



Cambridge Primary Review

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INTERIM REPORTS

TOWARDS A NEW PRIMARY CURRICULUM

a report from the
Cambridge Primary Review

Part 2: The Future

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TOWARDS A NEW PRIMARY CURRICULUM

A report from the Cambridge Primary Review

Part 2: The Future

February 2009

This is one of a series of interim reports from the Cambridge Primary Review, an independent enquiry into the condition and future of primary education in England. The Review was launched in October 2006 and will publish its final report in spring 2009.

The Cambridge Primary Review, supported by Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, is based at the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education and directed by Robin Alexander.

The present report is in two separately-published parts. This is Part 2.

A briefing which summarises key issues from this report has also been published. The briefing and both parts of the report are available electronically from the Cambridge Primary Review website: www.primaryreview.org.uk. The website also contains information about the 29 other reports published so far, all of which may be downloaded, and about the Review as a whole.

The report is the result of the collective efforts of the team of the Cambridge Review, the authors of its final report, those who commented on report drafts, and the many witnesses – professional, academic, official and lay – who in different ways provided evidence for the Review.

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TOWARDS A NEW PRIMARY CURRICULUM

PART 2: THE FUTURE

1 - INTRODUCTION

In this report, whose two parts are published separately, we present the Cambridge Primary Review's findings and proposals on the curriculum. The curriculum is one of the Cambridge Review's main themes. It is also the subject of a government enquiry led by Sir Jim Rose, whose interim report was published in December 2008 with a consultation deadline of 28 February 2009. Although the final report of the Cambridge Primary Review is not due to be published until later in 2009, we have brought forward its material on the curriculum in order to contribute to the debate about the Rose report.

Part 1 starts by identifying the curriculum questions which need to be addressed. It then describes England's national primary curriculum as this stands in 2009, tracing its origins and comparing it with its equivalent in other countries. The rest of the report is taken up with considering what the Review's witnesses, through the submissions, soundings and research surveys, told us about the strengths and weaknesses of existing arrangements and how they would like the curriculum to change. The account of this evidence is lengthy, for the curriculum attracted more witness comment than any other Primary Review theme and the comments are diverse and often controversial.

Part 2 – this publication – summarises the main themes from this evidence, highlights other problems in need of attention, and considers what a new primary curriculum should look like. It sets out proposals on the scope of the curriculum, the aims which it should pursue, and the way it should be implemented.

Some readers may become impatient with the history, the account of witnesses' concerns and our apparent preoccupation with the problematic. For them, solutions are more important. They are of course welcome to turn straight to Part 2. Yet it is only by understanding the history, recognising the deeply-rooted and often cyclic nature of the problems, and by accepting the inadequacy of some of the surrounding discourse, that we can make progress. That is why the grounding provided by Part 1 is essential. Without it, we shall simply repeat past mistakes.

The Cambridge Primary Review does not pluck a curriculum out of the air. Nor does it tinker with existing arrangements while ignoring the fundamentals. Nor does it treat some parts of the curriculum as sacrosanct or beyond debate. Instead, it strives to arrive at a framework for a future primary curriculum which is grounded in aims, evidence and argument. Yet it provides a framework only. The detail is for others to provide, mindful that one of most consistent themes to emerge from our evidence is that there must be less national prescription and more scope for local variation and flexibility. We go further, and argue for an explicit and protected local component to the curriculum.

As well as official documents and other publications which are readily accessible, this report draws on the following evidence marshalled specifically for the Cambridge Primary Review:

- Written submissions from 820 individuals and organisations, a large proportion of which referred to the curriculum.

- Reports on 87 sessions with teachers, heads, children, parents, school governors, local authority officials and members and a wide range of community representatives which made up our regional 'community soundings'. These sessions took place during 2007 and all of them discussed, among other matters, the curriculum.
- Reports on 9 'national soundings' with representatives of major national organisations, held in 2008.
- Reports on 28 specially-commissioned surveys of published research, seven of which dealt directly with the curriculum.
- Notes on 138 meetings with representatives of DCSF, QCA, teaching unions, professional organisations and other bodies which took place between 2006 and 2008.

The community soundings report and the research surveys were published as Cambridge Primary Review interim reports review during 2007-8. All are available at www.primaryreview.org.uk. The interim reports particularly relevant to our curriculum deliberations are listed in the bibliography at the end of this publication.

Witness evidence to the Review is sourced in the report's text. For other references, see the footnotes and bibliography. Organisational sources of submissions are named except when permission to do so has been withheld. Submission evidence from individual witnesses remains anonymous except where it is already in the public domain (for example, when a witness has sent an article or book with his/her submission).

Authorship and acknowledgements

The final report of the Cambridge Primary Review, from which these two special reports on the curriculum have been extracted and adapted, is edited by Robin Alexander, the Review's director, and written collaboratively by a team of nineteen authors, of which he is one. Part 1 of this curriculum report has been compiled by Robin Alexander and Julia Flutter, Part 2 by Robin Alexander, with valuable editorial support for both parts from Stephanie Northen and Colin Richards. Part 1 also drew on some preliminary work by Victoria Neumark. The Review's data were collected and analysed by the Review's 70 research consultants and the Cambridge team: principally Robin Alexander, Catrin Darsley, Christine Doddington, Julia Flutter, David Harrison, Linda Hargreaves and Ruth Kershner; but with additional support with the submissions and soundings data from Alex James, Qais Almeqdad, Chang Yan-Shing, Calvin Dorion, Boris Jokić, Lin Hsing-Chiung and Sharlene Swartz.

Helpful comments on report drafts were provided by Michael Armstrong, John Bangs, Sheila Dainton, Kate Froom, David Hargreaves, Wynne Harlen, Anna House, Pat Jefferson, Roger Luxton, Melody Moran, Gillian Pugh, David Reedy, Colin Richards, David Rosenthal, Sue Tite, Norman Thomas and John White. We also benefited from discussions on the penultimate draft with Jim Rose, DCSF officials, members of all three main political parties, and, in private session, the House of Commons Children, Schools and Families Committee. Needless to say, none of these people bears any responsibility for the report as published.

Finally, we are grateful to the many individual and organisational witnesses who submitted evidence to the Review and whose perspectives are abundantly illustrated in Part 1.

Executive summary

It is customary for reports such as this to include an executive summary. This is published separately as the four-page Cambridge Primary Review Briefing *Towards a New Primary Curriculum*. It may be downloaded at www.primaryreview.org.uk .

2 - CURRICULUM CHALLENGES

Not only did the condition of the primary curriculum attract more attention from our witnesses than any other Primary Review theme; the responses were also much more diverse. This was in sharp contrast, for example, to assessment and testing, on which there was general agreement.

Nevertheless, we can identify something approaching consensus on the following broad points:

- The need for a national curriculum is accepted in principle, but its current form is viewed as overcrowded, unmanageable and in certain respects inappropriately conceived.
- There have been significant gains from the national curriculum, notably in science, citizenship and the handling of values, though the place of science now seems less secure than it did before the arrival of the literacy and numeracy strategies in 1998-9.
- The initial promise – and achievement – of entitlement to a broad, balanced and rich curriculum has been sacrificed in pursuit of a narrowly-conceived ‘standards’ agenda. The most conspicuous casualties have been the arts, the humanities and those generic kinds of learning, across the entire curriculum, which require time for thinking, talking, problem-solving and that depth of exploration which engages children and makes their learning meaningful and rewarding. The case for art, music, drama, history and geography needs to be vigorously re-asserted; so too does the case for that reflective and interactive pedagogy on which the advancement of children’s understanding in large part depends, in ‘the basics’ no less than in other subjects.
- The curriculum is subject to excessive prescription and micro-management from the DCSF, the national strategies and the QCA, and many believe that the extent and manner of control from the centre has been, on balance, counter-productive.
- The national strategies – literacy, numeracy, primary – have their supporters, and younger teachers in particular welcome the structure and guidance which they have provided, but it is these strategies which, together with the national tests, are seen to have contributed most to perceptions of curriculum overcrowding, distortion and micro-management. The national literacy strategy (now part of the DCSF primary framework) is viewed by many as unsatisfactory in both conception and implementation, and is believed to have adversely affected the teaching of English more generally. The national numeracy strategy provoked a much more favourable response.
- The problem of the curriculum is inseparable from the problem of assessment and testing. Unless the national assessment system is reformed, especially at KS2, changes to the curriculum will have limited impact and the curriculum outside the favoured zone of tested subjects will continue to be compromised.
- Some subject associations are deeply concerned about the loss of the conceptual and heuristic integrity of the disciplines whose cause they seek to advance. Many teachers are happy to advocate thematic approaches to which, usually in an unspecified way, subjects will ‘contribute.’ In turn, some in the subject associations see this as capitulation to the

view that a discipline is not important enough to justify stand-alone status. A rather different defence comes from those witnesses who warn that the continuity and security of a subject/discipline-based curriculum is one of the attractions, for those who can afford them, of private schools. The place of subjects in the curriculum remains highly contentious.

Even if we can identify consensus on the successes and problems of the primary National Curriculum, there is no obvious agreement on the way forward, other than by extrapolating from the negatives above: less prescription, less micro-management, less testing, and so on. Otherwise, witnesses argued variously that the curriculum should:

- stay more or less as it is, but be amended and tidied up;
- be radically redesigned;
- be less prescriptive and more open and flexible;
- concentrate on those areas of knowledge and understanding which schools have always taught;
- be designed around skills, capabilities and attributes;
- be structured through areas of experience, as in the early years foundation stage;
- have a revised core;
- have a national core but reserve substantial time for local variation;
- take a new approach to language and literacy.

There is considerable food for thought in what our many witnesses said about the curriculum. However, we cannot arrive at a new model of the primary curriculum merely by following the majority witness line. Witnesses concentrated on the national curriculum, but some of the most intractable problems reach back to well before its introduction in 1989. Combining what our witnesses told us with the research surveys and independent analysis we believe that the following most urgently need to be addressed.

Where are the aims and values?

Such was witnesses' preoccupation with the logistics and politics of the national curriculum that many did not ask what it was all for. Yet one can hardly argue about a curriculum's scope, balance and priorities without taking a view of the educational aims which it should pursue and the values by which it, and the work of schools more widely, should be underpinned. Of course, values are pervasive, so in making a case for or against a particular approach to the curriculum witnesses to the Review are voicing their values in another way. But these frequently remain tacit.

In a research survey commissioned by the Review, Professor John White showed how England's national curriculum has tended to be detached from such statements of aims as have been provided,¹ which in any case have been too brief or anodyne to be useful. In any case, a curriculum always embodies aims and values, and these can be readily inferred from the hierarchy of subjects and the way each of these is conceived. What is unsatisfactory about the inherited approach, however, is that the stated aims may tend to march grandly in one direction while the curriculum slinks pragmatically in another. For aims to be other than cosmetic, not only should they be in harmony with the curriculum but they should also shape it.

¹ White (2008)

The Cambridge Primary Review has devoted considerable attention to this matter, for one of its principal ten themes is ‘purposes and values’. Here we argue from the Review’s evidence not only a new set of aims for primary education but also procedural principles which we believe should guide the respective contributions of government, local authorities and schools, for how these bodies act is no less critical for the achievement of the aims than what and how teachers teach. These aims are summarised later in this report and are built in an explicit way into the curriculum framework which we propose. This approach contrasts with that taken by the Rose Review, which is to accept as given the existing statements of aims and hope that they will somehow fit the proposed primary curriculum. Yet one can hardly have what has been billed as a ‘root and branch’ review of the curriculum without a root and branch review of the aims which it supposedly advances.

Early years, primary, secondary: progression or backwash?

The national curriculum sought to achieve much needed continuity from primary to secondary education by devising a single framework for the age-range 5-16, divided into four key stages and defined in terms of a single set of subjects. However, although entitlement was welcomed, many in the primary world saw this as the imposition of a secondary view of the curriculum on primary schools and believed that in the process something distinctively and properly ‘primary’ had been lost.

The recent expansion of early years provision has generated similar anxiety, this time about the downward thrust of a mainstream primary curriculum into the lives of children aged 3-5, with the Reception class becoming the point at which the two worlds collide. The pressure, one might note, is always in the same direction, downwards.

The Early Years Foundation Stage has been broadly welcomed, as have its six areas of learning and development. But the fear of inappropriate downward pressure has persisted, especially in relation to literacy, and the recommendation of the Rose Review that children should enter Reception classes in the September immediately following their fourth birthday² has generated opposition from early years experts, mainly on the grounds that in terms of staffing, training, space, resources and/or provision many reception classes as currently organised do not provide an appropriate environment for such young children.³ It is also pointed out that policy in England appears to be premised on the questionable principle that the younger children start formal schooling the better they will eventually do. The experience of those countries whose children start formal schooling up to two years later than in England yet manage to outperform their English peers by age 11 is usually cited here, but it is also important to be clear that in a world where pre-school education and care are increasingly the norm the argument is less about starting ages than the nature and appropriateness of provision on either side of the line, wherever it is drawn.

This report on the curriculum is not the place to discuss structures and starting ages. However, we give notice that in our final report we shall do so in some detail, and we shall make proposals on the length and structure of primary education and its relationship to both what precedes and follows it. For the moment, we wish to make clear that the Review’s evidence supports the EYFS and the character of its six ‘areas of learning and experience’.

² Rose (2008), recommendation 10(i)

³ See, for example, the response to the interim Rose report from the Early Education Advisory Group, whose members are acknowledged early years experts (EEAG 2009, cited with the Group’s permission).

The task of the primary curriculum is to build in a meaningful way upon these and respect their appropriateness and integrity.

‘A dream at conception, a nightmare at delivery’?

The phrase above is Professor Jim Campbell’s;⁴ the sentiment is that of thousands of teachers who, since 1989, have struggled to contain a large and expanding national curriculum within a finite school day, week or year: three core subjects, two of which between them are expected to take half of the available time, seven other statutory foundation subjects, three non-statutory foundation subjects, two subjects (RE and sex education) which are, respectively, statutory and required, but which fall outside the foundation subject framework, and six areas of learning across the curriculum.

The problem arose not so much from the original 10-subject specification as from the way each programme of study was independently devised for the National Curriculum Council by a group of specialists eager to take advantage of the opportunity to secure the strongest possible foothold for their subject by spelling out content in irrefutable detail. Whether in combination the 10 programmes of study would be logistically feasible appeared not to matter. The subject-by-subject ring binders of the first national curriculum rapidly acquired totemic status as the physical face of curriculum overload. Without the slightest consciousness of irony, the NCC and its successors, SCAA and QCA, increased the mountain of material by supplying document after document aimed at helping teachers to reduce it, sometimes reverting to the 1960s/1970s models of thematic topics in order to show that this was possible. Some schools achieved the necessary miracle of planning. Many others did not.

The experience is salutary and the warning is clear. The National Curriculum risked overload from the start. More elements were subsequently added but none was removed, for what subject lobby would be happy to relinquish the claims of a subject in whose educational importance it so passionately believes? Meanwhile, the school day, week and year remained the same length. Something had to give, and it did (see next section).

The warning has two parts. First, the logistical ‘nightmare at delivery’ remains today’s problem, not yesterday’s. It has yet to be solved. Second, reducing between 10 and 15 subjects to a smaller number of, say, ‘areas of learning’ (as in the Rose Review’s interim report) may look promising as a way out of the nightmare but will solve nothing if the programmes of study remain as densely packed as they have been, or if time for some subjects is ring-fenced while other subjects – the majority – must fight for what little time remains. As we understand it, Rose attends to the first of these problems but not the second.

‘Standards, not curriculum’? The anomaly of the national strategies

There are three ways in which the national strategies have over-complicated the curriculum and have exacerbated the problem of overload.

First, though technically non-statutory the strategies were treated by government and the national agencies, and hence by schools, as obligatory. Being so, they immediately corralled half of the teaching time available. Indeed, it was expected that literacy and numeracy would take half the available teaching time and the rest would be shared among the other national

⁴ Campbell (1993)

curriculum subjects *together with the rest of English and mathematics*. On that basis, the time available for the remaining eight subjects would be substantially less than 50 per cent.

Second, the strategies focused in a wholly different way from that established in 1989 on *parts* of the English and mathematics national curriculum, but not the whole. The NLS was about literacy, not English; the NNS was about numeracy, not mathematics. In turn, though initially defined as 'reading and writing', literacy within the NLS increasingly concentrated on the teaching of reading, with the inevitable result that the quality of children's writing suffered,⁵ not to mention speaking and listening, which though an important part of English in the national curriculum, was not seen as having a significant part to play in the acquisition of literacy. The NNS placed particular emphasis on developing pupils' speed and agility in mental calculation. Somehow, the rest of the national curriculum for English and mathematics had to articulate with these new requirements. The problems of this disarticulation, especially between literacy and English, were voiced by many of our witnesses, as we have reported.

