



Matt Hupfield <mhupfield@gmail.com>

RE: Adrian (d.o.b)

Matt Hupfield <matt@hupfield.com>

27 August 2008 18:40

To: "Hindmarsh, Olaf (C&LL)" <olaf.hindmarsh@staffordshire.gov.uk>

Dear Mr Hindmarsh,

As I am sure you are aware, under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, it is the responsibility of a person with parental responsibility to ensure that a child receives an education. The LEA's duty is defined by section 437(1):

If it appears to a local education authority that a child of compulsory school age in their area is not receiving suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, they shall serve a notice in writing on the parent requiring him to satisfy them within the period specified in the notice that the child is receiving such education.

I have already supplied you with our educational philosophy, which outlines the form and aims of the education that we are providing to Adrian. The fact that you are asking for examples of work indicates that you may not have actually read it, or are in need of re-reading it. It clearly states that we do not deliver discreet lessons, rather Adrian chooses activities he wishes to pursue. We do not mark, assess or compare anything that Adrian produces as a result of these activities. For these reasons we have no worksheets, exercise books or 'examples of work' to provide you with. Even if we did have such items it would be against our beliefs and educational philosophy to provide you with them as they would belong to Adrian and not us.

I must say that I find it ironic that the same council who for the last two years were happy for me to teach 20+ students, who I did not personally know, at a time are now questioning my ability to educate on a one to one basis a child who I live with and care for.

Case law (Phillips v Brown, Divisional Court [20 June 1980, unreported]) has established that an LEA may make enquiries to establish that a suitable education is being provided. In order to meet Lord Donaldson's criteria that parents should present evidence that would, on the balance of probabilities, convince a reasonable person that a suitable education was being provided, I enclose, again, our educational philosophy, statement of provision and an updated list of recent activities and resources that lay out our approach to Adrian's education.

If, after reading our statement, you have any reason to suspect that we may not be fulfilling our duty under section 7, I would appreciate it if you would notify me of those reasons in order that I might alleviate your concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Matt Hupfield.



Ed Phil - August 2008.doc

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This is the statement of provision of education otherwise than at school for Adrian , d.o.b .

Our belief is that people learn unless they are actively stopped or socialised into not doing so. That experience has led us to approach Adrian's education in a holistic and autonomous manner. By "holistic", we mean that education is an integral part of Adrian's life rather than something that is set apart for a particular building and a particular set of age-limited contacts and activities, during limited hours. Activities that contribute to Adrian's personal maturity and skill acquisition may take place any time during the day on any of the seven days of the week and in any venue. By "autonomous", we mean that Adrian determines the activities that he pursues at any time. Although we suggest and facilitate activities, we do not deliver "lessons" that must be completed at, or within, a time set by us (unless, of course, Adrian requests such activities).

Such educational provision means that Adrian's abilities and skills cannot be categorised in terms of the gradings used in schools (he is not "in Year 9" or even "at Key Stage 3"). Just as we have certain areas in which our abilities diverge widely, despite being in the same stage of life and close in age, Adrian is very able in some areas and not in others. However, autonomous education means that he can pursue the things in which he is interested or which he has a desire to take further. The corollary is that he does not have to study things in which he has no interest or for which his current skills have not yet prepared him. He is also not subjected to constant comparison with other children, so he is freed up to achieve his own personal best in every area.

We do not consider education to be a "preparation for life". A holistic and autonomous education is pursued as part of life in a community. Skills are acquired, as they are needed, to achieve a particular objective that Adrian has set himself.

Some recent examples of activities that Adrian has undertaken include:

- Working with the local youth club to design and paint a mural on a local underpass.
- Visiting the local farm.
- Experimenting with an electronics kit he received for his birthday.
- Attending a YHA organised week of water based activities.
- Started working on the ASDAN accredited CoPE level one course.

- Spending a week with family in Devon; walking on the moors, visiting an Otter farm, working on their allotment, visiting the steam railway.
- Practicing his Literacy and Numeracy skills with a view to taking the A.L.A.N Level 2 examinations.
- Helping to plan a route and choose local sites of interest to show a family friend who was visiting.
- Creating cash flow charts to help save his pocket money for things he wants to buy or do.

This list is not, of course, exhaustive; Adrian also regularly:

- Attends groups including Scouts and Youth Club.
- Uses the computer to play games.
- Goes swimming.
- Explores the local countryside on his bike.
- Cooks for himself and the family from recipes he has looked up at the library or on the Internet.
- Visits the Library.
- Uses the computer to play games, write letters and emails, create animated cartoons, research information and work on his 'Brain Training' software.

Some of the resources that Adrian regularly uses include:

- Books we own and books from the local library,
- Educational tv programmes recently including the Discovery Channels Human Body:Pushing the Limits series and the BBC's Blue Planet series.
- The computer and the Internet.
- Craft materials for making birthday cards etc.
- An electronics set.
- A tool set.
- Lego, Meccano and other construction sets.
- Musical instruments Adrian owns including the didgeridoo and Mongolian jaw harp.