Gloriavale Christian Community School: What does it teach?

*Registered by the state; inspected by the Education Review Office, and partially funded by taxpayers – but what is taught there?*

Liz Gordon, co-Convenor of QPEC, has been researching the Gloriavale School for three years. She has concluded that the ‘education’ that takes place there deprives young people of their human rights, supports a context that allows girls to be sexually abused and teaches young people a false curriculum – all sanctioned by the state.

“Private schools do not have to teach the New Zealand curriculum. In the case of Gloriavale, the curriculum, according to the Education Review Office, ‘suitably meets the Gloriavale philosophy’. From what we know about the community from recent and past publicity this includes teaching girls to be submissive housewives and boys to work on the farms” says Dr Gordon.

“At Gloriavale you learn science in a so-called ‘Christian’ context (God created the world in six days, and there was no evolution), girls are encouraged into the kitchens to meet their future destiny as wives and mothers and boys are trained into the trades. The sect does not believe in education beyond the age of 15 years, and does not teach health or physical education”.

Dr Gordon said that although taxpayers are contributing “a couple of hundred thousand dollars a year” to Gloriavale School, most would be shocked by the nature of the schooling taking place there.

“There is no school. Lessons take place in community facilities, and heavily involve reproducing the misogynist values of the place. There is no protection or rights for the young people, and especially the girls. Founded by convicted sex offender Neville Cooper, and run by a bunch of patriarchs, all the school has to do to maintain its registration, and get government funding, is show that it meets the standards set by its own community, not matter how unacceptable”.

Dr Gordon says that Gloriavale, and a number of other government-funded private schools in New Zealand, are allowed to teach a “false and oppressive curriculum”.

“There is at least a prima facie case that the community breaches several rights enshrined in the Bill of Rights Act, especially freedom of thought, freedom from discrimination and, possibly, the right not to be subjected to torture or cruel treatment (surely to be taught from a young age to accept rape and conceal it is a form of “torture and cruel treatment”).

QPEC’s view is that it is intolerable that the law mandates, and indeed funds, Gloriavale ‘Christian’ Community School.

ENDS. Phone Liz on 0274545008