The third complicating factor was political. In 1998-9, when the NLS and NNS were introduced, the national curriculum was the responsibility of the newly-established QCA, which by then had published, after consultation, programmes of study for literacy and numeracy as part of English and mathematics. But the literacy and numeracy strategies themselves were to be run directly by what was then the Department for Education and Employment (now the DCSF). This caused tension between the two bodies and confusion in schools and local authorities.

The response of the government to this situation was highly significant for our examination of the nature of the primary curriculum. In January 1998, a delegation from the board of the QCA met the Minister of State to discuss the new arrangements and to express concern about the department's sudden decision to suspend the programmes of study for the non-core subjects in order to allow schools to concentrate on the new literacy and numeracy strategies and the achievement of the 2002 test targets for 11-year-olds. In the course of the meeting the delegation asked why, having only just set up the QCA, the government had immediately deprived it of responsibility for literacy and numeracy, which by any definition are pivotal to a successful primary curriculum. The Secretary of State's Standards and Effectiveness Adviser was present and speedily forestalled the Minister's reply: 'Literacy and numeracy,' he said, 'are standards, not curriculum, and standards are the government's responsibility, not QCA's.'

Clearly, whatever might be claimed for the government's post-1997 standards drive, it was unfortunate, to say the least, that it defined literacy and numeracy not as fundamental and fully integrated aspects of a broad and rich entitlement curriculum – as they had been defined under the 1988 Education Reform Act – but merely as measures of educational standards annexed to a party-political agenda. But if the overt politicisation of literacy and numeracy was damaging, the impact on the curriculum as a whole of this separation of powers was even more so. That apart, the opposition of 'standards' and 'curriculum' is yet another unproductive instance of that pervasive discourse of dichotomy which this Review finds so unhelpful. In this case there was a clear implication that standards outside literacy and numeracy did not really matter.

⁵ Ofsted (2002)

However, from 2003 the government sought to reconcile 'standards' and 'curriculum'. The primary national strategy (PNS) was principally concerned with building on the literacy and numeracy strategies but also sought to re-integrate them into the wider curriculum, while at the same time encouraging schools to aim for 'enjoyment' as well as 'excellence'.⁶ The PNS was given responsibility for the literacy and numeracy strategies and in October 2006 a combined primary framework for literacy and mathematics was launched.⁷ Quietly, 'numeracy' had been replaced by 'mathematics' though the talismanic 'literacy' was retained.

Yet it hardly needs pointing out that the opposition of 'enjoyment' and 'excellence' (for the latter was defined only by reference to literacy and numeracy) is little different from the opposition of 'curriculum' and 'standards.' This, then, would seem to be a persistent problem with the way the primary curriculum has been conceived. We see below that it goes back much further than 1997.

One curriculum or two? The illusion of a 'whole curriculum'

Building on their 1978 primary survey, HM inspectors advanced, as necessary criteria for planning a coherent whole curriculum, *breadth, balance, relevance, differentiation, and progression and continuity*.⁸ Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence* retains three of these as stated. A fourth ('coherence') is defined in similar terms to HMI's 'balance', while HMI's 'differentiation' is updated to 'personalisation and choice'.⁹

HMI applied the criterion of breadth at two levels. It is not sufficient, they said, to ensure that a wide range of what they called 'areas of learning and experience' are listed in the paper curriculum or even included in the timetable. Each must be pursued in sufficient breadth and depth to ensure that justice is done to its significance and distinctiveness, for a subject compressed to the bare minimum ceases to be meaningful as an 'area of learning and experience' and thereby reduces the breadth of the whole. Similarly, balance has to be achieved both across the curriculum as a whole and within each area, so as to ensure, for example, that mathematics is not reduced to computation or English to the 'basic skills' of reading and writing alone (a prescient warning, as it turned out). Relevance is about tailoring curriculum experiences to meet children's present and future needs, however these are defined.

The criterion of differentiation grew out of HMI's preoccupation in the 1978 and subsequent surveys with what they called 'match', or 'the relationship between the standard of work children in the groups were doing and what they were considered to be capable of doing'.¹⁰ Generally, then as subsequently, HMI/Ofsted have found that a significant proportion of primary teachers expect too little of their pupils rather than too much. Progression and continuity, again, had both micro and macro aspects: building, minute by minute and day by day, on the child's existing understandings; and ensuring continuity between classes and schools.

The criteria of breadth, balance and relevance beg questions of value and purpose and immediately remind us that a curriculum which is not rooted in an explicit statement of aims

⁶ DfES (2003a)

⁷ DCSF (2007a)

⁸ DES (1978a, 1985b)

⁹ Scottish Government (2008)

¹⁰ DES (1978a), para 6.12

and principles makes little sense. Differentiation, progression and continuity focus more on developmental, pedagogical and organisational considerations, though they too are about the curriculum as conceived as well as enacted.

It will be apparent from our witnesses' evidence that in recent years and in many primary schools the essential criteria of breadth and balance have not been met, except by the narrowest definition of breadth and balance (that is, including a named subject in the paper curriculum regardless of its quality at 'delivery'). The schools, clearly, blame the government and the national agencies. Are they right to do so?

However, this is a much older problem than many may realise. The primary curriculum has always been a divided curriculum. The Victorian split between the 'basics' or 3Rs and 'the rest' was as sharp as it was sacrosanct. Indeed, striving during the 1970s to develop a curriculum relevant to disadvantaged children living in the shadow of Liverpool's two cathedrals, Eric Midwinter spoke – with an irreverence that only he could get away with – of the 'the ritualistic celebration of Holy Maths'.¹¹ The split was sustained until 1988, when it morphed into 'core' and 'other foundation subjects', with science at last finding its place as the new 'basic' though only temporarily, as our witnesses have noted. By 2008, the Rose Review's interim report confirmed that science had been supplanted as the third 'basic' by ICT, within a new core named 'skills for learning and life'.¹² This new core also included 'personal development', and objections to the dropping of science were anticipated by broadening the concept of literacy to include 'scientific, technological, mathematical and economic "literacy"'.¹³

The division between the two primary curricula starts with a perceived sense of the relative importance of 'the basics'. Were the matter one of relative significance alone there would be no problem, for clearly at every stage of education there must be priorities. But the gap between what in 1984 were called 'curriculum 1' and 'curriculum 2'¹⁴ widens dramatically because it is reinforced in so many other ways. Thus, updating the curriculum1/curriculum2 thesis we now find the situation summarised in figure 1.

It will be seen, then, that for curriculum 2 low valuation or priority is compounded by deprivations in time, resourcing and expertise. Taken together, these almost certainly mean that, for many pupils, minimal time is exacerbated by activities which are trivial, poorly conceived and lacking in cognitive or imaginative challenge. In the 1978 HMI primary survey, the subjects in 'curriculum 2' were the most heavily criticised for superficial teaching which lacked structure and progression and for inadequate professional training and understanding. The 1982 Gulbenkian Report on the arts in schools found primary-school art widely perceived as pleasurable, occasionally cathartic but in the end frivolous and inessential – a far cry from what the arts at best can offer.¹⁵ Since these studies, whose findings have been reinforced by classroom research and the comments of Primary Review witnesses, little has happened to halt the downward spiral of low valuation, inadequate training, limited expertise and undemanding practice which, all too often, is the fate of curriculum 2. On the contrary, the raising of the stakes for literacy or numeracy since 1997 has been at the expense of much or most else, and this is confirmed annually in Ofsted

¹¹ Dr Eric Midwinter led the ground-breaking Liverpool Educational Priority Area project during the 1970s.

¹² Rose (2008), paras 2.23-2.27

¹³ *Ibid*, para 2.25

¹⁴ Alexander (1984), chapter 3

¹⁵ Gulbenkian (1982)

inspections. The problem is readily and frequently identified, but for Curriculum 2 there is no billion-pound national strategy waiting in the wings.

Figure 1	
ONE CURRICULUM OR TWO?	
CURRICULUM 1: 'THE BASICS' <i>Assumptions</i>	CURRICULUM 2: THE REST <i>Assumptions</i>
High priority	Low priority
Seen as key indicator of educational 'standards'	The notion of 'standards' does not apply
Provides a curriculum for 'excellence'	Provides a curriculum for 'enjoyment'
Prepares children for life and work	Prepares children for relevant aspects of the secondary curriculum
Preserves separate subject identity	Likely to be merged within 'themes' or 'areas of learning', or taught through other subjects
Has substantial and protected time allocation	Is allocated little time, and this is not protected
Pupil attainment is tested	Pupil attainment is not tested, and sometimes not even assessed
High time/priority in initial training	Low time/priority in initial training, or omitted
High priority in Ofsted inspections	Low priority in inspections, or ignored
Substantial CPD provision	Minimal CPD provision
Specialist expertise welcomed: this teaching is demanding.	Specialist expertise not required: anyone can do it. ¹⁶

It is inevitable that some aspects of primary education will receive more time than others. What is neither inevitable nor educationally defensible is that priority should be negatively tied to quality. The point is so important, yet so open to misunderstanding, that it is italicised: *a truly 'whole' curriculum is one where the quality and seriousness of the teaching is consistently high across all its aspects, regardless of how much time is allocated to them. Breadth and balance are about the quality of provision no less than the allocation of time.* This means that tackling the incomplete, divided and unbalanced curriculum takes us into pedagogy, teacher deployment, expertise and training, and the future of the generalist class teacher system, all of them matters which will be considered in the Cambridge Primary Review's final report. A curriculum is only as good as those who teach it.

Meanwhile, we are glad to note that Ofsted shares our concern. In 2004, chief inspector David Bell (now Permanent Secretary at DCSF) said in his annual report: 'We cannot afford, and our children do not deserve, a two-tier curriculum.'¹⁷

Basics vs breadth: the pernicious dichotomy

¹⁶ Music is generally the exception to the 'anyone can do it' assumption (but not art).

¹⁷ Ofsted (2004)

The curriculum 1 / curriculum 2 problem is exacerbated by a long-held official assumption that standards in the basics are best secured by concentrating upon them to the exclusion of all or most else. This assumption has been challenged in a succession of official reports going back to 1931, and their findings are succinctly expressed in the 1985 White Paper *Better Schools*:

The mistaken belief, once widely held, that a concentration on basic skills is by itself enough to improve achievement in literacy and numeracy has left its mark; many children are still given too little opportunity for work in the practical, scientific and aesthetic areas of the curriculum which increases not only their understanding in these areas but also their literacy and numeracy ... Over-concentration on the practice of basic skills in literacy and numeracy unrelated to a context in which they are needed means that those skills are insufficiently extended and applied.¹⁸

Thus, for some, the continuing curriculum 1 / curriculum 2 divide is an obstacle to progress towards a genuinely broad and balanced whole primary curriculum. But we can also see that it is an obstacle to progress in curriculum 1 itself, for, as Hadow, Plowden, HMI and Ofsted have all said, attention to curriculum 2 raises standards in curriculum 1.¹⁹ The difficulty for some, and they tend to be politicians, is that the breadth/standards relationship seems counter-intuitive. Their common sense dictates that the 'mistaken belief' referred to by the authors of the 1985 White Paper should be sustained. Again, this is a battle which is far from won.

The non-core subjects: capitulation and courage

The threat to curriculum breadth, balance and coherence has in recent years been given a new twist. Aware that in today's educational and economic climate the criterion of 'relevance' to 'the world of work' has become paramount, and regardless of the fact that paid employment is only one kind of work and that both kinds of work constitute but a part of adults' lives, those seeking to defend the place of the non-core subjects against marginalisation cite 'relevance' as their pre-eminent justification. They do so by invoking the claim and language of economic utility. The old claim, that some subjects justify their place in the curriculum because they are intrinsically worthwhile, or because they are what help to hold the line between civilization and philistinism, no longer cuts much ice. What matters now is marketable skill.

Marketable skill certainly does matter, but it is not all that matters, and this response is as timorous as it is transparent. To each such subject is dutifully appended the word 'skills'. Art becomes 'artistic skills' and for good measure adds the eminently marketable 'design'. The arts generally are repackaged as generic 'creative skills', servants to 'the creative industries'. Other subjects follow suit, the complexities of feeling, empathising, responding and relating are designated 'personal, social and emotional skills'. Even language, unassailably established within curriculum 1 as it is, is repackaged as 'communication skills'. Meanwhile, the entire field of cognition – thinking, knowing, understanding, exploring, imagining, speculating, reasoning and pushing at the boundaries of what is intellectually possible, in all its astonishing aspects – is reduced to 'thinking skills'.

¹⁸ DES (1985b)

¹⁹ Board of Education (1931), CACE (1967), DES (1978a, 1985b); Ofsted (1997, 2002).

As the Leitch Report shows, there *is* a case, and a powerful one socially and economically, for paying much more attention than hitherto to the development of skill in public education, and we refer to it below.²⁰ But merely relabelling everything as a skill is not the answer. Worse, it diminishes the case that can and should be made for the centrality in young children's education of, say, learning in a consciously historical or geographical way about the past or the world around us; or of the educational importance of those irreplaceable pinnacles of human endeavour, imagination and insight represented by science, literature, art, music and drama. In the face of what some call 'the skills revolution' those who really believe in these things should exhibit greater courage.

A historical perspective, as always, exposes the trend for what it is. During the 1970s, primary education took a strongly developmental turn. Being at one with the way children 'naturally' develop was the touchstone for what was called 'good primary practice'. As a result, and at a stroke, 'development' became a required curriculum suffix in LEA and school curriculum plans and schemes of work. English, maths, science, arts, history and geography were out; language development, mathematical development, scientific development, creative development, historical development and geographical development were in. Physical education, which had already supplanted physical training, became physical development. Clearly, some of these can be conceived as genuinely developmental, but like the later over-use of 'skill', this all-purpose application of 'development' was a pronounced case of *reductio ad absurdum*. For children develop anyway, without the intervention of schools. In part, the use of 'development' acknowledged this, but it also implied – and often explicitly endorsed – a view of teaching as no more than developmental facilitation. Words like 'development' and – now – 'skill' have ideological overtones of which we should be keenly aware.

The unadmitted possibility: manageability or expertise?

In all the talk of a divided and unmanageable curriculum one possibility is rarely mentioned: that the problems may relate to expertise as well as logistics. After all, if the time and attention given to curriculum 2 in initial teaching training, CPD and inspection are markedly and consistently less than for curriculum 1, this cannot but diminish knowledge of what the curriculum 2 subjects are about and understanding of what they should contribute both to children's education and to the wider culture.

We shall recommend later that reform of curriculum must be accompanied by reform in teacher training and CPD, and by a re-examination of the curriculum-related roles which primary teachers undertake and the way they are deployed. For the moment we venture the argument that the primary curriculum has become unmanageable not only because the national agencies planned it in overfacing detail without regard for the logistics of the whole, and then added more and more subjects without taking anything away; but also because there has been insufficient conceptual grasp of what exactly needed to be managed. Such a grasp would have enabled professionals to cut straight to the essentials of each subject, recognising what must at all costs must be advanced, and what could be jettisoned. Having done so, they could surely have worked out ways to contain even a 12-subject curriculum within the required weekly lesson times of 21 hours for five to seven-year-olds and 23.5 hours for eight to 11 year olds; or, since there is no reason why the week should be taken as

²⁰ HM Treasury (2006)

the inevitable or only way of dividing curriculum time, a school year of 798 hours at KS1 and 893 hours at KS2.²¹

Here it is salutary to note two findings. First, we have spoken to primary heads who have managed to fit the entire national curriculum into the time available. Second, many independent preparatory schools have voluntarily adopted the national curriculum and from that sector the complaint about overload is never heard. This would seem to suggest, contrary to the received wisdom and contrary even to our own earlier line, that the national curriculum may have been overloaded content-wise but it was not *inherently* unmanageable – at least, not until the arrival of what one writer has called ‘the elephant in the curriculum’, high stakes testing,²² and the national strategies.

According to the primary heads in question, a manageable national curriculum requires that three conditions should be met:

- an intelligent and flexible approach to curriculum planning and timetabling;
- a refusal to be bound by the government’s expectation that literacy and mathematics should be allocated at least half of the available daily teaching time;
- high quality teaching in *all* subjects.

Given the immense pressure to which schools have been subjected, or to which they feel themselves subject, in order to ensure that literacy and numeracy dominate the school day, it is a brave head who asserts his or her independence in this matter. As for our hypothesis about expertise, it is confirmed not only by the evidence from teacher training and inspection, but also by the prevailing discourse of subjects, knowledge and skills, to which we turn next.

The primary curriculum: victim of a muddled discourse

It is essential to get the structure, balance and content of the primary curriculum right. It is no less essential to ensure that schools have the time and expertise to ensure that it is coherently planned and well taught. Neither of these things will happen until we sort out three essential terms in curriculum discourse. These terms are *subjects*, *knowledge* and *skill*. To these, at the end of this section, we add the contingent terms *discipline*, *curriculum* and *timetable*.

