



Our Role in Reducing the Tax Burden

There is a question as to how much money do we save the government each year?

Despite local education authorities often stating in their literature that they wish to offer support to home educators in reality home educators in the UK receive no financial help of any kind (either directly or indirectly).

It is legally possible for local education authorities to offer such help but because they receive no budget for this they invariably refuse to offer help.

The education industry is huge. The UK government spends around £50 billion for all compulsory education in the UK. That works out at a total spending of a little over £5,000 a year per child, more if the child has a special educational need or lives in a remote rural location.

It has been estimated that there are somewhere between 50,000 home educated children in the UK (2004). So £5,000 per child would mean that home educators save the government £250million a year. This could be much more if, as many believe, SEN children are over represented in the home education community.

It also saves on training. 50,000 children would require about 2,500 extra teachers nationally. Based upon an average teaching career of around 20 years then the government would have to train an extra 125 teachers a year. That is equal to three new teacher training colleges.

Additionally there would need to be a number of new schools built. 50,000 home educated children reduces the national requirement for schools by around 75 primary schools and 35 secondary schools. Even if half of all home educated children were to be absorbed into schools currently this still represents a huge school buildings program. Since many home educated children are based in and around London this would mean a massive budget requirement

In addition to all of the above is the extra involved in paying for DfES staff.

Currently there are calls for home educators to be registered and for inspections to be tightened up. Should these things happen it seems likely that the 50,000 or so home educating families would begin to put pressure upon the government to contribute to the extra (and unnecessary) requirements that they are placing upon them.

The main reason that this has not happened to date is that home educators themselves decide how a child is to be educated, but if the government takes this right away from them and attempt to apply undue influence upon how they teach their children it would be reasonable for home educators to demand that the government contribute towards the cost.