

Add: Friday, 23 February, 2007, 22:06 GMT 22:06 UK
Many hundreds of home educating parents in the UK are actually former teachers. As a teacher myself I felt uncomfortable about inflicting on children a curriculum driven by the need of government for test results. Schools and teachers have their hands tied. There is so little room now for the nurturing of individual children socially, emotionally or academically.

Education can be so much bigger, more interesting and more fun than anything today's schools can offer.

Sally Brisley, Chelmsford

Recommended by 37 people

Add: Friday, 23 February, 2007, 22:01 GMT 22:01 UK
"bullying seems a bad reason to pull your child out of school. Some things are better faced, you wont be able to pull little Johnny out of work when his boss bullies him."
By that point Johhny can deal with it himself by : Quitting, holding on untill he finds something better, reporting boss to Human resources, possibly prosecuting boss, and so on. He is not facing up to 11 more years in an environment over which he has no control or form of reliable redress

Jenn Impey, Hayes, Middlesex

Recommended by 18 people

Add: Friday, 23 February, 2007, 22:01 GMT 22:01 UK
My son is autistic and has prosopagnosia; the school environment is a nightmare for him and placing him in an inappropriate setting has led to serious mental health
problems.
There is no provision that can meet his needs and our LEA suggested that we should educate him ourselves as he wasn't entitled to anything but mainstream. He is now in a medical needs unit for just 10 hours a week. The government needs to sort out special needs before getting on its high horse about home education.

**Adele Beeson**, Leeds
Recommended by 13 people

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**Vijay K Vijayaratnam**, UK
Recommended by 10 people

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For those who are unaware of the law - if you withdraw your child from school you have to inform the head teacher (who will inform the LEA) that you are educating at home. If your child has never been to school then you do not need to inform anyone, hence the uncertainty in official figures. The LEA has a duty to check that a child is receiving appropriate and efficient education and will ask for information from parents to confirm this as and when they become aware of the child's existence.

**Dave H**, Cambridge, United Kingdom
Recommended by 8 people

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A Teacher claims that education "is a job best left to the professionals if we want young people to integrate properly into society and be well-balanced and employable." Where I live I see many school "educated" children who are far from well-balanced and employable, let alone good citizens. Since A Teacher believes in banning education that does not produce model citizens, perhaps the schools in my area should be closed. Or does A Teacher only want to ban things s/he doesn't agree with?

**Stephen Tarlton**, London, United Kingdom
Recommended by 23 people

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I was probably the last person on earth to try home schooling. But I live in a small town with terrible public schools and poor choices for private school. I chose the option of long distance learning. My daughter has a teacher, extensive curriculum, structured assignments, and online exams. Once a month, I mail a package of completed written assignments to her 'school' for grading. I am happy with this option, because I'm not doing it all by myself. I am very pleased with the results.

**Roberta**, Arizona, USA
Recommended by 7 people
Yes, it should be monitored, and paid for IN TOTAL by the parents doing the alleged educating - not me.

[Sepenere]

HEing parents do pay in full as there is no refund of that portion of our taxes allocated for education. There are no tax breaks, concessions, or discounts available to us. So we actually pay more for our children's education than those parents using state schools. Personally, I prefer it that way. I want no contribution, monetary or otherwise, from this rubbish government.

Cynthia Needham, Letchworth, United Kingdom
Recommended by 27 people

It is surprising that home schooling is not monitored at all. There are many tributes to it here, but I would like to see a thorough study to assess home-schooled children's knowledge, development, skills, etc. across a broad range of subjects and milestones, and their happiness and attainment later in life. Also what makes a good homeschooling parent. HE is a significant phenomenon which may have a large social impact.

Next, give tax credits to parents who school others' children too.

Jeremy Mason, Houston, Texas, United States
Recommended by 1 person

We HE our 5 kids & find they've kept their curiosity by having the freedom to choose what they learn. Like all young kids, they imitate their environment. So it's our responsibility to ensure that enviro. is one which includes everything we want our kids to aspire to. They are educated by life. They see us read & they want to read, etc. This ed envelopes them so that they grow into older kids who are hungry for knowledge. This is borne out in our eldest. How can this be assessed? Why should it?

Juno Charlett, Northampton, United Kingdom
Recommended by 16 people