

SECONDARY CURRICULUM REVIEW CONSULTATION

Section 96 of the Education Act 2002 requires the Secretary of State to publish draft Orders and regulations and any associated documents prior to laying new Statutory Orders before Parliament.

The Secretary of State now proposes to make Orders which will bring about statutory changes to the Secondary National Curriculum. In that context, the Orders and documents provided are as follows:

- A statement by Rt Hon Ed Balls, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families
- A regulatory Impact Assessment
- Education (National Curriculum) (Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study in Art and Design in respect of the First, Second and Third Key Stages) (England) Order 2008
- Education (National Curriculum) (Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study in Citizenship in respect of the Third and Fourth Key Stages) (England) Order 2008
- Education (National Curriculum) (Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study in Design and Technology in respect of the First, Second and Third Key Stages) (England) Order 2008
- Education (National Curriculum) (Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study in English in respect of the First, Second, Third and Fourth Key Stages) (England) Order 2008
- Education (National Curriculum) (Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study in Geography in respect of the First, Second and Third Key Stages) (England) Order 2008
- Education (National Curriculum) (Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study in History in respect of the First, Second and Third Key Stages) (England) Order 2008
- Education (National Curriculum) (Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study in Information and Communication Technology in respect of the First, Second, Third and Fourth Key Stages) (England) Order 2008
- Education (National Curriculum) (Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study in Mathematics in respect of the First, Second, Third and Fourth Key Stages) (England) Order 2008

- Education (National Curriculum) (Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study in Modern Foreign Languages in respect of the Third Key Stage) (England) Order 2008
- Education (National Curriculum) (Modern Foreign Languages) (England) Order 2008
- Education (National Curriculum) (Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study in Music in respect of the First, Second and Third Key Stages) (England) Order 2008
- Education (National Curriculum) (Attainment Targets) and Programmes of Study in Physical Education in respect of the First, Second, Third and Fourth Key Stages) (England) Order 2008
- Education (National Curriculum) (Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study in Science in respect of the First, Second, Third and Fourth Key Stages) (England) Order 2008

This documentation is being sent to all those who were invited by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to take part in the national consultation on the new Secondary Curriculum conducted between February 5th and April 30th 2007. Those wishing to submit evidence and make representations in response to issues arising from these documents may now do so by e mailing the Curriculum Policy Team at the Department for Children, Schools and Families at Secondary.CURRICULUM@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk.

All responses should be submitted by 13 April 2008.

SECONDARY CURRICULUM STATEMENT - Rt. Hon Ed Balls MP, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families

Rationale for curriculum change

1. Since the current National Curriculum was introduced in 2000, there have been far reaching changes in the national and global context within which it operates. Increasing globalisation, particularly the rise of China and India as global trading nations has radically altered the world economy; the communication and information revolution has gathered pace with innovations such as Wikipedia, social networking and digital broadcasting; concerns grow about the effect of climate change on the environment and the implications for human survival; the challenges of the changing face of the UK's social and demographic profile, including mixed populations in many cities and urban areas and the growing proportion of older people and those who are obese.

2. Young people face a world of rapid change and increasing uncertainty and must be equipped to deal with the challenges of the future. All that they experience between birth and adulthood should combine to help them develop, learn and mature. Home life, their relationships with their peers and with adults and the environment in which they grow up, should all support their physical and emotional development as well as their learning. At school, young people need a curriculum that will help them develop the skills to become confident adults, able to contribute to, and participate in, the society of the future. The National Curriculum, and the school-level curriculum need to meet their needs and aspirations as well as reflecting those of the economy, and of society more widely.

3. My Department published the Children's Plan on 11th December 2007, setting out our aim to make this the best place in the world for our children and young people to grow up. To achieve this, we want to improve schools and create a step change in the way parents and families are supported to deal with the challenges of the 21st century. By the end of the next decade we want all young people to stay on in education or training to 18 and beyond, and when they leave, to have the skills they need to prosper in a high skills economy. We are in the process of transforming our system of 14-19 education through increasing support for young people to stay in learning; reforming curriculum and qualifications to give young people more choice and flexibility - central to this is the introduction of diplomas and the development of functional skills which will be at the heart of all qualification routes; and ensuring that all who work with 14-19 year olds take a strategic view of their needs, provide them with their full entitlement and offer a personalised approach to their learning.

