

“Parents bring up children, not Government”¹

If you think this is New Labour policy, think again

Clauses 26 and 27 of the Children, Schools and Families Bill currently in Parliament would lock home educating families into a bureaucratic system that is all about restricting educational freedom and nothing to do with ensuring children are well educated and looked after.

What is the Government proposing?

If the proposals in the Bill become law:

- **Every year, parents would have to ask permission from the Local Authority to home educate**
The Government is calling this a ‘register’, but a more accurate word would be ‘licence’. Local authorities would have the power to refuse ‘registration’ or to remove children from the ‘register’ if their parents do not cooperate with the system. ‘Registration’ would have to be renewed every year.
- **Unregistered home educated children would be ordered to attend school**
Local authorities would not be allowed to consider whether the education of unregistered children is suitable for their needs. The only consideration would be whether the child was ‘registered’ or not.
- **Parents would be required to supply an advance plan for their children’s education every year in order to remain on the ‘register’**
Local authorities would be given the power to decide whether the education provided is suitable, and whether it measures up to the plan. The power to decide what constitutes a suitable education for an individual child would be taken out of the hands of that child’s parents and given to a local council officer, who may have met the child only once.
- **Local authorities would have to reassess home educated children and parents every year**
If home educated children, or their parents, do not give consent for a child to be interviewed alone, the local authorities would not have the right to insist. But they would have the right to remove that child’s name from the ‘register’ as a punishment for this refusal to cooperate. Loving parents would be forced to override their children’s wishes in order to protect their freedom to be educated outside the school system.

Clause 26 of the Children, Schools and Families Bill gives this or any future government the power to issue guidance to local authorities about what they may demand of parents as part of this new ‘registration’, monitoring and inspection regime. MPs are being asked to approve the Bill without having sight of this guidance.

Clause 26 of the Children, Schools and Families Bill has been presented to Parliament before the results of a public consultation on the proposals have been released. Over 5000 people responded to the consultation but their views have been completely ignored in the drafting of the Bill.

There is no need to change the law regarding home education. Home educated children are at no more risk of abuse than any other group of children. Local authorities **already have powers** to take action if parents are not educating or caring for their children properly.

Please write to your MP now and demand that they vote for the removal of Clauses 26 and 27 from the Bill.

¹ <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/childrensplan/>