

Curriculum reform consultation

30 April – 24 July 2009

Primary curriculum review questionnaire

Thank you for your participation.

When you have completed this survey, please email it to **info@qca.org.uk**, or post to:
Simon Watmough, Ipsos MORI House, 79-81 Borough Road, London, SE1 1FY.

QCA is managing this consultation, on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools and Families



Thank you for your interest in participating in the curriculum reform consultation.

We will now ask you for some contact information and personal data (ethnicity, disability, belief etc) to meet our legal requirement to monitor equalities.

We may use the information collected here to contact you:

- with further questions about the consultation
- if we need to clarify your responses
- to tell you about the findings of the consultation
- about similar consultation exercises in the future, and
- to give you information about other QCA activities such as conferences.

We will also use this information to check that the consultation is representative.

This information will be kept strictly confidential. The analysis of responses will be carried out by an external organisation. This organisation must comply with the Data Protection Act in its handling of personal data and will only process personal data on instructions from QCA.

QCA is managing this consultation, on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools and Families

Your name and contact details:

First name: Ian	Last name: Toone
Email address: iantoone@voicetheunion.org.uk	
Postal address: Voice, 2 St James' Court, Friar Gate, Derby	
Postcode: DE1 1BT	
Phone no: Daytime 01332 372337	
Phone no: Mobile 07939262519	

Who you represent:

In which capacity are you responding to this consultation? Please tick one box only:

Learner	<input type="checkbox"/>	Governor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local authority representative	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Headteacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Member of the wider education community	<input type="checkbox"/>
Member of the wider school workforce	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Trade Union	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

If you are a teacher or headteacher, governor or member of the wider school workforce, what is the name and postcode of your school?

School	Postcode
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If you are a local authority representative, what is the name of your local authority?

Local Authority	
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Are you responding to this consultation as an individual or as an organisation? Please tick one box only:

As an individual	<input type="checkbox"/>	As an organisation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If an organisation, approximately how many people are in the organisation?	38000
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If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, what is the name of your organisation?

Voice – the union for education professionals

Equality monitoring:

What is your gender? Please tick one box only:

Female	<input type="checkbox"/>	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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What is your ethnic origin? Please tick one box only:

White		Asian/Asian British	
White British	<input type="checkbox"/>	Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other White background, write in	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Any other Asian background, write in	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups			
White and Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>		
White and Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black/Black British	
White and Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>	African	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other Mixed background, write in	<input type="checkbox"/>	Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Any other Black background, write in	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to say	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
		Other ethnic group	
		Any other ethnic group, write in	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you have a disability or longstanding illness? Please tick one box only:

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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What is your religion? Please tick one box only:

No religion	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Buddhist	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Hindu	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Sikh	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Any other religion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Write in	<input type="text"/>

Prefer not to say	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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What is your sexual orientation? Please tick one box only:

Bisexual	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lesbian/Gay woman	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homosexual/Gay man	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heterosexual/straight	<input type="checkbox"/>

Prefer not to say	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Proposals to change the primary curriculum

This consultation offers all those involved in education, including teachers, governors, parents, employers and young people the opportunity to comment on the proposed primary curriculum. The feedback you provide will be used by the government to inform final decisions about the primary curriculum.

Before starting the questionnaire you may find it useful to read the report of the independent review of the primary curriculum by Sir Jim Rose, the Secretary of State's response and the proposed primary curriculum. These documents are available at www.qca.org.uk/curriculumconsultation, or can be obtained by calling the QCA Enquiry line on 020 7509 5556 or by emailing info@qca.org.uk.

This survey is approximately 30 questions long, across five sections, but could be considerably longer depending on the options you select. It could take more than 30 minutes to complete, depending on how detailed your responses are.

When considering your response to each question please try and think about all learners including those with special educational needs, disabled learners, the gifted and talented, children from minority ethnic groups and those with English as an additional language.

If you have any queries about this consultation, or the questionnaire, please email info@qca.org.uk or call QCA's Enquiry line on 020 7509 5556.

Your personal information, and the data collected in this survey will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Thank you for your participation.