Subjects

The furore which greeted the interim report of the Rose Review, in December 2008, illustrated the problem. Opinion split sharply into two camps: those who cheered the departure of subjects and those who condemned it. One side piled up the anti-subject insults – ‘traditional’, ‘old-fashioned’, ‘artificial’, ‘irrelevant’ and, for good measure, ‘Victorian’. The other defended subjects in the name of culture, continuity and standards and deplored alternatives such as Rose’s ‘areas of learning’ as recipes for ignorance or a return to the bad old days of the ubiquitous topic or project (even though Rose carefully emphasised the place of subjects, however the curriculum was organised).

²¹ Hours as specified in regulations currently in force: DfEE (1999b)

²² Richards (2009)

Older readers will recall that during the 1960s and 1970s subjects were similarly demonised and defended. At that time they were seen by many primary teachers, teacher trainers and LEA advisers as the antithesis of that seamless curriculum which children's nature and development required. Subjects, it was claimed, fragmented and compartmentalised learning into 'little boxes'. 'It is important,' said a memorandum in one school at this time, 'that the natural flow of activity, language and thought be uninterrupted by artificial breaks such as subject matter', and to reinforce the message that subjects were outmoded there were frequent references to the 'rigid timetables, clanging bells, silent cloakrooms, cramping desks and absurd rules' of the dark days of elementary schools,²³ though it was never clear what silent cloakrooms had to do with the curriculum. The contributors to the Black Papers responded in no less baleful terms. The folk memory of this discourse remains powerful, even though a large and growing proportion of primary teachers have known no other world than the national curriculum.

Apart from its residual 1970s colouring, what has happened here is that discussion of subjects has become entangled with a distinctly ill-informed discourse about the nature of knowledge. A subject is merely a named conceptual or organisational component of the curriculum. It can mean anything we want it to mean. It is, or ought to be, a wholly neutral term, available to support the efforts of those who strive to work out how in terms of organisation, timetabling and professional expertise the goals of a curriculum – any curriculum, ancient, modern or post-modern – can be achieved. Time may be seamless but children's attention is not; nor is their teacher's expertise. The different aspects of the curriculum need to be named, otherwise how else can we talk about them to children, parents or each other? The day and week need to be divided into periods of time which sensibly and appropriately enable these different aspects to be taught.

A subject's relevance, or lack of relevance, resides not in its name but, under whatever name is chosen, in exactly what is taught and how. A subject is not of itself 'old-fashioned' just because subjects have been used as an organising device for over a century. If, as enacted in the classroom, a subject is irrelevant, it is the teacher who makes it so.

This problem, we have to note, is very much a primary school one. Universities woo applicants with long and expanding lists of subjects, and no academic would countenance the accusation that his or her subject remains static or moribund in the way presumed by those who label subjects, *ipso facto*, 'old-fashioned'. For pushing at the boundaries of knowledge, understanding and enquiry is what academics do. For them, though many of the labels have a kind of permanence, the subjects themselves are constantly on the move. Indeed – and this perhaps is the ultimate irony – knowledge does not become outdated because it is framed by subjects; it does so because of the efforts of the very people who work within the boundaries of those subjects. In this sense, knowledge obsolescence and change are marks not of a subject's decline but of its vitality.

Throughout this report we use the word 'subject'. We would not wish any readers to assume that the usage is other than neutral. Because some people object to 'subjects' we could talk of 'components', 'elements' or 'parts' of the curriculum, but this would be an exercise in mere political correctness.

So when critics of the Rose Review's interim report complain of the 'death of subjects' there is a sense in which they may be wrong, for one set of names, or subjects, has merely been

²³ Both quoted in Alexander (1984), 18

replaced by another, and what matters above all else is what, in terms of knowledge, understanding and skill, these new names denote. What the critics are really worried about is the exclusion from the curriculum of *disciplinary-based knowledge and enquiry*, and this exclusion does not automatically follow such a re-naming. It is possible that within Rose's 'areas of learning' what critics of his model associate with subjects (that is, disciplines) is not only alive and well but may even be strengthened. Equally, it is possible that the new labels reflect that very dilution or exclusion of discipline-based knowledge and enquiry which critics most fear and deplore. At the time of writing, that remains to be seen.

In any case, subjects, disciplines and knowledge, still less subjects and a particular view of knowledge, are not synonymous. A *subject*, as we have said, is an organisational segment of the curriculum. It may or may not be coterminous with a particular *discipline* such as mathematics, science, art or geography. *Knowledge* is central to every discipline, but its precise place and character in school subjects as diverse as mathematics and PSHE are highly variable. The three terms should be used much more discriminately, and the word 'subjects', in particular, should be divested of its inherited ideological charge.

A different though related point is made by Norman Thomas, former HM chief inspector of primary education, in a post-Rose comment to the Cambridge Review. He is pleased that the Rose Review acknowledges that there is a place on the timetable for both specific subject lessons and for thematic work. He argues, however, 'that it should be made very clear that the sub-headings used in describing the curriculum do not prescribe the headings for the periods into which the timetable is divided. Indeed, whatever the title of the lesson, whether a subject or a theme, it is bound to include aspects of learning referred to within a number of different sections of the curriculum definition.' Thus, while subjects divide the curriculum conceptually or organisationally, the timetable divides it temporally into lessons, and the two forms of division are not necessarily synonymous.

Knowledge

Children do not need to know lots of dates. They can look up information on Google and store it on their mobile phones ... The days of teachers barking out facts are long gone. Our job is to prepare children so that they can access information and knowledge in the modern world.²⁴

Lest readers imagine that we quote with approval this testimonial to Rose's 'areas of learning', we say immediately that it puts in a nutshell much that is wrong with the way knowledge is talked about in primary education. Consider the assumptions here:

- knowledge is mere facts or information.
- such facts and information are there to be 'looked up' and 'stored', but never engaged with or questioned.
- knowledge is ineradicably associated with old-fashioned quasi-Gradgrindian teaching ('Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life...'²⁵)
- children may 'access' knowledge but it is no longer necessary for them, or their teachers, to know anything.

and, as a gratuitous swipe at one subject among several:

²⁴ A 'leading primary school head teacher' applauding the Rose Review's interim report: quoted in *The Times*, 9 December 2008 (Aaronovitch 2008).

²⁵ Charles Dickens, *Hard Times*, chapter 1

- history is about the learning of dates.

The most serious problem here is the equating of knowledge with facts or information. Propositional knowledge is but one kind of knowledge, and it is the essence of the mature disciplines that propositions must be tested, whether through the assembling and examination of evidence which marks out the methodology of the physical and human sciences, or by tests of authenticity and artistry which may be applied in the arts, or simply in relation to honestly-assessed experience. In any case, propositional knowledge need not be as sterile as 'the learning of dates' portrays it, and for many people to acquire information both excites and liberates. To tell children, at the start of lives in which they will be assailed by information which they fail to evaluate at their peril, and in which they will need and want to know and discover a great deal, that Google and a mobile phone will do the trick, is a travesty of what knowing and understanding ought to be about. Educationally, it is also highly irresponsible.

What is doubly disturbing about the point of view illustrated above is that England's national curriculum was initially credited with breaking away from such perceptions and encouraging greater attention to modes of enquiry and the assessing of evidence. But then, our witnesses have reported that one consequence of curriculum overcrowding in the past decade has been to force teachers more and more into transmission mode.

If the various domains of knowledge are viewed not as collections of inert or obsolete information but as *distinct ways of knowing, understanding, enquiring and making sense* which include processes of enquiry, modes of explanation and criteria for verification which are generic to all content in the domain, then far from being redundant or irrelevant, knowledge provides the means to tackle future problems and needs as well as offering windows of unparalleled richness on past and present. Knowledge in this sense also provides the pupil with essential tools for testing the truth and value of all that information which pours from the internet, television, radio and newspapers, and the teacher's task becomes one of initiation into this critically-armed frame of mind rather than the mere transmission that is the stock-in-trade of the teacher 'barking out facts'. We cannot at the same time hope that science will enable us to cure the hitherto incurable disease, or offer the world a route to sustainability and survival, while asserting that subjects – including of course science – are educational old hat and need to be replaced by skills or themes.

Rejection of a knowledge-based curriculum, therefore, reflects in part a simple misapprehension about the nature of knowledge itself, and the partisan bodies of information with which mere transmission pedagogy and its totalitarian variant, indoctrination, are associated. But in the processual sense advocated above, mathematics, the sciences, arts and humanities will be no less relevant and useful in the 21st century than they were in the 20th. For they develop rather than stand still, proceeding on the basis of cumulation, verification and/or falsification. Thus, Matthew Arnold's view of culture as 'the best that has been known and said in the world' needs to submit neither to relativist sneers nor to post-modernist nihilism. For by its sheer intellectual and imaginative power, and by its dogged integrity in the face of ignorance, scepticism or autocracy, the best of past thinking always tells us something new about ourselves and our world. Knowledge may be cumulative, but certain knowledge transformations and acts of artistic creation or scientific discovery are so fundamental that they never lose their power and should be visited afresh by each generation. If teachers confine themselves to 'barking out facts', then they understand neither knowledge nor pedagogy.

No less fundamentally, knowledge looks forward as well as back. Scientific research is permanently on the move and its truths are no sooner accepted than superseded, the arts are constantly pushing at the boundaries of form and expression, and for every conventional history there is a radical alternative. As for that traditional core of all curricula, literacy, it is right to ask whether what counted as literacy for the pen-pushing Victorian clerks of the British Empire can serve also as a literacy for the global information age, even though some would continue to confine the literacy debate to endless arguments about phonics. As Luke and Carrington argue, we may now need a pluralist vocabulary of 'literacies' which can accommodate in a convincing and coherent way text both print and virtual, literature both canonical and popular, and narratives both local and international²⁶. The Rose Review's interim report commends the broadening of the concept of literacy to include 'scientific, technological, mathematical and economic "literacy"'.²⁷ On the other hand, we may also need to be alert to the possibility that the proliferation of 'literacies' carries the same danger as the proliferation of 'skills': the force and discipline of the word as originally used, and of the practice undertaken in its name, is weakened or lost.

All this is before we begin to talk about public and private knowledge; about the way, within and outside the public forms of knowing and understanding, individuals make their own sense, drawing on knowledge 'out there' and accommodating it to their personal worlds; about the role of schools, no less than universities, as sites for knowledge creation and reconstruction. These, too, are important areas for debate, not least in the context of the movement towards constructivist pedagogy to which we refer in our final report. So too is an understanding of the relationship between knowledge, social structure and power, for without that understanding we may not perceive how the elevation of certain kinds of knowledge represses others, and how a curriculum's 'selection from culture' may be interested only in the culture of a society's upper layers, thereby fuelling the sense of marginalisation or exclusion among those whose culture appears not to be valued. In our plural, divided and unequal society, this apparently theoretical issue has direct relevance to the work of teachers in some of the country's most challenging educational environments. It is taken up directly in the new aims for primary education proposed later in this report, in the Review's response to witness concerns about community engagement and regeneration, and in our proposals for a vibrant local dimension to curriculum and curriculum planning.

These matters should be the stock in trade of those – curriculum planners and teachers – who select, mediate and pronounce upon the knowledge which children encounter. The one thing needful here, apart from a very different discourse about knowledge from the one with which we are familiar, is that the study of knowledge itself should secure a central place in the training of teachers. At the moment, it is rarely seen.

Skills

A rather different kind of reductionism attends discussion of skills, currently the fashionable educational antidote to knowledge. At the same time as knowledge is downgraded to obsolescent information, everything else is elevated to a skill. So, for example, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers' submission to the Review claimed that today's children need:

²⁶ Luke and Carrington (2002)

²⁷ Rose (2008), para 2.25

a skills based curriculum, focused on the physical skills, the communication, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills and the thinking and learning skills as well as the academic skills which will be essential components of the educated person who is able to think and act effectively in the twenty-first century.

The belief here is that skills combine contemporary relevance, future flexibility and hands-on experience: that is, those attributes which knowledge is presumed to lack. The modes of knowing, understanding and enquiring embodied in the established disciplines are themselves reduced to 'academic skills' from which, presumably, knowledge is excluded. Skills, it is believed, transcend both knowledge and time.

In similar vein, the Rose Review's interim report proposes replacing the knowledge-rich core of the current national curriculum – English, mathematics and science – by a new core of four 'skills for learning and life' – literacy, numeracy, ICT and personal development;²⁸ while the QCA's 'big picture of the curriculum' highlights 'literacy, numeracy, ICT, personal, learning and thinking skills' but defines 'knowledge and understanding' merely as 'big ideas that shape the world'.²⁹

In all such cases, the concomitant to the elevation of skill – in itself, as we see below, a necessary development – is the downgrading of knowledge, understanding, enquiry and exploration. But to set them in opposition is foolish, unnecessary and epistemologically unsound, for all but the most elemental skills – and certainly those that in educational circles are defined as 'basic skills' – require knowledge, and knowledge itself is far more than 'big ideas that have shaped the world'. Or indeed, far less, for is it proposed that ideas that have not 'shaped the world' should be excluded from the curriculum, that eminence matters more than destiny obscure? Whose world are we talking about anyway? Is there an applied judgement here that to 'shape' is to shape for the better? Does the definition encompass the casualties of world-shaping ambition as well as the usual list of heroes? And who decides on all these matters? QCA?

Further, in terms of our argument that primary education should balance preparation for future needs and circumstances with attention to the needs and capabilities of children here and now, this shift is clearly driven by the former. Thus the Royal Society of Arts, Manufacture and Commerce (RSA) reworks the entire curriculum in terms of five areas of 'competence': for learning, citizenship, relating to people, managing situations, and managing information,³⁰ and the government identifies three broad domains of 'skill': vocational skills which are specific to particular work settings; job-specific skills distinctive to particular positions within a given occupation; and generic skills, transferable across different work and life settings.³¹

Clearly, the first two groups – vocational and job-specific skills – may provoke the same objection on the grounds of built-in obsolescence as knowledge-as-information. For this reason many advocates of this approach prefer to transfer them to the category of training/retraining in the more specific domain of vocational education, and place greatest emphasis during general schooling on the lifelong learning potential of the third group, generic skills. Here is a typical list:

²⁸ Rose (2008), para 2.23

²⁹ QCA (2007a), 31

³⁰ Bayliss (1999)

³¹ DfEE (1998b)

- managing one's own learning
- problem-solving
- thinking
- research, enquiry and investigation
- invention, enterprise and entrepreneurship
- communication
- social and interpersonal skills
- teamwork
- leadership³²

We note immediately that David Hargreaves' list is no mere exercise in curriculum re-naming in pursuit of a spurious notion of 'relevance'. Everything here can make a strong claim to the status of skill as properly defined: the 'ability to do something (especially manual or physical) well; proficiency, expertness, dexterity ... acquired through practice or learning'.³³ During the last few decades, 'skill' has lost its embedding in 'manual or physical' activity, possibly as these have lost their dominance in the world of work. What has not been lost is the sense of skill as the capacity to *do* something: a capacity which is in the broadest sense practical and which is honed through concentration and practice. This is why skill is so important in education, why it must complement knowing and understanding rather than supplant them, and why as a concept it must not be debased through inappropriate use.

It is therefore useful to note that Hargreaves' list includes capacities which are needed to advance knowledge and understanding (problem-solving, research, enquiry and investigation) and those which do not necessarily lie within the boundaries of a knowledge-based curriculum (invention, enterprise and entrepreneurship, social and interpersonal skills, teamwork, leadership). In this formulation, and unlike the re-naming instances we have given, skills extend the scope of the curriculum in a convincing and wholly necessary way.

Even so, if skills are *all* that a curriculum offers, as some of our witnesses have advocated, then we have a problem. Even when one hives off the explicitly vocational skills, most such models tend to be more strongly influenced by the needs of the workplace than by other contexts for life after school, let alone the needs of children here and now. And though the generic skills approach purports to address the claims of lifelong learning, it actually sells such learning short, for it elevates being able to do something over knowing, understanding, reflecting, speculating, analysing and evaluating, which arguably are no less essential to the fulfilled, successful and useful life. Indeed, without these capacities the exercise of skill becomes in a very real sense meaningless.

Skills are vital. We cannot survive without them. But, once again, educators should use the term more discriminatingly, otherwise we shall carelessly lose not only knowledge and understanding, but also skill itself.

Definitional footnote

We end up, then, with six basic curriculum terms in need of differentiation:

³² Hargreaves (2004b)

³³ OED definition.

