

A HEURISTIC INTERLUDE
BEKKIE GRAHAM
8 AUG – 19 SEP 2020

NEWLYN
ART GALLERY
& THE
EXCHANGE

Ten framed photographs
Each measuring 63 x83 cm, 2020

Presented at The Exchange, Penzance, as part of *Hippo Campus: Where We Learn*, an Arts Council Collection National Partners exhibition.

ARTIST STATEMENT

Heuristic (adj.) *Enabling a person to discover or learn something for themselves*

A Heuristic Interlude tells the stories of five families in the U.K. who were not home-schooling prior to lock-down. However, since trialling this way of living and learning during the school closures, they have either decided to de-register their children from school, or are seriously considering doing so before schools return in September.

Through intertwining visual imagery, personal interviews with the families, national home-schooling surveys, and education-based pandemic research, I have created a microcosm of the situations many families in the U.K. now face, when deciding how best to live and learn together going forward.

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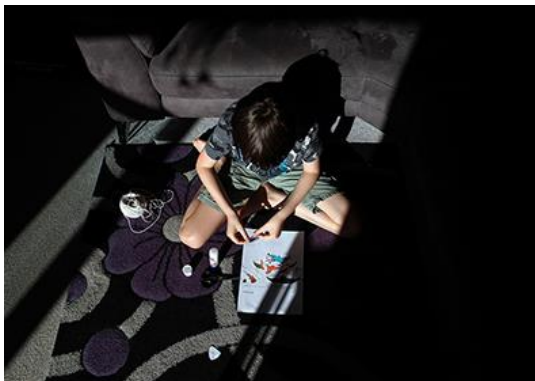
NATALIE



“So I shut up, I followed her lead. I wait to answer her questions and I don’t correct her. I don’t spell out words letter for letter in a mock-teacher condescension. I read her favourite stories in a normal, flowing voice, just letting her enjoy and engage naturally, and gesturing only slightly to the paragraph as I do so. I am telling myself, let her be. Stop hustling - at all. Let her follow her own curiosity, just as I do in my art.” Natalie, 2020.

Natalie de-registered her daughter in June.

SIMONE



“He is happier being at home and he asked if he could stay home, instead of going back to school. His behaviour is easier, as he no longer has to contain himself in a seat all day trying to concentrate, resulting in less explosions in an evening.” Simone, 2020.

Simone and her son sent the de-registration email together in July.

ABBI



"I don't trust the government to do the right thing, and I've said 'I'm not sending them back to school unless I'm absolutely convinced it is safe to.' and even then, I have always wanted to home-educate them. I want us to move into the countryside with them and let them learn in nature." Abbi, 2020.

Abbi and her partner are still undecided as to whether the girls will return to school in September.

SHELLEY



Shelley very much wanted to home-educate at the start of her son's schooling journey. During lockdown she saw the positive impact that it had had on their lives. However, as a single parent who has suffered from bouts of depression, she was mindful of how she would cope long-term without a break. Shelley eventually decided that her son would return to school when it reopened in July.

"I've decided to send him back to school. I'm really glad we've tried it and had this time, but I've been parenting for 23 years now, I want my own time as well."

"He went in for his first day the other day. I wish I had videoed it, he ran in he was so happy." Shelley, 2020.

KATIE AND ED



Katie and Ed always planned on home educating their boys when they were older. The pandemic bought forward those plans.

"It was nothing to do with discontentment with school. We just want to spend more time together. We've all enjoyed the time to do things together and, lockdown in particular, forced us to slow down and realise what is important to us." Katie 2020

Their boys were de-registered from school in July.

<https://newlynartgallery.co.uk/activities/hippo-campus/>