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Section 1: How the curriculum is organised

The proposed curriculum is organised into three parts:

1. Curriculum aims
2. Six areas of learning
3. Essentials for learning and life

The following questions ask you about the contribution of each of these parts to the proposed curriculum:

The proposed curriculum aims provide an appropriate foundation for primary education

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	X
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

The proposed areas of learning help teachers to plan meaningful learning experiences

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	X
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

The proposed areas of learning will help children make useful links between related subjects

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	X
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

The proposals to integrate information and communication technology (ICT) through the curriculum will help children use technology to enhance their learning

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	X
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

The proposed essentials for learning and life provide schools with a helpful framework for the skills that all children should develop

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	X
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

Overall, the proposed curriculum is less prescriptive than the existing curriculum

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	X

Overall, the proposed curriculum will give schools more flexibility to adapt the curriculum to the needs of their children

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	X

If you would like, please give reasons for your responses given above

(please limit your answer to around 200 words)

Although the proposed curriculum appears to be less prescriptive, much of the subject content is the same, and as the level descriptions are at least as rigorous (more so in the case of ICT), it would appear that any increased flexibility relates only to method, rather than content, of delivery. In some aspects, the proposed curriculum is actually more prescriptive (e.g. making PSHE and MFL statutory).

The proposed curriculum may give schools more flexibility to adapt the curriculum to the needs of their children, but whether or not this happens in practice will depend entirely on how schools choose to deliver the new curriculum. Some schools may feel that their flexibility is constrained by the fact that KS2 SATs remain in place.

Section 2: Essentials for learning and life

The essentials for learning and life, as defined in the proposed curriculum, are the key skills, attitudes and attributes that children need to develop to support their learning, personal relationships and individual development.

The essentials for learning and life are in two parts:

- literacy and numeracy and ICT capability
- learning and thinking skills, personal and emotional skills and social skills

The following questions ask about the contribution of each of these parts to the proposed curriculum:

Literacy and numeracy should be part of the essentials for learning and life

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	X
Tend to agree	
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

Placing literacy and numeracy in the essentials for learning and life offers teachers a helpful way of incorporating these skills across the entire curriculum

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	X
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

Literacy and numeracy as set out in the proposed primary curriculum provides the necessary knowledge and skills that children need to develop in this area

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	X
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

ICT should be part of the essentials for learning and life

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	X
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

Placing ICT in the essentials for learning and life offers teachers a helpful way of incorporating ICT across the entire curriculum

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	X
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

ICT as set out in the proposed primary curriculum provides the necessary knowledge and skills that children need to develop

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	X
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

ICT is clearly expressed across the curriculum

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	X
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

Learning and thinking skills, personal and emotional skills and social skills should be part of the essentials for learning and life

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	X
Tend to agree	
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

Placing the learning and thinking skills, personal and emotional skills and social skills in the essentials for learning and life offers teachers a helpful way of incorporating these skills across the entire curriculum

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	X
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

Learning and thinking skills, personal and emotional skills and social skills as set out in the proposed primary curriculum provide the necessary knowledge and skills that children need to develop

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	X
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

If you would like, please give reasons for your responses given above

(please limit your answer to around 200 words)

Whilst most of our members agree that ICT should replace Science as a core subject, we would hope that the objectives of fostering an enquiring mind, a sense of awe and wonder and a curiosity about how things work/react will remain a major part of a child's education.

Section 3: Areas of learning

(You may choose one, more than one or none at all – if none, move to section 4.)

Understanding the arts	X
Historical, geographical and social understanding	X
Mathematical understanding	X
Understanding English, communication and languages	X
Scientific and technological understanding	X
Understanding physical development, health and wellbeing	X
Religious education (non-statutory)	X
None	

One of the key proposals for the primary curriculum is that the curriculum should move from a subject-based design to areas of learning.

Please read the area of learning on which you wish to comment and answer the questions below. Each question refers to a different section of the area of learning.

Why is this area of learning important captures the significance of this area for children's education

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure
Understanding the arts	X				
Historical, geographical and social understanding	X				
Mathematical understanding	X				
Understanding English, communication and languages	X				
Scientific and technological understanding	X				
Understanding physical development, health and wellbeing	X				
Religious education (non-statutory)					X

Essential knowledge captures the big ideas of what it is children need to learn at primary school

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure
Understanding the arts	X				
Historical, geographical and social understanding	X				
Mathematical understanding	X				
Understanding English, communication and languages	X				
Scientific and technological understanding	X				
Understanding physical development, health and wellbeing	X				
Religious education (non-statutory)	X				

Key skills are the important skills that children need to develop in this area of learning in order to progress at primary school

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure
Understanding the arts		X			
Historical, geographical and social understanding		X			
Mathematical understanding		X			
Understanding English, communication and languages		X			
Scientific and technological understanding		X			
Understanding physical development, health and wellbeing		X			
Religious education (non-statutory)		X			

Breadth of learning covers a sufficient range of content and experiences

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure
Understanding the arts		X			
Historical, geographical and social understanding		X			
Mathematical understanding		X			
Understanding English, communication and languages		X			
Scientific and technological understanding		X			
Understanding physical development, health and wellbeing		X			
Religious education (non-statutory)		X			