- *Curriculum*: what is intended to be taught and learned overall (the planned curriculum); what is taught (the curriculum as enacted); what is learned (the curriculum as experienced).
- *Subject*: an organisational or conceptual segment of the planned curriculum; may be disciplinary, cross-disciplinary or thematic.
- *Timetable*: the way the planned curriculum is divided temporally into lessons or sessions as opposed to being divided organisationally or conceptually into subjects.
- *Knowledge*: the process and outcome of coming to know, or the combination of what is known and how such knowledge is acquired. It encompasses knowledge both propositional and procedural, public and personal, established and reconstructed, and it allows for reservation and scepticism as well as certainty. It is neither synonymous with subjects nor all that a curriculum contains, though it is nevertheless a central goal of all education.
- *Discipline*: a branch of knowledge as systematised into distinct ways of enquiring, knowing, exploring, creating, explaining and making sense, each with their own key foci, preoccupations, concepts, procedures and products.
- *Skill*: the ability to make or do something, especially of a practical kind; requires knowledge but is distinct from it.

3 - TOWARDS A NEW PRIMARY CURRICULUM

Our approach

In the first volume of this report we described present curriculum arrangements and traced their roots. We also summarised the considerable quantity of evidence on curriculum matters received by the Review. On some of this evidence we have felt obliged to comment, and combining it with our own analysis we have identified what appear to be the central problems in contemporary primary curriculum policy and practice and in the thinking which informs them.

We are now ready to move forward. The position of the Cambridge Primary Review is that a future primary curriculum must:

- confront and attempt to address the *problems and challenges* in current arrangements;
- be grounded in explicit *principles* of design and implementation;
- pursue and remain faithful to a clear and defensible statement of educational *aims and values*.

These criteria structure what follows.

Tackling the problems

The main problems in existing national curriculum arrangements which must be addressed are these:

- The detachment of curriculum from aims.
- The supplanting of long-term educational goals by short-term targets of attainment.
- The real or perceived problem of curriculum overload, in the sense that many teachers believe that far too much is prescribed for the time available.
- The loss, for whatever reason, of the principle of children's entitlement to a broad, balanced and rich curriculum, and the marginalisation, in particular, of the arts, the humanities and – latterly – science.
- The test-induced regression to a valuing of memorisation and recall over understanding and enquiry, and to a pedagogy which rates transmission more important than the pursuit of knowledge in its wider sense.
- The dislocation and politicisation of both the whole curriculum and two major elements within it – English and mathematics – by the national strategies and the accompanying rhetoric of 'standards'.
- The use of a narrow spectrum of the curriculum as a proxy for the quality of the whole, and the loss of breadth and balance across and within subjects as a result of the pressures of testing, especially at the upper end of the primary school.
- The parallel pressure at the start of the primary phase, this time of formal learning on the developmental curriculum of the EYFS.
- The excess of prescription and micro-management by DCSF and QCA, their reinforcement through the focus of Ofsted inspection and TDA requirements for initial teacher training, and the resulting loss of professional flexibility and autonomy.
- The historical split between 'the basics' and the rest of the curriculum, in which differential time allocations legitimately set in pursuit of curriculum priorities are

compounded by unacceptable differences in the quality of provision as between these two segments.

- The continuing and demonstrably mistaken assumption that high standards in ‘the basics’ can be achieved only by marginalising much of the rest of the curriculum.
- A muddled discourse about subjects, knowledge and skills which infects the entire debate about curriculum, needlessly polarises discussion of how it might be organised, parodies knowledge and undervalues its place in education and inflates the undeniably important notion of skill to a point where it, too, becomes meaningless.

Curriculum overload, real or perceived

On the face of it, the solution is to prescribe less and leave more to the judgement of individual schools. However, because we know that some schools manage the same curriculum much more successfully than others, the answer must also lie in improved planning at school level, a better match of professional expertise to curriculum task, and more effective ways of deploying that expertise. In these matters local authorities have an essential role, quite apart from the part they can play in the realisation of our proposed aims of local citizenship and the celebration of local culture and community (see section on aims below).

Marginalisation of the arts and humanities

This is not, or not only, about reducing prescription overall. In the first instance, it requires a much more confident – perhaps even aggressive – assertion of the educational importance of the arts and humanities in human development, culture and education, and a refusal to capitulate to narrowly-conceived criteria of ‘relevance.’ Ministerial support for the arts in education tends to sound tokenistic and insincere, whether or not it is. Authoritative official enquiries on the arts, creativity and culture are warmly applauded and then disappear without trace.³⁴ At school level, the persistence of the ‘two curricula’ problem suggests that the marginalisation relates also to teacher expertise and the neglect of the non-core subjects in initial teacher training (ITT) and continuing professional development (CPD). Those primary schools which do not allow vulnerable subjects to be marginalised are those which are confident and knowledgeable about their value and which have the expertise to teach them well. Reinstating the arts and humanities in primary education requires a campaign on several fronts simultaneously.

The distortion of the curriculum by the national strategies

Leaving aside the question of the impact of the strategies on standards, which is assessed in this Review’s final report, their non-statutory status should be insisted upon, and should not be countermanded by inspection procedures or teacher training requirements which treat them as obligatory. In any event, it is for individual schools to ensure, through sound planning and good teaching, that the strategies support rather than deny children’s entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum.

³⁴ For example, the 1999 Robinson Report (NACCCE 1999), commissioned by the then Secretary of State, David Blunkett.

The strategies' dislocation of English and mathematics

Eliminating this problem would seem to require that the PNS and Primary Framework, successors to the NLS and NNS, be abandoned as separate initiatives, that literacy be reunited with English and numeracy with mathematics, and that they once again become the responsibility of QCA or whatever agency is responsible for the rest of the curriculum (though on the powers of the latter, see below). It is of course acknowledged that the strategies have generated a large body of useful professional support material, but this need not be lost in the re-integration of English and mathematics. The professional networking latterly encouraged by the PNS should also be built upon, and indeed is essential to what we propose below.

The adverse impact on the curriculum of the KS2 tests

This requires reform of the testing regime, as discussed in the final report of the Cambridge Primary Review to be published later in 2009. A reduced obsession with targets might also re-invigorate discussion of aims more broadly conceived.

Pressure on the EYFS

Some see a contradiction in the Rose Review interim report. On the one hand it supports 'play-based' learning in the EYFS and teaching in Y1 which is more aligned to the six EYFS areas of learning and development. On the other it proposes a single entry point into the reception class – the September immediately following a child's fourth birthday – on the grounds that this will secure more positive learning outcomes for all children, including the summer born and those from disadvantaged backgrounds.³⁵ As we noted earlier, the real issue here is the nature of the provision. However, early years experts are concerned that too many reception classes reflect downward pressure from KS1 rather than the integrity of the EYFS as conceived, and for that reason resist such a move and view it as incompatible with the Rose Review's support for the principles embodied in the EYFS.

Unease about the reception year started as soon as the national curriculum was introduced in 1989. Whatever they have separately achieved, the expansion of pre-school provision and the KS1/2 standards agenda have made this vital point of transition increasingly fraught, for it has been squeezed by two very different views of what primary education should be about.

In this report we take the view that the integrity of the EYFS must be preserved but also that the curriculum we propose can build readily onto the EYFS areas of learning and experience, provided that – and it is an important proviso – schools are able to make their own decisions about how this is done. But there is a structural issue here too, and in our final report we shall make proposals for rationalising the phasing of primary education as a whole, in respect of both organisation and curriculum, which we believe will help to resolve the problem.

The 'two curricula' problem

This goes right back to the beginning of mass basic education and it cannot be solved overnight. It entails attention to all those tendencies which exacerbate differential time

³⁵ Rose (2008), 48-54

allocation by unacceptable qualitative variation in what children encounter and experience as between different subjects and requires:

- re-educating stakeholders about what the 'curriculum 2' subjects offer when they are valued and well taught, and about children's educational need for a broad and balanced curriculum at the primary stage;
- re-instatement in ITT and CPD of all subjects to be taught and their pursuit there at a properly serious and demanding level so that teachers understand their true worth and potential;
- ensuring that every school has the professional expertise to teach all subjects well, regardless of how much time is allocated to them;
- re-assessing the balance of generalist, semi-specialist and specialist teaching and of the staffing establishment which schools need in order to deploy such teaching as needed.

The loss of breadth and balance within subjects

This is partly about reducing the scope of what is prescribed, partly about re-balancing the programmes of study, and partly about pedagogy. If it is the case, as it is, that many teachers succeed in making individual subjects lively and challenging without capitulating to mere transmission, then at stake is not just what is prescribed but also teachers' understanding of the subjects in question and the scope of their pedagogic repertoire. This takes us back, yet again, to ITT and CPD.

Excessive micro-management

This is a systemic problem which affects many aspects of English primary education. In the specific context of curriculum, there would appear to be three solutions:

- reduce the scope of the prescribed curriculum to a broad framework which encourages and indeed requires schools to provide the detail;
- change the QCA's role to a purely advisory one;
- replace professional dependence by autonomy through training which deepens teachers' curriculum knowledge and understanding, including both their specialist knowledge of particular subjects and their capacity to use the language and concepts of curriculum more expertly. Changes are also dictated in inspection and teacher training.

The opposing of standards and breadth

We have to be blunt: it is time that ministers and officials started taking notice of the evidence on the necessary relationship between standards and breadth. The evidence may be politically counter-intuitive but it is also well-established, consistent and unequivocal.

Subjects, disciplines, knowledge, skills and the discourse of curriculum

In the long term, the pervasive failure to speak with proper understanding and discrimination about subjects, disciplines, knowledge and skills can only be addressed through ITT and CPD. While supposedly training teachers to advance children's knowledge and skill in specific subjects, ITT has (a) neglected many of those subjects and (b) failed to educate teachers in even the basics of epistemology. Learning, knowing, understanding, acquiring skill and developing personal qualities are the essence of education. Disciplines provide a significant resource and focus for that endeavour, though not the only one.

Subjects offer one way, though again not the only way, of translating what is to be learned and taught into a curriculum which is manageable on a day-to-day basis.

The ability to move with ease around this conceptual and organisational territory is particularly important for primary teachers because the generalist tradition requires them to think about, plan and teach the curriculum as a whole. Unless it is prepared to be radical, a secondary school may be able to confine its thinking about the curriculum as a whole to the admittedly complex task of timetabling, knowing that the boundaries of what is to be timetabled are set and agreed. It seems almost inconceivable that this complex and controversial field has been neglected in primary teachers' training; but it has, and the matter should be addressed without delay.

However, the pressure is on to devise a new primary curriculum to start in 2011 and that is too soon for changes in ITT and CPD to make the necessary impact, and in any event the changes will not touch those who make the decisions. All we can do is insist that there is a problem, and urge those concerned to recognise it as such and attend to it with due seriousness. It cannot be the task of the Cambridge Primary Review to plan the curriculum in detail; but to those charged with this task we would urge very careful attention to the business of differentiating the different kinds of knowledge and understanding, the skills and the personal qualities and attributes which the new curriculum seeks to advance and foster.

In particular, the fundamental place in primary education of both knowledge *and* skill needs to be asserted, and the skills which children need for today's learning and tomorrow's world need to be identified with precision.

Warning: the blame game

To this brief summation we add that although there is a clear case for less central prescription and micro-management, in a centralised system it is all too easy for professionals to blame government and national agencies for problems which, partly or even wholly, may have their roots in professional understanding, expertise and resourcefulness, not to mention school leadership. This is clearly demonstrated by the fact that some schools and teachers transcend what appear to be systemic problems, and are led with the dynamism and independence of spirit which gives their staff the necessary confidence to break free of the culture of dependence and compliance. Yet there is no doubt that there is considerable pressure from the top to conform to particular views of 'best practice' and that asserting such independence requires both real courage and a record of success as conventionally defined. All this demonstrates the importance for a sound curriculum not only of matters discussed here but also of those considered in other parts of the Cambridge Primary Review: pedagogy, teacher expertise, training and deployment, and school leadership.

Forward from principles

The principles upon which the Cambridge Primary Review has concluded that primary education should be based will be presented and elaborated in the Review's final report. Here they can be summarised as:

- Entitlement
- Quality, standards and accountability

- Equity
- Responsiveness to national need
- Responsiveness to local needs and opportunities
- Balancing national, local and individual
- Balancing preparation and development
- Guidance, not prescription
- Continuity and consistency
- Human rights
- Sustainability
- Democratic engagement
- Respect for evidence
- Resources and support

The principles apply to different degrees and in different ways at the levels of national government, local authority and school. Each level has its part to play in implementing them, in contrast to what some see as the full-blown centralism of recent years and the countervailing rhetoric of ‘partnership’ between government and schools, which underplays the contribution of local authorities and communities. Instead, the principles re-assert the need for a genuine and vibrant localism in which partnership between school and community, school and school, and school and local authority are essential to a curriculum which can respond to children’s needs and circumstances, and which is able to realise the aim of ‘celebrating culture and community’, one of the 12 in our list of new aims for primary education (see below).

Without going into detail about the principles, it is pertinent in this context to comment on four of them.

Entitlement. Entitlement – of all children, to a curriculum in which aims are universally pursued, through content which is reasonably consistent, in pursuit of outcomes, standards and quality which apply regardless of which school the child attends – can only be guaranteed by a national curriculum framework. However, we must bear in mind our evidence that in recent years government appears to have been at the same time the official guarantor of children’s entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum and a threat to it through some of its other policies. Therefore, those bodies which are in a position to scrutinise the impact of such policies, notably Parliament, Ofsted and the House of Commons Children, Schools and Families Committee, will need to be vigilant and vocal in upholding both the principle and the law in this regard. Further, the sheer diversity of local circumstances means that national bodies can safeguard entitlement only up to a point: local authorities and schools must play their part too.

Quality, standards and accountability. We have asserted that those involved in a public system of education should be accountable for what they do, and this requires standards against which such accountability can be demonstrated. But we have also noted that educational ‘quality’ and ‘standards’, still less ‘standards’ as defined solely by reference to selected aspects of literacy and numeracy, must not be treated as synonymous, and that what is meant by quality in primary education needs urgently to be re-assessed and re-defined.

It is also important to be aware that in centralised regimes accountability tends to be one-directional. That is to say, those with most power habitually call to account those with least, despite the fact that culpability for what goes wrong may well lie with those who determine

policy as much as with those who implement it. Under the old HMI system, an independent inspectorate was able to balance comment on schools with critique, where necessary, of government policy. Under the current Ofsted system this is less likely, and there is a tendency to treat policy as beyond reproach and to concentrate on how far schools comply with it. In the interests of both efficiency and justice there now needs to be greater mutuality in the mechanisms for educational accountability.

Guidance, not prescription. This principle has two direct practical consequences: first, reduction in the amount of curriculum detail emanating from government and the national agencies, so that local flexibility and freedom become a realistic prospect; second, a clear statement to the effect that, subject to the broad curriculum framework proposed below, the role of the national agencies becomes advisory. We have argued separately that the national strategies should cease to operate in their present form and that guidance on literacy and numeracy should be re-integrated into the national curriculum framework.

Balancing national and local. Local circumstances and needs, by their nature, cannot be made subject to national prescription. Three changes are indicated: first, a re-balancing of responsibility between national and local government; second, a preparedness of local government to generate a culture of genuine partnership with and between schools rather than regress to that lower-tier centralisation and paternalism for which some local authorities were notable during the 1970s and 1980s; third, the reservation of time and space for local elements in the national curriculum framework. At present, curriculum localism applies only, through the SACREs, to religious education. There may be a need for a whole-curriculum equivalent to the SACREs. However, on the principle of 'guidance, not prescription', schools might determine their own response to the outcome. Some might argue, indeed, that true localism leaves such matters entirely to individual schools. Past evidence should discourage that.

Forward from aims

The Cambridge Primary Review has made the elucidation of values and aims for contemporary primary education one of its central tasks; and with aims as with the curriculum, it has treated no aspect of current arrangements as sacrosanct. In contrast, the Rose Review is bound by its remit to advance existing policy. Thus: 'The Children's Plan is the platform on which this Review is based. This is because the aims and values for primary education must be seen in the light of the Children's Plan.'³⁶

There are several rather unsatisfactory features of the Rose Review's treatment of aims. The report recommends that 'The revised primary curriculum should be underpinned by a statement of aims and values which is fit for all stages of education'³⁷, which encourages readers of what is supposedly a consultation document to see the debate as open; but the report then not only insists on the primacy of the Children's Plan but adds: 'Although this Review will continue to test views upon it and comment in the final report, the statement of aims for secondary education compares well with its international counterparts and holds good for the primary phase and indeed the EYFS.'³⁸ Then, as further and final discouragement to readers to entertain the possibility of alternatives, Rose builds the

³⁶ Rose (2008), para 1.1

³⁷ Rose (2008), recommendation 3

³⁸ Rose (2008), para 1.34

DCFS/QCA secondary aims firmly into its structure for the revised primary curriculum³⁹ and adds (our italics) that ‘each programme [for Rose’s six areas of learning] *must show, explicitly*, how the area of learning helps all children to become...’ Then follow the three main secondary aims.

