

Press Release Wednesday 22nd July 2009

**Education Otherwise welcomes the Select Committee Inquiry
into the Badman Review of Elective Home Education**

Education Otherwise welcomes today's notification of a Select Committee Inquiry into the Badman Review of Elective Home Education.

Fiona Nicholson, Trustee of Education Otherwise said: "There are a number of questions around the rushed nature of the Review and the sweeping recommendations which are wholly disproportionate to any evidence for change put forward by Graham Badman. "

Annette Taberner from Education Otherwise Government Policy Group stated "The Government published guidelines on home education less than two years ago but the DCSF has never promoted its own guidelines to local authorities leaving it up to individuals to decide whether or not to implement government policy."¹

"At the same time, the Government has launched repeated consultations into home education and related areas, constantly moving the goalposts and making it extremely difficult for anyone to gain a clear understanding of the law and guidance on home education. To cap it all, the Government justifies further interference in this area by pointing out that many people are "confused" about the law."

Fiona Nicholson says: "In proposing massive new legal responsibilities for local authorities, it seems only sensible for the Government to pause and reflect on the nature of the recommendations in the Badman Report which will fundamentally change the relationship between the state and all children, not just children who are educated at home."

Annette Taberner observes that: "The Badman Review was launched in January² and a hasty Report was submitted to the Secretary of State at the end of May³. Ten days later, we learned that the DCSF was drafting a new law in time for the Queens Speech in November⁴. I am currently asking the Better Regulation Executive for their help in understanding how there could be a meaningful public consultation on a matter of policy which has already been announced as a piece of new legislation"

Education Otherwise hopes that the Inquiry examine the issue of disaggregation of the data relied upon by the Review Team in reaching some of its more sweeping conclusions. Home educators who have reacted in dismay to the Report have been contacting their MPs since its publication. Ann Newstead EO media spokesperson commented "We keep a record of which MPs have been contacted and it is obvious that feelings are running very high; it's a struggle to keep our records⁵ up to date".

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Notes to Editors

¹ DCSF Elective Home Education Guidelines for Local Authorities in England
<http://tinyurl.com/5tuqq4>

² DCSF Press Release "Morgan: Action to Ensure Children's Education & Welfare"
http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2009_0013

³ Review of elective home education in England
<http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=HC+610&>

⁴ Improving Schools & Safeguarding Children Bill <http://www.commonleader.gov.uk/output/Page2831.asp>

⁵ Record of MPs contacted by home educators
<http://www.freedomforchildrentogrow.org/mps.htm>

See Education Otherwise page about the Review which includes a summary of the recommendations, frequently asked questions, useful links and more information about what EO has been doing - <http://www.freedomforchildrentogrow.org/heconsult.htm>

Education Otherwise is the oldest and largest organisation that provides support and information for families whose children are being educated outside school:
<http://www.education-otherwise.org>

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