The three curriculum stages (early, middle and later) help teachers plan for progression

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure
Understanding the arts	X				
Historical, geographical and social understanding	X				
Mathematical understanding	X				
Understanding English, communication and languages	X				
Scientific and technological understanding	X				
Understanding physical development, health and wellbeing	X				
Religious education (non-statutory)	X				

Cross-curricular studies makes useful links to other areas of learning and the essentials for learning and life framework

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure
Understanding the arts	X				
Historical, geographical and social understanding	X				
Mathematical understanding	X				
Understanding English, communication and languages	X				
Scientific and technological understanding	X				
Understanding physical development, health and wellbeing	X				
Religious education (non-statutory)	X				

The explanatory text is helpful in improving understanding of this area of learning

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure
Understanding the arts	X				
Historical, geographical and social understanding	X				
Mathematical understanding	X				
Understanding English, communication and languages	X				
Scientific and technological understanding	X				
Understanding physical development, health and wellbeing	X				
Religious education (non-statutory)	X				

There is sufficient reference to ICT in this area of learning

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure
Understanding the arts	X				
Historical, geographical and social understanding	X				
Mathematical understanding	X				
Understanding English, communication and languages	X				
Scientific and technological understanding	X				
Understanding physical development, health and wellbeing				X	
Religious education (non-statutory)				X	

If you would like, please give reasons for your responses given above

(please limit your answer to around 200 words)

Our members are split over whether or not 'Why is this area of learning important' captures the significance of this area for children's education in respect of RE, with some agreeing and others disagreeing.

Reference to ICT is sparse in respect of 'Understanding physical development, health and wellbeing' and 'RE'.

Section 4: Languages

Schools should be free to choose the languages they wish to teach at key stage 2

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	X
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

Schools should, when possible, teach languages at key stage 2 that children will learn at key stage 3

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	X

Schools should teach one or two languages in depth

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	X

The language expectations in the area of learning entitled *Understanding English, communication and languages* are appropriate

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	
Tend to disagree	X
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

If you would like, please give reasons for your responses given above

(please limit your answer to around 200 words)

Practicalities may constrain how well objectives may be achieved. Key constraints are access to appropriate language teachers (and learning materials) in primary schools, and availability of given languages at KS3. Since MFL has been removed as a compulsory subject from KS4, there has been a reduction in specialist language teachers in secondary schools, so it would appear to be very optimistic to expect there to be a sudden influx of appropriate language expertise by 2011. It is very difficult for primary schools to predict which languages will be available at KS3, especially when a given primary school may feed pupils into several secondary schools. The promotion of English language skills should remain a priority, especially as, unless MFL is taught in EYFS, pupils need to be secure in both their mother tongue and in English before learning another language. The delivery of MFL has the potential to be inconsistent and fragmented.

Section 5: Learners' needs and transition

The proposed curriculum will enable schools to meet the needs of all learners

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	
Tend to disagree	X
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

The proposed curriculum will improve transition from the early years foundation stage

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	X

The proposed curriculum will improve transition into the secondary phase

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	
Tend to disagree	X
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	

The proposed curriculum will improve progression within the primary phase

Please tick one box only:

Strongly agree	
Tend to agree	
Tend to disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Not sure	X

If you would like, please give reasons for your responses given above

(please limit your answer to around 200 words)

The primary curriculum is the 'filling' between EYFS and secondary phase. What is needed is a comprehensive overview to facilitate compulsory schooling from beginning to end. The proposed curriculum may improve transfer both from EYFS and to secondary phase (as well as within the primary phase), but this cannot be guaranteed, as much depends on delivery. It is yet to be seen how well the primary sector will embrace the culture change needed to facilitate the delivery of the proposed curriculum. Over the last 12 years, there has been a loss of expertise in delivering thematic and cross-curricular learning, which has implications for initial teacher training and CPD for current practitioners.

It is difficult to see how the proposed curriculum will enable schools to meet the needs of all learners as this is dependent on its delivery being effectively personalised and differentiated. Some of our most experienced teachers feel that teaching 13 subjects through 7 areas of learning requires more specialist teachers, especially at KS2 and is becoming less and less of an option for the single generalist teacher. There are, therefore, issues for schools in terms of staffing as well as restructuring the curriculum. There could also be practical issues for schools in terms of the physical space, SEN support and other resources required to deliver the new curriculum.

Thank you for your participation.

When you have completed this survey, please email it to info@qca.org.uk, or post to:

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