So there is no room for debate in the Rose report, either about the aims as such or whether an identical set is appropriate for early years, primary and secondary. Yet so much is taken for granted here – about the efficacy of a well-received but untried Children’s Plan, about the wisdom of validating one country’s aims by reference to another’s, about making aims uniform across educational stages, about the usefulness of the existing DCSF/QCA secondary aims in any context – that to proceed without proper debate in this vital area would be wholly wrong. Above all, bringing together educational aims conceived for one context and a view of the curriculum conceived for another, in the hope that they will more or less fit, is the antithesis of the proper approach. Aims, values and priorities for primary education should be sorted out first; the curriculum should then be devised to enact and implement them.

The Cambridge Primary Review is not so constrained. Its final report examines aims in English education from historical and international perspectives, but also, and vitally, from first principles:

What is primary education for? To what needs and purposes should it be chiefly directed over the coming decades? What core values and principles should it uphold and advance? Taking account of the country and the world in which our children are growing up, to what individual, social, cultural, economic and other circumstances and needs should it principally attend?⁴⁰

The Cambridge Review reaches its recommended list of aims for primary education after considering evidence received from a wide variety of sources, not only on aims as such but also on the on the contingent questions above. It must be said, too, that on the condition of childhood, Britain and the world today, many our witnesses expressed hopes and concerns which translated readily into values and aims which bear little relation to the DCSF/QCA secondary school aims which the Rose Review appears to be saying must be accepted as a basis for the primary and EYFS curriculum. The issue here is partly the secondary backwash problem referred to earlier, for although aims should be *consistent* from one stage to the next there is no reason why they should be *identical*; but there is also the matter of the validity of the aims themselves, which are ‘to help all children become

- successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve;
- confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives; and
- responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.’⁴¹

It might be suggested that these aims are not so much high aspirations as minimal expectations. Schools should certainly help their pupils to become successful and confident learners, for if they don’t do this they might as well close down. But ‘successful’ in relation to what, and displaying what kind of ‘confidence’? What will they actually learn? The only one of the three aims that offers any kind of signpost for the curriculum – for a direct link

³⁹ Rose (2008), 39

⁴⁰ Cambridge Primary Review remit:

http://www.primaryreview.org.uk/Themes_and_questions/The10ReviewThemes.html#1

⁴¹ Rose (2008), para 1.33

between aims and curriculum, as we have said, is essential – is ‘responsible citizens’, which would appear to indicate a place for citizenship and aspects of what is called ‘personal, social and health education’ (PSHE). It is true that the first aim makes the usual mention of the 3Rs, now expanded for the information age – ‘the essential learning skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology’ – but a curriculum is, or ought to be, a lot more than that, and in any case we have contested the reduction of such important and complex areas of human endeavour as literacy, numeracy and ICT to ‘skill’ alone.

The Cambridge Review’s 12 aims for primary education

Here, as an alternative, are the aims for primary education proposed by the Cambridge Primary Review. Their origins and rationale are explained in detail in the Review’s final report. They are grounded in analysis of the needs, capabilities and circumstances of children now, of their likely future needs as adults and lifelong learners, and of the condition of the society and world in which they are growing up. These aims are fundamental, and inform not only the curriculum but also wider aspects of pedagogy and the life of the school. The 12 aims are presented first as a list. Each is then explained.

The individual

1. Wellbeing
2. Engagement
3. Empowerment
4. Autonomy

Self, others and the wider world

5. Encouraging respect and reciprocity
6. Promoting interdependence and sustainability
7. Empowering local, national and global citizenship
8. Celebrating culture and community

Learning, knowing and doing

9. Exploring, knowing, understanding, making sense
10. Fostering skill
11. Exciting the imagination
12. Enacting dialogue

The first group identifies those personal qualities and capacities which schools should strive to foster and the individual needs to which they should attend. In light of our own widely-publicised evidence,⁴² as well as that from major enquiries under the auspices of the United Nations and the (UK) Children’s Society,⁴³ heading the list with wellbeing should occasion no surprise. The second group extends these personal needs, qualities and capacities into four critically important orientations to other people and the wider world. The third group focuses on the content, processes and outcomes of learning, or the central curriculum experiences and encounters which primary schools should provide. The full rationale for the

⁴² Alexander and Hargreaves (2007): this report attracted considerable media coverage when it was published in October 2007. See also the text of the lecture given at the joint conference of the Cambridge Primary Review, the Good Childhood Inquiry and the GTC: http://www.primaryreview.org.uk/Downloads/Childhood_Well-being_and_Primary_Education_Robin_Alexander_lecture_170308.pdf (March 2008).

⁴³ UNICEF (2007), Layard and Dunn (2009).

aims, and the evidence on which they draw, are provided in the forthcoming final report on the Review as a whole.

The individual

- ***Wellbeing.*** To attend to children's capabilities, needs, hopes and anxieties here and now, and promote their mental, emotional and physical wellbeing and welfare. Happiness, a strong sense of self and a positive outlook on life are not only desirable in themselves: they are also conducive to engagement and learning. But wellbeing goes much further than this, and 'happiness' on its own looks merely self-indulgent. Caring for children's wellbeing is about attending to their physical and emotional welfare. It is about inducting them into a life where they will be wholeheartedly engaged in all kinds of worthwhile activities and relationships, defined generously rather than narrowly. It is about maximising children's learning potential through good teaching and the proper application of evidence about how children develop and learn and how teachers most effectively teach. Fostering children's wellbeing requires us to attend to their future fulfilment as well as their present needs and capabilities. Wellbeing thus defined is both a precondition and an outcome of successful primary education.
- ***Engagement.*** To secure children's active, willing and enthusiastic engagement in their learning.
- ***Empowerment.*** To excite, promote and sustain children's agency, empowering them through knowledge, understanding, skill and personal qualities to profit from their present and later learning, to discover and lead rewarding lives, and to manage life and find new meaning in a changing world.
- ***Autonomy.*** To foster children's autonomy and sense of self through a growing understanding of the world present and past, and through productive relationships with others. Autonomy enables individuals to establish who they are and to what they might aspire; it enables the child to translate knowledge into meaning; it encourages that critical independence of thought which is essential both to the growth of knowledge and to citizenship; it enables children to discriminate in their choice of activities and relationships; and it helps them to see beyond the surface appeal of appearance, fashion and celebrity to what is of abiding value.

Self, others and the wider world

- ***Encouraging respect and reciprocity.*** To promote respect for self, for peers and adults, for other generations, for diversity and difference, for language, culture and custom, for ideas and values, and for those habits of willing courtesy between persons on which civilised relations depend. To ensure that respect is mutual: between adult and child as well as between child and adult. To understand the essential reciprocity of learning and human relations.
- ***Promoting interdependence and sustainability.*** To develop children's understanding of humanity's dependence for well-being and survival on equitable relationships between individuals, groups, communities and nations, and on a sustainable relationship with the natural world, and help children to move from understanding to positive action in order that they can make a difference and know that they have the power to do so.

- ***Empowering local, national and global citizenship.*** To help children to become active citizens by encouraging their full participation in decision-making within the classroom and school, especially where their own learning is concerned, and to advance their understanding of human rights, democratic engagement, diversity, conflict resolution and social justice. To develop a sense that human interdependence and the fragility of the world order require a concept of citizenship which is global as well as local and national.
- ***Celebrating culture and community.*** To establish the school as a cultural site, a focal point of community life and thought. To enact within the school the behaviours and relationships on which community most directly depends, and in so doing to counter the loss of community outside the school. To appreciate that 'education is a major embodiment of a culture's way of life, not just a preparation for it';⁴⁴ and 'School is a place of culture – that is, a place where a personal and collective culture is developed that influences the social political and values context and, in turn, is influenced by this context in a relationship of deep and authentic reciprocity.'⁴⁵ Policy has paid little attention to the cultural and communal significance of primary schools and their pupils, except perhaps in the context of decisions about rural school closures, and then only after the event, as it were. This is a grave omission. To establish itself as a thriving cultural and communal site should be a principal aim of every school.

Learning, knowing and doing

- ***Exploring, knowing, understanding and making sense.*** To enable children to encounter and begin to explore the wealth of human experience through induction into, and active engagement in, the different ways through which humans make sense of their world and act upon it: intellectual, moral, spiritual, aesthetic, social, emotional and physical; through language, mathematics, science, the humanities, the arts, religion and other ways of knowing and understanding. *Induction* acknowledges and respects our membership of a culture with its own deeply-embedded ways of thinking and acting which can make sense of complexity and through which human understanding constantly changes and advances. Education is necessarily a process of acculturation. *Exploration* is grounded in that distinctive mixture of amazement, perplexity and curiosity which constitutes childhood wonder; a commitment to discovery, invention, experiment, speculation, fantasy, play and growing linguistic agility which are the essence of childhood.
- ***Fostering skill.*** To foster children's skills in those domains on which learning, employment and a rewarding life most critically depend: in oracy and literacy, in mathematics, science, information technology, the creative and performing arts and financial management; but also in practical activities, communication, creativity, invention, problem-solving, critical practice and human relations. To ally skills to knowledge and a sense of purpose in order that they do not become empty formulae devoid of significance.
- ***Exciting the imagination.*** To excite children's imagination in order that they can advance beyond present understanding, extend the boundaries of their lives, contemplate worlds possible as well as actual, understand cause and consequence, develop the capacity for empathy, and reflect on and regulate their behaviour; to explore and test language, ideas

⁴⁴ Bruner (1996), 13

⁴⁵ Rinaldi (2001), 38

and arguments in every activity and form of thought. In these severely utilitarian and philistine times it has become necessary to argue the case for creativity and the imagination on the grounds of their contribution to the economy alone. Creative thinking is certainly an asset in any circumstance, and the economic case, as many arts organisations have found, can readily be made. At the same time, we assert the need to emphasise the *intrinsic* value of exciting children's imagination. To experience the delights – and pains – of imagining, and of entering into the imaginative worlds of others, is to become a more rounded person.

- ***Enacting dialogue.*** To help children grasp that learning is an interactive process and that understanding builds through joint activity between teacher and pupil and among pupils in collaboration, and thereby to develop pupils' increasing sense of responsibility for what and how they learn. To help children recognise that knowledge is not only transmitted but also negotiated and re-created; and that each of us in the end makes our own sense out of the meeting of knowledge both personal and collective. To advance a pedagogy in which dialogue is central: between self and others, between personal and collective knowledge, between present and past, between different ways of making sense.⁴⁶

The aims are interdependent. Thus, for example, empowerment and autonomy are achieved in part through exploring, knowing, understanding and making sense, through the development of skill, through the liberation of the imagination, and through the power of dialogue; and wellbeing comes not only from having one's immediate needs met in the way emphasised in *Every Child Matters*, but also from deep engagement in culture and the life of the community, from the development of meaningful relationships with others, and from engagement in those domains of collective action on which the larger wellbeing of civil society and the global community depend. In other words, our twelve aims are not a pick-and-mix checklist but the necessary elements in a coherent view of what it takes to become an educated person.

Note that we subsume welfare under wellbeing. In law they are defined separately, and 'welfare' tends to focus on maltreatment, abuse and neglect. It is right that these have received attention in recent years and the emphasis on welfare in *Every Child Matters* and the Children's Plan is applauded by the Review's witnesses. However, in defining aims for primary education we must attend to the needs of *all* children, not only those who are at risk and for whom welfare in the more focused sense is a priority. We believe that the necessary balance is secured by making wellbeing a central aim of primary education but incorporating welfare into its definition.

Finally, we warn against reductionism. The Rose Review tells us:

No matter how they are configured, educational aims and values generally recognise two mutually beneficial sets of outcomes: those for the benefit of the individual and those for the benefit of society (personal fulfilment and utilitarian benefits).⁴⁷

On that basis, some may see our first group of aims as 'individual' and the second as 'societal' in Rose's sense. However, 'the individual' and 'society' in the quoted definition

⁴⁶ On engagement, co-construction and the importance of student voice in securing both, see Hargreaves (2004a, 2006) and the important series of booklets prepared under his direction for the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust. On pedagogic and educational dialogue see Alexander (2008a, chapters 5 and 6).

⁴⁷ Rose (2008), para 1.32.

imply mutual exclusivity, even though Rose allows aims which lean one way or the other to be ‘mutually beneficial’. Thus, individuals who are engaged, empowered and capable of autonomous thought and decision are more likely to act effectively for the greater ‘benefit of society’ than those who are not; conversely, the Cambridge review’s ‘societal’ aims of respect, reciprocity, interdependence and cultural engagement clearly benefit the individual no less than others. We would particularly wish to distance ourselves from the equating of ‘for the benefit of society’ with ‘utilitarian benefits’. This seems to debase the high aspirations of citizenship, mutual respect, sustainability, community and cultural engagement as we understand and argue them.

Aims, curriculum and the life of the school

The curriculum is not the only context in which educational aims are pursued. Some aims apply in an obvious fashion to the curriculum as formally specified. Some relate more to the generic features of pedagogy and the relationships and culture of the classroom. Some are pursued equally or even more appropriately through the ethos and collective practices of the school as a whole. Some are engaged with in all of these contexts simultaneously. The possibilities are indicated in figure 2.

Figure 2

AIMS INTO PRACTICE: CONTEXTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

	Through specific curriculum domains	Through generic pedagogy	Through the life of the school and community
The individual			
Wellbeing			
Engagement			
Empowerment			
Autonomy			
Self, others and the wider world			
Encouraging respect and reciprocity			
Promoting interdependence & sustainability			
Empowering local, national & global citizenship			
Celebrating culture and community			
Learning, knowing and doing			
Exploring, knowing, understanding, making sense			
Fostering skill			
Exciting the imagination			
Enacting dialogue			

For example, *wellbeing* (aim 1) is on the face of it fostered in school mainly through relationships. However, to say – as frequently used to be said of primary education as a whole – ‘it’s all about relationships’ is to miss the point that wellbeing follows no less from securing children’s engagement in learning, giving them access to stimulating and worthwhile activities, exciting their interest and imagination and helping them to achieve high standards. In this sense, *Every Child Matters* is right that an enhanced concept of

childhood wellbeing requires that children should not only ‘be healthy’ and ‘stay safe’ – the minimal definition of wellbeing – but also ‘enjoy and achieve’ and ‘make a positive contribution’. ECM is right, too, in balancing wellbeing now and in the future (‘make a positive contribution’ and ‘achieve economic well-being’), though on the latter it might be argued that ‘not being prevented by economic disadvantage’ is one vital precondition for ‘achieving their full potential in life’ but not the only one.

Exploring, knowing, understanding and making sense (aim 9) reasserts the fundamental importance to the child’s education of encountering and being inducted into ‘the different ways that humans make sense of their world and act upon it’, principally through what we call the disciplines – language, mathematics, science, the arts, the humanities and so on – but also through other ways of knowing and understanding, both collective and personal. However, ‘exploring’ in this aim ensures that this induction does not stop short at the transmission and recall which have given subject teaching its arid reputation and reminds us that to enliven the child’s ‘amazement, perplexity, curiosity, discovery, invention, speculation, fantasy, play and linguistic agility’ requires a special and heightened form of pedagogy.

Celebrating culture and community (aim 8) is as much about what happens in the school – and indeed outside it – as in the classroom. Celebration, it must be noted, is not merely unfocused merriment but is as rooted in knowledge and understanding as are mathematics and science.

These three examples show how, although the curriculum framework proposed below may in some respects seem familiar, a new primary curriculum as outlined in this report uses every resource at the school’s disposal to pursue the specified educational aims. These are aims for primary education in all its aspects. Earlier we suggested that if pupils identify a subject only with transmission, memorisation and recall, this reflects not the intrinsic character of the subject but the way their teachers have chosen to interpret and teach it. In the same way, if our twelve aims for primary education are presumed to start and end with the various areas or subjects of the formal or paper curriculum, then a large part of their potential, and certainly of their impact on the pupil, will be lost.

What, then, should children learn?

It is a conventional truth, but a useful one, that *how* children learn is as important as *what* they learn, in as far as a curriculum, however relevant or inspiring it is on paper, will make little headway unless the teacher succeeds (aim 2) in igniting ‘children’s active, willing and enthusiastic engagement in their learning.’ The aims we have proposed contain other such reminders: the importance of the imagination (aim 11); of dialogue and joint activity which both motivate pupils and capitalise on what is now known about how brain, mind and understanding develop during the early and primary years (aim 12); and of generating that sense of empowerment allied to skill through which learning becomes inner-directed and autonomous rather than dependent on pressure from others (aims 3 and 4).

Yet we cannot accept the claims in some of the Primary Review submissions that ‘process’ is *all* that matters, that the content of the curriculum is no longer significant, and that in a fast-changing world knowledge is merely an ephemeral commodity to be downloaded, accepted without question or summarily discarded. Indeed, this is a view which we have deemed it necessary to contest with some vigour, for we believe it to be based on a fundamental

misunderstanding about the nature and possibilities of knowledge and on a caricature of teaching as telling and of learning as factual memorisation and recall.