4. The secondary curriculum changes are part of our transformation of learning for young people aged 14-19. The curriculum and Diplomas share the same aims and the approaches are directly aligned. There is an emphasis on learner choice and on locally-designed curricula that will meet the needs of students and their community. There is a shared emphasis on the development of practical skills for life and work – including personal skills, competencies and attributes - such as teamwork, resilience, independence and risk taking. Both Diplomas and the new secondary curriculum see the importance of developing cross-curricular links and both lock in the basics so that every young person has a secure grounding in functional English, mathematics and ICT. An outward-looking approach is common to the secondary curriculum and the Diploma, with teaching and learning being grounded in a real-world context and engaging with the big issues of the day.

5. It is important that the curriculum enables children to move seamlessly from

early years settings to schools, from primary to secondary and to work or further and higher education. It should ensure all children secure the basics while allowing flexibility to learn new skills and develop the social and emotional skills they need to succeed. The primary curriculum has remained unchanged since 2000. On 9th December 2007 I announced a root and branch review of the primary curriculum. I have asked Sir Jim Rose, former Deputy Chief Inspector of Schools and author of the 2006 report into the teaching of early reading and member of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) Board, to lead the review. He will be closely supported by the QCA. The review is now underway and will report back to me by March 2009 so that agreed changes to the curriculum can be implemented in September 2011.

Overall aims of the secondary curriculum review

- To raise standards by creating additional flexibility and space for stretching students or for helping those who had fallen below the expected level in English and mathematics.
- Reduce prescription and clutter, allowing teachers to exercise their professional judgement to tailor the curriculum to local and individual circumstances.

The Process

Correspondence between Ministers and QCA

All correspondence can be viewed at www.qca.org.uk - a summary is set out below.

6. Ruth Kelly, then Secretary of State for Education and Skills wrote to Sir Anthony Greener, Chair of QCA on 24th March 2005 setting out the 14-19 Education and Skills White Paper remit, which included inviting QCA to undertake a review of the Key Stage 3 curriculum. Dr Ken Boston, Chief Executive of QCA wrote to Ruth Kelly on 23rd December 2005 with an update on the Key Stage 3 review. Ruth Kelly replied on 31st January 2006, thanking him for his update and setting out next steps. On 31st May 2006, Dr Boston wrote to Alan Johnson, then Secretary of State for Education and Skills, updating him on progress with the Key Stage 3 review. Alan Johnson responded on 26th July 2006. On 10th October 2006, Sir Anthony Greener, wrote to Alan Johnson with advice on progress of the Key Stage 3 review. On 5th January 2007, Dr Boston wrote to Alan Johnson on completion of the QCA review with recommended programmes of study for Key Stage 3 to be taken forward for formal consultation. Alan Johnson responded on 23rd January 2007 agreeing for consultation to take place on the revised programmes of study for Key Stage 3 and 4 and the revised level descriptions.

The QCA consultation process:

7. The national consultation on the new secondary curriculum took place between 5th February 2007 and 30th April 2007. QCA consulted on all of the statutory programmes of study. There are 12 statutory programmes of study to be considered at key stage 3 and a further five at key stage 4. QCA also consulted on changes to the level descriptions. In addition, QCA invited comments on the non-statutory elements of the new curriculum, including programmes of study at KS3 and KS4 for Religious Education, Personal Wellbeing and Economic Wellbeing;

8. Consultation on the new curriculum was achieved predominantly through an online survey managed by Ipsos Mori. In addition, in-depth interviews on the statutory elements were conducted with subject specialists and school / curriculum

managers. Information was also collected through QCA's contacts with teachers, Local Authorities and other interest groups. In accordance with Section 96(6) of the Education Act 2002, QCA wrote to schools, local authorities, governing body organisations and organisations representing school teachers to alert them to the consultation. More than 12,000 people responded to the consultation through the on-line survey, face to face contacts or correspondence.