That is why the aims, for all their apparent emphasis on process, include the unambiguous statement (aim 9) that primary education should enable children 'to encounter and begin to explore the wealth of human experience through induction into, and active engagement in, the different ways through which humans make sense of their world and act upon it: intellectual, moral, spiritual, aesthetic, social, emotional and physical; through language, mathematics, science, the humanities, the arts, religion and other ways of knowing and understanding.'

The statement goes on to remind us that knowledge matters because culture matters. Indeed, culture is what defines us: 'Induction acknowledges and respects our membership of a culture with its own deeply-embedded ways of thinking and acting which can make sense of complexity and through which human understanding constantly changes and advances. Education is necessarily a process of acculturation.'

That, too, is why the same statement couples knowing and understanding with exploring, discovering, experimenting, speculating and playing, for 'content' and 'process' are not mutually exclusive as in yet another of primary education's dichotomies they are held to be, but are equally essential aspects of knowing and understanding.

All this has now been rehearsed, but it leaves unanswered the question of what knowledge and understanding matter most at the primary stage. Since, as Denis Lawton notes, curriculum is necessarily a selection from culture, and Britain is anything but a monoculture, there are two questions:

- What knowledge?
- Which culture?

As the demography of Britain has changed, so discussion of the second question has shifted from the collision of 'high' and 'mass' or 'popular' culture which once preoccupied T.S.Eliot, F.R.Leavis and Richard Hoggart, to a keener awareness of the need somehow to balance the collective culture and identity of the nation, if there is such a thing, with the often very different cultures of Britain's many minorities and majorities, whether these are defined by race, faith, gender, age, class, income, politics or geography. Set against this many-layered complexity, the old debates about the 'canon' of English literature, art and music, or about cultural elitism and dumbing-down, seem almost straightforward. Now there is no longer one 'high' culture and another 'popular' culture, but many. In any case, culture in the artistic sense is not synonymous with culture in its wider sense of the values, beliefs and way of life of particular societies or groups.

This Review and its witnesses have added a further twist which was barely discussed by educators until very recently, the idea of culture as global. Initially this arose from a recognition of the extent to which economic and information globalisation have internationalised the way people and nations operate and have made them increasingly competitive in their dealings. Now there is a sharper and more urgent moral understanding of the inequity of international relationships, of the collision of cultures, and of the other collision of expanding consumer demand and diminishing natural resource. The earlier single-minded pursuit of the economic advantages of globalisation is now offset by a concern for interdependence and sustainability (aim 6), the idea that citizenship is global

and local as well as national (aim 7), and that the necessary sense of community begins not with abstract tests of 'Britishness' but with how people relate to each locally (aims 5, 7 and 8).

It is both impossible and inappropriate for the Cambridge Primary Review to seek to arbitrate on these matters. However, the last point above supports the principle of local involvement in curriculum decision-making, and hence of a protected local element in the curriculum. Beyond that, we extrapolate from the Review's evidence and the foregoing discussion a broad consensus that a properly-conceived primary education should include appropriate knowledge, exploration, skills and dispositions in the following fourteen areas. There is a perceptible logic to the sequence, though not a watertight one.

- *spoken language;*
- *reading and writing;*
- *wider aspects of language and communication, including literature and a modern foreign language;*
- *the electronic handling of communication and information through ICT;*
- *numeracy, wider aspects of mathematics and their applications;*
- *science, the workings of the physical world, human action on the physical world through science and technology, and its consequences;*
- *artistic, imaginative, creative and cultural endeavour, with particular reference to art, music, drama and dance, but also in other contexts;*
- *history, its impact on culture, consciousness and identity, and the lessons it offers for the present and future;*
- *geographical location, other people and other places – locally, nationally and globally – and their interdependence;*
- *the values, ethics, civil customs and procedures by which individuals, groups and nations act, co-exist and regulate their affairs;*
- *religious and other kinds of belief through which people make sense of their condition and guide their lives;*
- *the financial and other capacities needed for everyday transactions;*
- *the handling of emotions and relationships;*
- *the human body, its development and health.*

It is deceptively easy to attach labels to most of these, whether they are the subjects of the current national curriculum, the six 'areas of learning' proposed in the Rose Review interim report, or the eight 'curriculum areas' in Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence*:

- sciences
- languages
- mathematics
- expressive arts
- social studies
- technologies
- health and well-being
- religious and moral education.⁴⁸

Yet it is important to be alert to another kind of reductionism, the wrapping up of distinct and not necessarily compatible pursuits in larger parcels headed 'personal and social

⁴⁸ Scottish Government (2008)

education' or 'human, social and environmental understanding'. The motivation is to make an unmanageable curriculum of 10 or 12 subjects (or, as in our list, 14 areas of knowledge, understanding, skill and disposition) more manageable by collapsing it to half a dozen. This may not solve the problem, and in the process much that is important may be lost.

A rather different kind of grouping comes from Howard Gardner's 'multiple intelligences', or what he posits as the distinct ways and domains of the operation of the human brain:

- linguistic
- logico-mathematical
- spatial
- musical
- bodily-kinaesthetic
- interpersonal (relating to other people)
- intrapersonal (understanding oneself)
- naturalist (understanding the observable world)
- existential (understanding one's existence and place in the universe).⁴⁹

It will be observed that Gardner's model is not that far removed from a typical generic approach to a knowledge-based curriculum. But then, it must be asked, which came first, a human mind which has linguistic, mathematical and musical intelligences, or a curriculum which contains the language, mathematics and music that such intelligences have created? It would be stranger still if the culturally-evolved forms of knowledge and understanding and the posited multiple intelligences bore no relation to each other. The fact that there is overlap between the two kinds of framework, from utterly different starting points, actually strengthens the argument for a curriculum grounded in the different ways of knowing and understanding through which humans make sense of themselves and the world.

Yet for the moment none of the categories above is much more than a heading. What matters no less than defining the educationally essential domains of human knowledge, understanding and skill is what each of them subsumes. That is where the principles and aims proposed by this Review come in.

⁴⁹ Gardner (1999)

4 - PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER: A NEW CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The essentials of the proposed new framework for the primary curriculum are as follows.

Aims

The framework has just two axes: aims and domains. Such is the importance that we attach to the aims and of ensuring that aims and practice are consistent, that we place the aims firmly within the framework rather than leave them outside it to be referred to only if the will or opportunity exists.

Domains

The term 'domains' has been chosen in preference to a number of alternatives. 'Subjects' carry too much historical and political baggage to be helpful, and we have no wish to see discussion of our proposals splinter into pro-subject/anti-subject factionalism. 'Disciplines' strongly inform most of the domains but are not synonymous with them, and in any case they do not encompass the full range of knowledge, skill, disposition and modes of enquiry to which primary schools need to attend. 'Areas of learning' remind us that learning is what the curriculum is about, though it is somewhat vague, and in any case as the preferred term of the Rose Review it is best avoided to prevent confusion. Scotland's 'curriculum areas' is a no-nonsense descriptive term which, unlike 'subjects' is helpfully neutral in its connotations. However, 'areas' is slightly ragged at the edges and we believe that 'domain' better captures the sense that each of the components has its own internal coherence. We are tempted to attach 'cultural' – as in 'cultural domains' – since aspects of the wider culture rather than school subjects more narrowly defined is what these are, but the phrase will be probably rejected as cumbersome or pretentious.

The old core ...

In a departure from established practice, but in line with the evidence about the historic and continuing split between 'the basics' and 'the rest' and the educational damage that this has caused, the framework does not include a core in the familiar sense of a small number of subjects which, as recommended in Prime Minister Callaghan's 1976 Ruskin speech, are 'protected', while the others are not.

Self-evidently, language and literacy (though re-defined as below) remain the undisputed priority for primary education, both as a coherent domain and as skills which can and must be developed and applied across the entire curriculum. Self-evidently, too, the domains will be allocated different amounts of time. However, experience over the past 150 years has shown that creating a two-tier curriculum is an invitation to treat the second tier with far less seriousness than the first. Indeed, since 1997 primary schools have had in effect a *three*-tier primary curriculum: (i) literacy and numeracy, (ii) other aspects of English and mathematics, (iii) the rest of the curriculum, with the added anomaly, according to the Review's evidence, that science has hovered between the essential core in name and the dispensable non-core in practice.

It is possible that the Rose Review's new core of 'skills for learning and life'⁵⁰ will, if implemented, perpetuate the problem. For although Rose says that ' "core" and "foundation subjects would no longer apply in the same way,' he adds 'but the essential knowledge, skills and understanding that characterise these subjects will still be prioritised.'⁵¹ This is capable of only one interpretation: the name 'core' has been abandoned but the concept of a core, and all that follows from it, has been retained.

In contrast, the approach commended by the Cambridge Primary Review presumes that every domain, if it is significant enough to be included, is essential and belongs in a properly-conceived primary curriculum. Thus, every domain, however much time is allocated to it, should be treated with the same degree of seriousness and be accorded teaching of the highest possible quality. That being so, the term 'core' – which has meaning only if there is a non-core – becomes redundant.

... and the new curriculum

This report, and much of the evidence it cites, has argued that a 'one-size-fits-all' national curriculum is appropriate neither to the diversity of British culture nor to the very different circumstances of England's 17,000 or so primary schools and the communities they serve, and 'responsiveness to local need and circumstance' is one of the listed guiding principles for primary education as a whole.

This requirement arises for cultural and social as well as educational reasons, for one of the defining themes of our community soundings, and many of the submissions, is the loss of community itself, a trend which is also deplored by politicians and religious leaders. The Review's proposed aims, with their emphasis on interdependence, respect, reciprocity and citizenship, respond to this, and one of them – 'celebrating culture and community' – gives an explicit steer towards both the regeneration of communal life and an education in which mutuality in learning as well as relationships is axiomatic.

Articulating such aims takes us only so far: unless they are enacted in the curriculum we shall be left with the current dissonance of high ideals and expedient practice – which, we suggest, is risked by the Rose Review's quest for educational aims after the curriculum has been determined. And if the local and communal are so important and distinctive, they can neither be defined by national agencies nor left to chance in a curriculum in which nationally-defined requirements take all the time available. They must have an explicit and protected allocation of time, and local mechanisms for defining and validating them.

It is therefore proposed that each domain should have national and local components, with the time available for the local component across all domains set at 30 per cent of the *yearly* total.

This needs further explanation. A local element in the curriculum is appropriate, essential and therefore required, but making it mandatory in each domain would make little sense since a domain like mathematics has relatively limited scope for local variation while others – for example through local history or ecology, the exploration of local culture and faith, the arts in the local community and the work of local writers – offer considerable scope. Setting the expected allocation at 30 per cent *overall* allows schools to make some domains more

⁵⁰ Rose (2008), 37-39

⁵¹ *Ibid*, para 2.23

local than others. It also allows schools to compensate for over or under-representation in the national component. But if local planners cannot conceive of anything distinctly local in a particular domain this should not mean that it disappears from that level; rather that what is proposed nationally becomes local as well.

The local component is valuable, and indeed essential, in three further senses:

- This enquiry has reviewed research which confirms, in reaction against earlier deficit or 'blank slate' views of childhood, just how much young children know, understand and do outside school and how competent and capable many of them are from an early age.⁵² On the basis of this research we argue that primary schools can and should respect and build on children's non-school learning, experience and capability. The local component encourages this.
- The government-initiated *Narrowing the Gap* programme, which focuses on what can be done to narrow the gap in outcomes between vulnerable and excluded children and the rest, makes success in this vital area heavily dependent on the work and collaboration of local agencies, including local authorities. Significantly, curriculum initiatives are prominent in the 115 case studies provided in the programme's November 2008 report.⁵³ By their nature, these are local. Our proposed local component to the curriculum provides a framework for embedding such responses. It also invites schools, LAs and other agencies to make the local in curriculum matters habitual rather than exceptional, for although *Narrowing the Gap* concentrates on the specific groups identified as most vulnerable, the 'gap' is more correctly seen as a continuum, with children's educational engagement shading gradually from full through many stages of partial to minimal, and their educational attainment likewise. And it is not only the vulnerable who under-achieve.
- The capacity to innovate is not restricted to national government and its agencies. Schools, local authorities and the communities they serve have massive potential in this regard. Some of the most interesting and powerful educational ideas and practices of recent years have come from the educational grass roots, but their later adoption by national agencies has been marred by an unwillingness to acknowledge their source, and even by plagiarism, for centralisation justifies itself by contrasting government omniscience with local ignorance. Noting how much is made of the importance of speaking and listening in the Rose Review's report after it was barely mentioned in the primary national strategy's *Excellence and Enjoyment*, and the way that this shift reflects not the inspiration of national agencies but the combined efforts of researchers, schools and local authorities, one eminent director of children's services commented:

It is a commonplace that, historically, many system-wide innovations have originated in specific localities and local authorities ... For over two decades this has not been recognised. I believe that in a climate where the local potential for nationally-relevant innovation was acknowledged, [the work on talk reform] would have spread faster and further. It is absurd that the system has to wait so long for the Rose seal of approval for the centrality of the spoken word.

⁵² Goswami and Bryant (2007); Mayall (2007)

⁵³ LGA *et al* (2008), 8.1-8.79

In sum, then, the core curriculum at the primary stage is redefined as requirements for *all* the specified domains, not just some of them, so 'core' disappears. Each domain has both national and local components which, below, we term the *national curriculum* and the *community curriculum*.

The use of time

The national/local division is proposed as 70/30 for the school year as a whole. The failure of Dearing's 80/20 recommendation in 1993 to come to anything shows that the local component must have a sufficient proportion of the whole to be viable and to resist erosion by national requirements. But because the domains pervade both national *and* local components, this does not mean that any domain loses out, whereas with Dearing all the national curriculum subjects were to be contained within the recommended 80 per cent, which would have made the non-core subjects unviable once the core had taken its 50-60 per cent. Our approach is different. There is no core/non-core distinction. Every domain is both required and protected. The national/local split is not a division between domains but a way of balancing, within each domain, global, national and local concerns and opportunities; and it reflects the need for school, local authorities and communities, as well as government and its agencies, to play their full part in determining a significant part of what each domain contains.

70/30 is in our judgement the right distribution. However, we would welcome further discussion on this. When we circulated drafts of this report for comment, our advisers strongly supported the principle of a protected local component, but disagreed about how much time should be allocated to it. On the one hand national entitlement must be safeguarded; on the other, the local component must be sufficient to be meaningful and to accommodate all the various dimensions of localism, in both curriculum content and decision-making, as we define them.

The national/local distribution is a temporal matter at the level of policy. At the level of the school there is a no less important point to make about how time is used. We noted earlier the warning of former primary chief inspector Norman Thomas that the Rose Review interim report appears to confuse curriculum and timetabling, and it is possible that some of the favourable responses to Rose may reflect a sense that timetabling six subjects (or what Rose calls 'areas of learning') each week is easier than timetabling 10 or 12. But while the lesson/session is the usual timetabling unit, and the week is its conventional frame, we would encourage more flexible use of the 798 - 893 hours of teaching time available annually. The term and year should be viewed as wholes and the advantages of demarcating less frequent but longer blocks of time for concentrated study within a domain should be carefully considered. The benefits of depth thus achieved would far outweigh the superficiality and fragmentation of one dutiful or scrambled lesson during a week in which teachers felt obliged to attend to every domain. This is the secondary model, and because most or all teaching in secondary schools is done by specialists the timetable there is perforce somewhat rigid. But primary schools have no need to mimic secondary timetabling assumptions or practices, and for as long as most teaching in primary schools is done by generalist classteachers, primary timetabling can be vastly more flexible.

There are certain exceptions. Where knowledge and skill need to be built up on the basis of memorisation, repetition and practice there is a case for regular and indeed daily activity. The error of the national strategies, which according to this review's evidence has been at considerable cost to the rest of the curriculum, has been the 'winner takes all' presumption

that literacy and mathematics *as a whole* can be advanced only through daily activity. Some aspects of literacy require daily attention or frequent practice. Others do not.

We propose below that panels of independent experts should be convened to advise on the content of the national core, having mind to the proposed aims and the earlier discussion about knowledge and culture. Part of their brief would be to recommend which aspects of a domain require regular – though not necessarily daily – attention, which can profitably be pursued on a less frequent basis and which lend themselves to handling in concentrated blocks of time.

Progression and transition

The framework needs to ensure a smooth progression from the EYFS via primary to secondary. Accordingly, the domains are expressed in terms which it is hoped are compatible with the preceding and following stages of schooling while remaining true to themselves. However, there is a necessary debate about whether all domains, and/or all contributory aspects of each domain, should be included from Year 1. The proposed national domain panels would be asked to consider this, and to ensure continuity they would include representation from early years settings and secondary as well as primary schools.

Clearly, there cannot be one-to-one correspondence between the eight domains and the six EYFS areas of learning and development, any more than there is between the eight domains and the 14 subjects in the KS3 curriculum. However, it takes little effort to track the path from EYFS areas to primary domains and onward to secondary subjects, noting that in each educational phase the curriculum diversifies. In terms of the EYFS/primary interface, the crucial condition for progression is that the EYFS areas provide, as their name requires, a curricular foundation upon which subsequent learning can build. We believe that the framework encourages this.

Equally, we warn against the assumption that because the Rose model has the same number of areas – six – as the EYFS, and similar area names, this solves at a stroke the problem of progression. What matters, as we have stressed, is not the label but what is taught and learned in its name, and reactions to the interim Rose report suggest that among early years experts, at any rate, there remains considerable scepticism on this score.

The other warning to be heeded is Rose's own: 'While primary education must build upon the EYFS and prepare children for education post-11, it is far more than either a post-script to the early years, or a prelude to secondary education.'⁵⁴ Primary education is sandwiched between two phases with strong and contrasting identities. Historically, infant/KS1 education has sought to sustain itself by reference to a distinctive early years rationale while what shapes the education of juniors/children in KS2 has never been very clear, created as it was from the old elementary/lower secondary structure. Starting from evidence and belief about children, culture and the wider world, the Cambridge review has devised first a set of aims and then a curriculum which it believes to be right for the primary phase as a whole, and as a phase which in developmental and educational terms has its own imperatives. Education, we have insisted, attends to today as well as tomorrow, to development no less than to preparation. This has been the central task. But it happens that what we have proposed for the primary phase also maps onto what precedes and follows it.

⁵⁴ Rose (2008), para 1.31.

While the Rose report's warning is welcome, the coincidence of curriculum area numbers and names, and the lack of a rationale for the primary phase other than building on the EYFS and preparing for secondary, lend support to the view that the task has been viewed more in terms of rationalisation than reform, especially as the report proposes taking a set of primary school aims off the secondary school shelf.⁵⁵

The domains

It is proposed that the primary curriculum be re-conceived as a matrix of the 12 specified aims together with eight domains of knowledge, skill, disposition and enquiry. The domains bring together the 14 areas in which, drawing on the Review's evidence, we have suggested that primary education should pursue. Below, notwithstanding the centrality of language, oracy and literacy, the domains are listed alphabetically so as to discourage regression to a curriculum pecking order.

- *arts and creativity*
- *citizenship and ethics*
- *faith and belief*
- *language, oracy and literacy*
- *mathematics*
- *physical and emotional health*
- *place and time*
- *science and technology*

If this is compared with the recommendations of the Rose Review interim report two apparent omissions will immediately be noted: ICT and personal development. Both are extremely important, but neither, in our view, is best conceived as a separate domain. The child's personal development is a constant, and is pursued, as we explain below, through most or all of the domains; and indeed through generic pedagogy and the life of the school. In addition, more specific aspects of what is generally defined as PSE appear in *citizenship and morality*, *physical and emotional health* and *faith and belief*. Similarly, those aspects of ICT which are essential to a modern concept of literacy and to effective communication are within *language, oracy and literacy*. The many other applications of ICT are developed through the other domains.

What, then, is a domain? Though their characters differ – and this variety and complementarity is indeed the point – each also has:

- thematic and/or epistemological coherence and integrity;
- an identifiable and essential core of knowledge and skill which is contingent upon certain dispositions and modes of exploration or enquiry; in some cases the knowledge is recognisably disciplinary while in others it is more eclectic;
- capacity to contribute to the pursuit and achievement of one or more of the 12 proposed educational aims;
- strong *prima facie* justification for inclusion at the primary stage, the justifications ranging from the child's present developmental need, through acculturation to future instrumental relevance, as reflected in the 14 areas proposed earlier;

⁵⁵ Rose (2008), paras 1.34-5.

- potential to build on the EYFS and bridge to the secondary curriculum without being subservient to either.

A domain is *not*:

- a named slot in the school's weekly timetable – **domains are *professional curriculum categories, and how they are translated, terminologically, temporally and pedagogically, is for schools to decide***;
- an invitation to low-grade topic work in which thematic serendipity counts for more than knowledge and skill.

Collectively, the domains are:

- the starting point for curriculum planning in which the proposed domain panels will consider how each domain is most appropriately elaborated by reference to the twelve aims and the outlines below, and schools will determine how the domains are reconstructed as a viable school curriculum and are then named, timetabled and taught. We make no proposals on such matters, for our task is to provide a framework for others to work within. But unless the distinctiveness of the framework is understood, the radicalism of an aims-driven curriculum will not be realised and we shall merely perpetuate the problems, as we have identified them, from which the primary curriculum most needs to escape.

Domains and aims: the curriculum matrix

The 12 aims for primary education are no less essential to this enquiry's conception of a primary curriculum than the eight domains. To underline this, we have departed from the usual practice of identifying what in earlier versions of the national curriculum were called 'cross-curricular themes, skills and dimensions' and have replaced these as the second axis of our curriculum framework by the aims themselves (figure 3).

The domains explained

Here we place within the eight domains of knowledge, skill, enquiry and disposition the 14 educational imperatives listed on page 36. Because curriculum hierarchies and their concomitant anxieties are so deeply embedded, we probably need to add that the different lengths of the descriptions below reflect not their perceived importance but the challenges of reconceptualisation (particularly critical for language, oracy and literacy, the relatively new domain of citizenship, and for physical and emotional health).

Arts and creativity

This domain includes the arts, creativity and the imagination, with particular reference to art, music, drama and dance, each with its complementary dimensions of 'appreciation' (knowledge, understanding and disposition) and 'performance' (knowledge, understanding and disposition allied with executive skill). As argued earlier, we would wish to encourage a vigorous campaign aimed at advancing public understanding of the arts in education, human development, culture and national life, coupled with a much more rigorous approach to arts teaching in schools. The renaissance of this domain is long overdue.

Figure 3

**AIMS AND DOMAINS:
THE PRIMARY CURRICULUM MATRIX**

AIMS \ DOMAINS	<i>Arts and creativity</i>	<i>Citizenship and ethics</i>	<i>Faith and belief</i>	<i>Language, oracy and literacy</i>	<i>Mathematics</i>	<i>Physical and emotional health</i>	<i>Place and time</i>	<i>Science and Technology</i>
The individual								
Wellbeing								
Engagement								
Empowerment								
Autonomy								
Self, others and the wider world								
Respect and reciprocity								
Interdependence and sustainability								
Local, national and global citizenship								
Culture and community								
Learning, knowing and doing								
Exploring, knowing, understanding, making sense								
Fostering skill								
Exciting the imagination								
Enacting dialogue								

Creativity, of course, is not confined to the arts, but also entails what the Robinson enquiry called the 'democratic definition' of creativity, which 'is equally fundamental to advances in the sciences, in mathematics, technology, politics, business and in all areas of everyday life' and which has four features: the pursuit of purpose, the use of the imagination, originality, and the exercise of discriminating judgements of value.⁵⁶ The arts are indelibly creative, and properly pursued they achieve the aim of 'exciting the imagination' which features in our list of 12. But we have also stressed that both creativity and imaginative activity can and must inform teaching and learning across the wider curriculum.

Citizenship and ethics

This domain includes the values, moral codes, civil customs and procedures by which humans act, co-exist and regulate their affairs. As noted above, it has local and global as well as national components.

⁵⁶

NACCCE (1999), 27-30

Locating ethical questions in the curriculum is difficult. Though most religions have a moral element, moral questions and ethical standpoints are not dependent on religious belief. Equally, as – say – the Sermon on the Mount, the Ten Commandments or Sharia remind us – it makes no sense to detach morality from a religion to which it is so fundamental.

Once again, we remind ourselves of the 12 aims towards which we propose that not just the curriculum but also the entire conduct of primary education should be directed. Reflecting strong representation from the Review's witnesses and widespread concern about the ousting of mutuality and civic consciousness by selfishness and material greed, we highlighted 'encouraging respect and reciprocity' in the list of aims. This is interpreted not in the narrow, deferential or intimidatory way that the word 'respect' is sometimes used, but much more broadly, as an outlook of 'willing courtesy' towards ideas as well as people, and as the bedrock of relations within and between societies. Respect in this sense manifests a moral standpoint, and other aims – 'promoting interdependence and sustainability', 'celebrating culture and community', 'enacting dialogue' and indeed 'exploring, knowing, understanding and making sense' – all carry no less of a moral charge. For these reasons, it makes sense not only for private and public morality to be placed together within the communal domain of citizenship, but for citizenship to be mandatory rather than, as at present, optional.

We use the term 'ethics' in preference to 'morality' because of the normative overtones of the latter. It also encourages the questioning, exploratory approach to such matters which is captured in the Review's aim of 'enacting dialogue' and has been successfully developed through recent work on dialogic pedagogy and philosophy for children (P4C)⁵⁷, both of which have been taken up in many other countries, thus giving the global dimension of citizenship as proposed here particular resonance. These approaches, of course, have applications across the entire curriculum and are not specific to citizenship.

Faith and belief

On the question of religious education, we take the view that religion is so fundamental to this country's history, culture and language, as well as to the daily lives of many of its inhabitants, that it must remain within the curriculum, even though some Review witnesses argued that it should be removed on the grounds that England is a predominantly secular society or that religious belief is for the family rather than the school. However, while denominational schools see their mission as the advancement of particular religious beliefs and moral codes, non-denominational schools should remain essentially secular, teaching about religion with respect and understanding, but not attempting to inculcate or convert. Further, other beliefs, including those about the validity of religion itself, should also be explored. This approach helps us to resolve the quandary of moral education, for in teaching about a religion its ethical elements can be handled with the same sympathetic objectivity as we commend for the treatment of its beliefs and rituals.

The situation is complicated by the fact that religious education has a unique and perhaps anomalous place in law. Alongside religious education in the classroom, schools are still obliged, as they were under the 1944 Act, to hold a daily act of collective worship of predominantly Christian character for all the school's pupils. However, in 2009 the cultural and religious character of England is such that for many schools this creates acute dilemmas, not just because a typical urban primary school has pupils from many religious faiths, and

⁵⁷ Lipman *et al* (1980)

indeed from families with no religious faith, but also because the ‘act of [Christian] worship’ obligation sits uneasily with the more recent requirement that schools should promote inclusion and community cohesion. Mostly the dilemma simmers unresolved. Occasionally, as in Sheffield in February 2009, it explodes into the media with unhappy consequences for all those involved.

Although we argue that teaching about faith and belief should be part of the curriculum, for a non-denominational school to require pupils from different faiths (or none) to join an act of worship in just one of those faiths raises more difficult questions. Some might suggest that the act of worship contradicts the rationale for the ‘faith and belief’ domain as outlined both here and in many existing RE syllabuses, and that divested of its controversial ‘act of worship’ requirement the school assembly could more appropriately pursue other aims, as indeed in many schools it already does. Interdependence and sustainability, respect and reciprocity, culture and community, and citizenship are obvious candidates for such treatment from this review’s proposed list of aims, and we have already argued that they should be pursued outside as well as inside the classroom. The matter arouses strong feelings. We believe it deserves proper debate.

Language, oracy and literacy

This domain includes spoken language, reading, writing, literature, wider aspects of language and communication, a modern foreign language, ICT and other non-print media. Though we dispense with the old core/non-core distinction, we do not hesitate to argue that the domain is the heart of the new curriculum. But it stands in considerable need of revision.

The importance of oracy

It is a recurrent theme of this Review that in England literacy is too narrowly conceived and that spoken language has yet to secure the place in primary education that its centrality to learning, culture and life requires, or that it enjoys in the curriculum of many other countries. The current national curriculum formulation, as ‘speaking and listening’, is conceptually weak and insufficiently demanding in practice, and we would urge instead that important initiatives like the National Oracy Project be revisited, along with more recent research on talk in learning and teaching, as part of the necessary process of defining oracy and giving it its proper place in the language curriculum.

Re-thinking literacy

Relatedly, the redesigning of this domain requires, as noted earlier, that the primary national strategy’s literacy component be curtailed in its present form and that literacy – in the familiar sense of reading and writing – be re-integrated into the language curriculum. Further, the goal of literacy by the end of the primary phase must be more than functional. It is about making and exploring meaning as well as receiving and transmitting it. That is why talking must be part of reading and writing rather than an optional extra. And it is why engagement with the meanings made by others through literature, and with the language through which such meanings are conveyed, is no less essential. Literacy achieves our listed aim of empowerment by conferring the skill not just to read and write but to make these processes genuinely transformative, exciting children’s imagination (another listed aim), extending their boundaries, and enabling them to contemplate lives and worlds possible as well as actual.

Which modern foreign language?

There is an obvious debate about which foreign language should be taught. The interim Rose report proposes that 'schools should be free to choose which language(s) that they wish to teach, however, as far as possible the languages offered should be those which children will be taught at key stage 3.'⁵⁸ Continuity from primary to secondary is certainly one criterion. A second is the likely use or usefulness of the language, and arguments divide over what might be termed 'vacational' use (which favours French, Spanish or Italian) and 'vocational' use (which favours languages of growing global economic importance such as Standard Mandarin, Russian or Hindi). A third criterion is the support which learning a foreign language gives to the advancement of the pupil's understanding and skill in English. Mindful of the roots of the English language this would support the teaching of French and/or German. Fourth, and less commonly heard, there is the argument that in communities which are linguistically diverse, cultural understanding and cohesion would benefit if the principle of English as an additional language (EAL) were reversed and native English speakers were to learn one of the prominent local languages. Like Rose, we see no alternative to the decision on such matters being taken locally.

The ubiquity – and challenge - of ICT

While ICT reaches across the entire curriculum, it should receive more explicit attention, and attention of a particular kind, within the language component. In this we differ from the Rose review interim report, which treats ICT as a neo-basic 'skill for learning and life', or as a tool without apparent substance or challenge other than the technical.

Within the space of a few years we have advanced far beyond what used to be called 'computer-assisted learning', in which computers, like textbooks, were a pedagogical aid largely within the control of teachers. Now in such matters children are increasingly autonomous. Much of their out-of-school learning is electronic and beyond the reach of either parents or teachers. They exchange messages and information by texting on their mobile phones and through on-line networking sites such as MySpace, Facebook, Twitter and Bebo. They seek information from Google and Wikipedia. They download music, DVDs, games and other material pretty well at will, using the mobile phones, PCs and laptops which are increasingly standard property in English households. In such matters, as Hargreaves shows, they are not merely passive 'surfers' who read, watch and listen, but 'peerers' who use electronic media to share, socialise, collaborate and create.⁵⁹

In as far as most such activities depend on the ability to read and write, they must be counted in part as variants or extensions of literacy. It no longer makes sense to attend to text but ignore txt. Yet the matter is not merely one of skill or access. In the Cambridge Primary Review's soundings and submissions, parents, teachers – and children themselves – expressed concern about the perils as well as the opportunities of the electronic communication and information-handling skills which today's children so effortlessly command and the material to which they have access. However, while policing the more unsavoury reaches of the web is clearly necessary, the issue is not so much what is extreme and self-evidently disreputable as what is mainstream and apparently to be taken on trust. The more fundamental task is to help children develop the capacity to approach electronic and other non-print media (including television and film as well as the internet) with the

⁵⁸ Rose (2008), recommendation 18

⁵⁹ Hargreaves (2008)

degree of discrimination and critical awareness that should attend reading, writing and communicating of any kind.⁶⁰ This, we believe, is an argument for treating ICT both as the cross-curricular informational tool which it obviously is, and as an aspect of the language curriculum which demands a rigour no less than should apply to the handling of the written and spoken word, and to traditionally-conceived text, information and evidence.

There is a further concern here. In April 2009, the Secretary of State found himself having to respond to headlines about the Rose review's apparent advocacy of an approach to ICT which included teaching children about Wikipedia and social networking sites like Twitter, to the detriment of more familiar subjects like history. He said, 'We have a duty to ensure our children learn about history. We also have a duty to make sure they are not left in the technological dark ages.'⁶¹ However, his apparently gung-ho approach took no account of concerns raised by neuroscientists about the risks of excessive exposure to screen technologies. In a debate in the House of Lords, Baroness Greenfield warned:

The mid-21st century mind might almost be infantilised, characterised by short attention spans, sensationalism, inability to empathise and a shaky sense of identity ... If the young brain is exposed from the outset to a world of fast action and reaction, of instant new screen images flashing up with the press of a key, such rapid interchange might accustom the brain to operate over such timescales ... Real conversation in real time may eventually give way to these sanitised and easier screen dialogues ... It is hard to see how living this way on a daily basis will not result in brains, or rather minds, different from other generations.⁶²

These remarks caused a certain amount of controversy, and, in some quarters, ridicule.⁶³ But warnings about any technology which in an exceptionally short space of time becomes such a prominent and almost addictive aspect of young people's lives should not be lightly dismissed. Further, we believe that this debate confirms that it is right to locate ICT within the language curriculum rather than as a semi-detached and uncritically-fostered 'skill for learning and life' as in the Rose interim report, for placing it here enables schools to balance and explore relationships between new and established forms of communication, and to ensure that the developmental and educational primacy of talk, which is now exceptionally well supported by research evidence, is always maintained.