QCA advice to Ministers

9. Following consultation, Dr Boston wrote to Alan Johnson on 5th June 2007 recommending the programmes of study and level descriptions for the revised secondary curriculum and setting out amendments made as a result of consultation. The then Secretary of State replied on 26th June, accepting QCA's proposals, with responses to the outstanding subject issues highlighted by QCA. These outstanding areas were: the requirements for product areas in design & technology, the overarching acronym for PSHE (in the light of the introduction of the non-statutory programme of study for economic wellbeing alongside a new personal wellbeing non-statutory programme of study) and asking for further work to align the Department's Social and Emotional Aspects of learning (SEAL) with the personal wellbeing programme of study.

10. **Design & Technology** – In order to bring flexibility to the subject, QCA proposed there should be a requirement to study a minimum of 3 subject strands out of 4, with schools having the option to prioritise food technology, textiles, resistant materials or systems and control. QCA noted that this recommendation had attracted adverse reaction from different groups, including those concerned for healthy eating. QCA noted further that Ministers had announced a strong expectation that pupils would be given opportunities to cook, but that those opportunities can be within or beyond the formal curriculum (eg the Licence to Cook programme). QCA's view was that the widespread commitment to healthy eating initiatives over the last years suggested that the optional nature of food technology within design & technology would not be detrimental to the provision of cooking and suggested retaining the proposed flexibility. QCA also noted that references to healthy living have been enhanced in Physical Education and Personal Wellbeing to support a whole school approach.

11. Others who responded to this flexibility were concerned that Systems and Control would no longer be compulsory and this important component for engineering could be diminished. QCA noted that many schools currently teach all four areas even though they can choose between food and textiles. QCA's expectation was that schools would choose which areas to study based on the needs and aspirations of their pupils.

12. Having carefully considered QCA's proposals, the then Secretary of State decided that the revised curriculum should retain resistant materials, systems and control as elements of compulsory study and at least one of food or textiles product areas. This will ensure that all pupils continue to experience the basics of engineering within design & technology.

13. The then Secretary of State decided not to make food technology compulsory for the introduction of the new secondary curriculum in 2008 because a) schools that do not currently offer food technology (c15%) are very unlikely to have specialist food rooms and any necessary capital works were unlikely to be complete by September 2008; and b) these schools would not have food technology teachers. I have announced that cooking will be a compulsory part of the secondary curriculum from

2011, giving time for the necessary preparations, including recruitment and training of additional food technology teachers.

14. **PSHE** – As a result of the curriculum review, two new programmes of study were proposed, covering Personal Wellbeing and Economic Wellbeing & Financial Capability. QCA noted during consultation that some respondents strongly wished to retain the title Personal, Social and Health Education. The then Secretary of State decided to retain use of the overarching acronym PSHE when talking about personal, social and health education as PSHE will continue to exist in this form in terms of continuing professional development and as a subject in primary schools. It will also continue to be taught to some pupils in secondary schools until the new Key Stage 3 curriculum is rolled out to all year groups. However, in order to reflect the introduction of the Economic Wellbeing programme of study, he decided that, when referring to the two new programmes of study for Personal and Economic Wellbeing, the acronym PSHE education would be understood to refer to personal, social, health and economic education.

15. When the new secondary curriculum was published on 12th July 2007, I included financial capability in the title of the Programme of Study to reflect the importance I attach to young people learning to manage their money and finances effectively – it is now known as Economic Wellbeing and Financial Capability.

16. **Alignment of Social and Emotional Aspects of learning (SEAL) with personal wellbeing.** QCA reported that, as a result of consultation, some changes had been made to the personal wellbeing programme of study to ensure appropriate links to social and emotional aspects of learning. The then Secretary of State asked QCA to agree with the Department what more could be done to align the Personal Wellbeing Programme of Study with the Department's Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme, to provide greater clarity for schools. QCA subsequently agreed amendments with the Department to make the relationship between the processes and skills in the Personal Wellbeing Programme of Study and the social and emotional skills in the SEAL programme clearer.

Shape of the new secondary curriculum

17. The new Key Stage 3 curriculum will be phased in over a three year period. It becomes statutory for Year 7 pupils in September 2008; from September 2009, it will apply to all Year 7 and Year 8 pupils; and from September 2010 it will apply across Years 7, 8 and 9. Changes to the Key Stage 4 curriculum begin rolling out in September 2009. From 2011, food technology will become statutory for Key Stage 3 pupils.

What is different in the new curriculum?

18. There is **less detailed prescribed content** to allow time for those who may have fallen behind at Key Stage 2 to catch-up, particularly in the key areas of English and mathematics. There will also be more time to offer more stretching opportunities for pupils with particular gifts and talents. This approach moves us away from a one size fits all curriculum to one that offers more flexibility to tailor teaching to pupils' needs and aspirations. It enables teachers to focus their teaching on what each individual needs in order to progress

19. There is more emphasis on developing **in-depth understanding of the key ideas and practice of particular subjects.**

20. Personal and economic wellbeing have been brought together under the umbrella of **Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education**. PSHE education contains 2 non-statutory programmes of study; Personal Wellbeing and Economic Wellbeing and Financial Capability.

21. The new curriculum is more explicit in encouraging schools to **make connections across events and activities, as well as subjects**. It offers exciting opportunities to increase engagement and motivation in education by designing relevant learning experiences for young people which reflect the world they live in. As a result, learners should experience a curriculum that is more relevant, provides the support and challenge they need and better meets their interests and aspirations. This in turn should lead to greater engagement with learning and higher standards.

New focus on aims and skills

22. The new curriculum places a strong emphasis on the development of **skills for life and work alongside essential subject knowledge**. A framework for personal, learning and thinking skills – under the six headings of independent enquirers, creative thinkers, team workers, self-managers, effective participators and reflective learners – has been built in to the curriculum. The skills are embedded in the programmes of study and will also be assessed as part of the new diploma programmes that will be available from September 2008.

23. The development of knowledge, skills and understanding in subjects is an important part of what the curriculum offers but it is not the whole of the planned learning experience, nor is it everything that we want our young people to learn. The 2002 Education Act requires schools to provide **a balanced and broadly-based curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of learners and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life**. Following the review of the secondary curriculum, an additional set of statutory aims have been introduced around enabling young people to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. These aims reflect the purpose of education as set out in the 2002 Act and were widely consulted upon by the QCA. When asked, “Do you agree that the single set of aims for the secondary curriculum contributes to making the curriculum more coherent?”, 80% agreed or agreed strongly; only 5% disagreed or disagreed strongly.

24. **Functional skills of English, mathematics and ICT** have been built in to the curriculum at both key stages 3 and 4 and are an integral part of the new Diplomas. The key processes sections in the programmes of study highlight the essential skills that learners need in order to make progress and achieve in each subject.

25. New guidance materials have been written to show how the whole curriculum contributes to learners’ **personal development** and the achievement of the Every Child Matters agenda. PSHE education is described in two new, interrelated, programmes of study for both key stages 3 and 4: one for Personal Wellbeing and one for Economic Wellbeing and Financial Capability. Personal Wellbeing draws together personal, social and health education, including sex education and the social and emotional aspects of learning; while Economic Wellbeing draws together careers education, enterprise, financial capability and work-related learning”

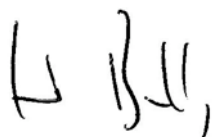
26. **Greater personalisation** will increase learners’ engagement, enable them to show what they can do and open doors to higher achievement. With **more ways to demonstrate progress and more pathways to choose from at Key Stage 4,**

learners are likely to find something that motivates them, continue learning for longer, and gain the qualifications they need to progress into further and higher education and skilled employment.

27. To ensure **assessment** supports teaching and learning, the new curriculum encourages a range of approaches to assessing learners' knowledge, skills and understanding, helping teachers provide more targeted assessments. The **level descriptions** for national curriculum subjects have been modified so that they complement the revised programmes of study and maintain standards. The Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP) materials in the core subjects will continue to help teachers make judgements about their learners' progress. New level descriptions for citizenship have been developed. The non-statutory level descriptions for RE are unchanged.

Conclusion

28. Our aim is for a world class curriculum so young people can develop the skills and knowledge they need to secure their future in further learning, employment and society. I believe the new secondary curriculum will provide them with essential skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. It will also ensure that the underpinning key elements of the curriculum that have stood the test of time remain at the forefront of what the next generation learns. This modern curriculum will also develop personal skills such as initiative, ability to work in teams and the capacity to learn independently, alongside essential subject knowledge and understanding. These skills will stand young people in good stead as they progress through learning and employment, and enable them to take their place as active and responsible citizens.



Rt Hon Ed Balls MP

6 March 2008