Revisiting language across the curriculum

Finally, we commend renewed attention to the Bullock enquiry's recommendation that every school 'should have an organised policy for *language across the curriculum*'⁶⁴ so as to underline four recurrent concerns of this review:

- Although language, oracy and literacy are conventionally located within the teaching of English, they are no less important in the other seven domains.
- The achievement of high standards in literacy requires not the narrowing of the primary school curriculum and the downgrading of other than 'the basics' which

⁶⁰ For a detailed discussion of the role of film and television in the teaching of English see the report of the 1993 BFI/ TES Commission of Enquiry into English (Bazalgette 1994).

⁶¹ For example, the *Daily Mail*, 6 April 2009

⁶² Baroness Susan Greenfield, quoted in *The Guardian*, 24 February 2009

⁶³ For example, 'Baroness, you are being a complete twit about twitter', Catherine Bennett in *The Observer*, 1 March 2009

⁶⁴ DES (1975), 514

England has witnessed periodically since the 1860s and with renewed force since 1997, but the pursuit of breadth, balance, challenge and high quality teaching across the entire curriculum.

- Language, and the quality of language, are essential to cognitive development, learning and effective teaching in all contexts. A policy of language across the curriculum therefore requires the mapping of the different kinds and registers of language, both spoken and written, which are intrinsic to each domain and for which each domain provides particularly significant development potential.
- If language unlocks thought, then thought is enhanced, challenged and enlarged when language in all its aspects mentioned here, and in every educational context, is pursued with purpose and rigour.

Mathematics

This includes both numeracy and wider aspects of mathematics. The boundaries of this domain remain broadly unchanged, provided that numeracy be taken out of the PNS and re-integrated with the rest of mathematics. Further, and mindful of the concern of some of our witnesses that primary mathematics escapes the critical scrutiny to which other domains are subject, domain panels and teachers should address with some rigour the question of what aspects of mathematics are truly essential and foundational in the primary phase.

We suggest that what is sometimes called ‘financial literacy’ be handled within this domain, even though financial literacy, properly conceived, is about much more than monetary computation. But placing it here is analogous to broadening the domain of science and technology to include their human and environmental impact, and it is right that such real-life applications of mathematics be explored alongside the acquisition of mathematical knowledge and skill.

Physical and emotional health

This deals with the handling of human emotions and relationships and with the human body, its development and health, together with the skills of agility, co-ordination and teamwork acquired through sport and PE as conventionally conceived. It is important that the significance of this reconfiguration be properly understood and that neither emotional/relational understanding nor health be treated as a mere PE add-on. We believe that it makes medical as well as educational sense to group together physical and emotional health, and indeed for health as such to be named as a mandatory component of the child’s curriculum for the first time. However, unlike Rose, we do not go so far as to place well-being as a whole in the physical domain, for, as defined in our list of aims, well-being has aspects other than the physical, and although attending to children’s physical and emotional well-being and welfare is an essential task for primary schools, well-being is no less about educational engagement, the raising of aspirations and the maximising of children’s potential across the board.

As with several other domains, we wish to stress that what is required here is a complete reconceptualisation. In this case it would explore the interface between emotional and physical development and health and their contribution both to the more comprehensive concept of wellbeing which is signalled in our first nominated aim and to children’s educational attainment. A strongly ‘affective turn’ was noted in one of the Review’s commissioned research surveys, and is to be welcomed, as is that survey’s caution about

'emotional literacy', 'emotional intelligence' and 'therapeutic pedagogy'.⁶⁵ But affectivity is not a subject, an area of learning or a domain. It is a state of mind which manifests itself in complex ways to which one-dimensional terms like joy, sorrow and anger may only approximate. Researchers and teachers are right to stress its importance as an influence on children's engagement, motivation and attainment and it is therefore with a certain ambivalence that we place the education of the emotions within any one domain. We do so to ensure that it is explicitly attended to as an aspect of the curriculum, but we remind readers also that it, like wellbeing more generally, is an aim for primary education as a whole which can be realised only if it pervades the wider life and relationships of the classroom and school, as well as the curriculum.

Place and time

This principally includes how history shapes culture, events, consciousness and identity and the lessons which it offers to our understanding of present and future; and the geographical study of location, other people, other places and human interdependence, locally, nationally and globally. Like the arts, this domain and its contributory disciplines stand in need of proper public and political recognition of their importance to children's understanding of who they are, of change and continuity, cause and consequence, of why society is arranged as it is, and of the interaction of mankind and the physical environment. In opening up children's understanding of these matters the domain may range beyond the boundaries of what is conventionally included in primary history and geography to draw, as Jerome Bruner's *Man a Course of Study* (MACOS) famously did during the 1960s, on anthropology and other human sciences. The domain is central to the advancement of a number of the proposed aims, notably *respect and reciprocity, interdependence and sustainability, local, national and global citizenship, and culture and community*.⁶⁶

Science and technology

This includes the exploration and understanding of science and the workings of the physical world, together with human action on the physical world through both science and technology, and its consequences. It incorporates understanding of the key ideas about these areas and the skills of scientific enquiry, making and doing through which this understanding is progressively developed and applied. Although science is currently one of the three core subjects, our evidence shows that it has been increasingly squeezed out by the exclusivity of recent attention to literacy and numeracy. It is clearly of immense importance, and among our witnesses some – and not all of them scientists or science teachers – were prepared to argue that in the pervasiveness of its actual and potential impact on the individual and society it is considerably more important at the primary stage than mathematics. However, as we have insisted and shown that curriculum hierarchies are unhelpful, we do not wish to encourage such rivalry.

What is beyond dispute is that the educational case for primary science, as for the arts and humanities, needs to be re-asserted. This is now urgent, for there is evidence that from being one of the success stories of the original national curriculum during the decade 1989-99, primary science has increasingly been marginalized by the government's national strategies,

⁶⁵ Conroy, Hulme and Menter (2008)

⁶⁶ 'Place and time' is borrowed from – and a tribute to – two champions of the primary humanities, the late Joan and Alan Blyth.

retaining its place only because it continues to be tested at the end of KS2 (and even that is now in question) but with reduced teaching time.

5 - NEXT STEPS

Although we have urged a considerable reduction in central specification and prescription, we accept the value to heads and teachers of well-conceived guidance and exemplification. Moving from the outlines above to a sufficient level of detail to enable schools to move forward would seem to require something along the following lines.

The national component: the national curriculum

Eight expert panels would be convened to define in greater detail the place of each domain in the new national curriculum, and to propose in broad terms the content, process and progression within the domain. By 'expert' is meant a combination of experienced primary heads or teachers together with early years and secondary representatives and experts from the domain's contributory discipline(s) and their transformation into what American researcher Lee Shulman calls 'pedagogical content knowledge'.⁶⁷ The panels would propose programmes of study and would indicate those aspects of learning where frequent or regular teaching is required, but they would not specify precise time allocations beyond that. In convening the panels it should be noted that several of the domains require radical planning or restructuring, and reading across from the existing programmes of study will certainly be helpful but will not suffice. In mapping the domains, each panel would work towards:

An expanded statement of the essential features of the domain (statutory)

- the overall rationale and scope of the domain;
- those of the 12 aims for primary education which are most effectively pursued within the domain, and how they can be securely embedded within it;
- the knowledge, skills, dispositions and modes of enquiry and exploration with which the domain is chiefly concerned;
- what, in general terms, a child should be expected to encounter, experience, know and do within the domain by the time he/she moves on to secondary education.

Fuller programmes of study (non-statutory)

- progression in the identified knowledge, skills and dispositions through the primary phase;
- more precise intermediate and terminal indications of what children should encounter, experience, know and do, possibly year by year – though this is open for debate – and certainly for the end of the primary phase;
- particular aspects of the specified knowledge and skill which require regular attention and/or practice;
- how the domain builds on the EYFS curriculum and leads on to the secondary curriculum;
- how the identified problems in current arrangements can be avoided;
- priorities for ITT, CPD and resources.

A further whole curriculum panel would receive each set of domain proposals and ensure that they cover the specified field, avoid duplication and when taken together can be comfortably accommodated within the 70 per cent of the year available for the national component. This panel might need to exercise its responsibilities with a vigour which the

⁶⁷ Shulman (1987)

architects of the first national curriculum avoided, for disciplinary loyalties tend to outweigh interest in the balance and viability of the whole.

There would be full national consultation on the draft domain statements and programmes of study.

The QCA has considerable experience in curriculum planning and in the drafting of curriculum guidance and exemplification. On that basis, and given its statutory responsibility, it is the obvious body to take forward the planning of the national component. However, the QCA and its predecessors (NCC and SCAA) are in part responsible for the perceived problem of curriculum overload which looms large in the Review's evidence, and it is also clear that many view the QCA as lacking the intellectual, political or professional independence which the task requires. On balance, therefore, we would prefer to leave open the question of which body would co-ordinate the development of the national component. The conditions are:

- the work of the panels must be genuinely and visibly independent;
- they should be properly resourced and supported.

The local component: the community curriculum

Each local authority would convene a community curriculum partnership (CCP) to consider what might be included in the local component of each domain. The councils would include primary, secondary and early years teachers, domain experts and community representatives, and would have domain-specific sub-committees. The existing SACREs for religious education, expanded to meet the extended scope of this domain, might form one of these sub-committees, in effect making the SACRE a prototype for local curriculum planning across the board. Children would be involved in the consultations, probably through school councils.

The CCP would have equivalent responsibility to the whole curriculum panel at national level, ensuring that what is proposed is viable within the allocated 30 per cent of the year. The resulting guidance would be non-statutory.

This arrangement, we should add, is not an attempt to recover what was recommended in the 1993 Dearing Report and left unimplemented. On that occasion, the time (20 per cent) was to be entirely at each school's discretion. In contrast, the local component proposed here has an explicitly communal focus and both encourages a local orientation in those of the domains where this is applicable and gives life to aim 8, 'Celebrating culture and community'. It is for these reasons that we suggest that the local component be planned collectively, even though the outcome in terms of detail will be non-statutory. In a multi-ethnic inner city, schools and the local authority might work together to ensure that the curriculum as a whole genuinely engages with both the challenges of that environment and its possibilities in terms of the cultural diversity and richness that flows from plurality. It would also give close attention to the handling of faith and the teaching of language, including the choice of a foreign language. In a rural area, small and widely-dispersed primary schools might collaborate to enhance the study of a very different environment, to share resources, and to ensure that pupils have access to the cultural riches which are more readily available in urban settings.

Especially, by building on children's knowledge and experience, by engaging children educationally with the local culture and environment in a variety of ways, and by involving children in discussion of the local component through school councils and the work of the CCPs, the community curriculum would both give real meaning to children's voice and begin the process of community enrichment and regeneration where it matters.

Primary Review witnesses deplored the loss of community outside school and were grateful for what many schools offer by way of compensation. The community curriculum, allied to more flexible use of school premises, is a way to recover the idea of community in its fullest sense. It also offers a much-needed way to re-invigorate and legitimise the creative potential and innovative partnership of schools, local authorities, colleges and universities, bearing in mind the contention by a senior witness to the Review that this is where many of the most significant educational innovations have originated.

The disposition of domains, national curriculum and community curriculum, and the roles of the planning bodies concerned, are shown in figure 4.

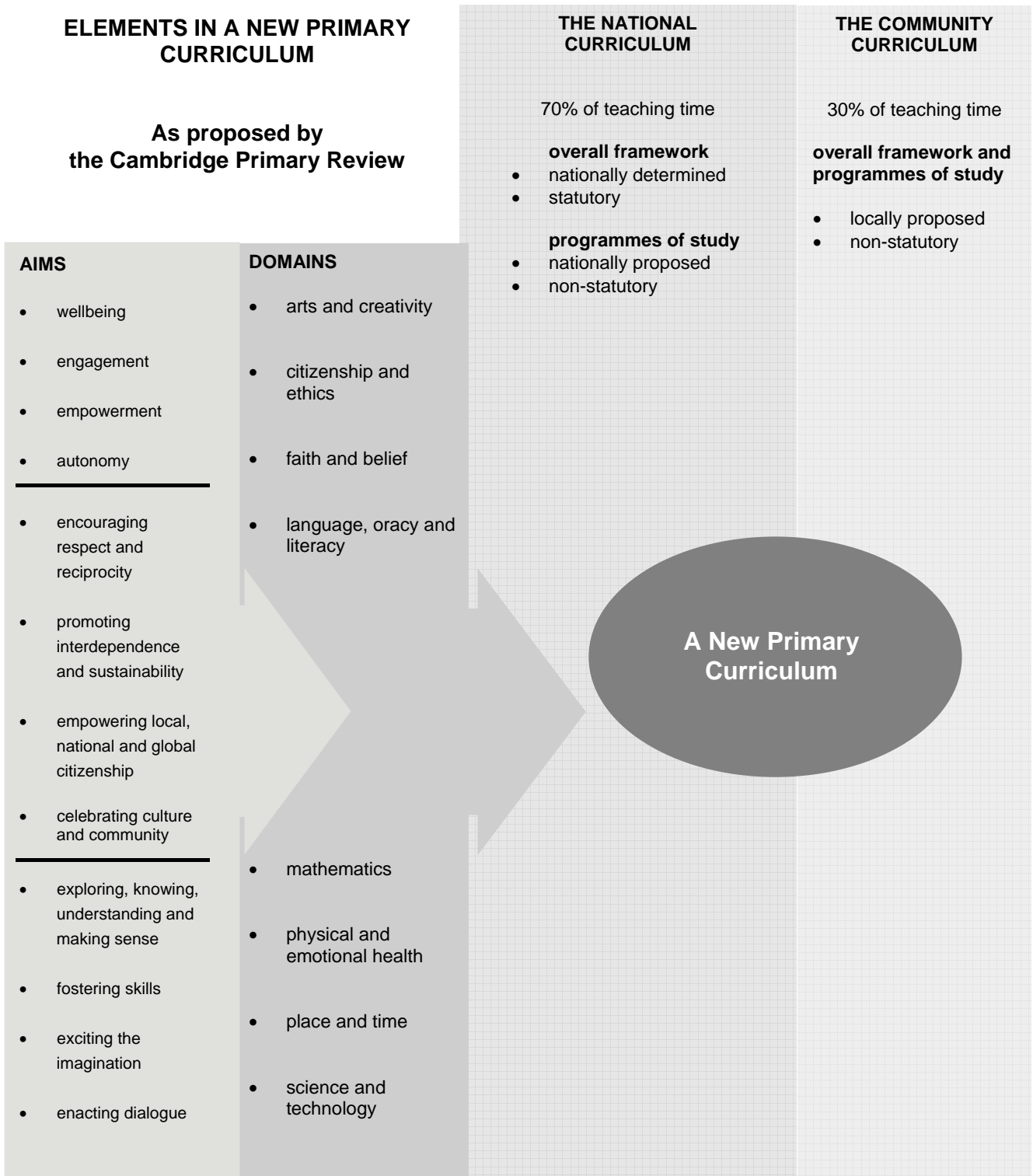
A new primary curriculum: summary

The new primary curriculum proposed here:

1. Addresses and seeks to resolve the problems of present and past arrangements, especially: overload, micro-management from the centre, the distorting impact of testing and the national strategies, the dislocation of English/literacy, the qualitative imbalance between 'the basics' and the rest, the marginalisation of the arts and humanities, tokenism in respect of aims, and the muddled discourse of subjects, knowledge and skills.
2. Is planned and implemented with clear regard to principles of procedure which highlight and safeguard, for example, entitlement, quality, breadth, balance of attention to present and future needs, rights, equity, guidance not prescription, local responsiveness, and the pursuit of explicit aims and values.
3. Starts from an account of the aims of primary education which is grounded in analysis of the needs, capabilities and circumstances of children now, of their likely future needs as adults and lifelong learners, and of the condition of the society and world in which they are growing up. These aims are fundamental, and inform not only the curriculum but also wider aspects of pedagogy and the life of the school.
4. Builds on, and respects the appropriateness and integrity of, the EYFS curriculum.
5. Is conceived as a matrix of 12 educational aims and eight domains of knowledge, understanding, skill and disposition, with the aims locked firmly into the framework from the outset.
6. At the same time acknowledges and celebrates the centrality of language, oracy and literacy, both to young children's education and to a properly-conceived curriculum in which breadth and standards go hand in hand.
7. Incorporates a significant and protected local component to the entitlement curriculum by differentiating the 'national' from the 'community' curriculum, though both include

all eight domains. Divides time between them on the basis of 70/30 per cent of the yearly teaching total.

Figure 4



8. Differentiates curriculum from timetabling, both to discourage the equating of domains with timetabled lessons and to encourage domain panels and schools to think carefully about which aspects might be taught separately and which combined, which need to preserve disciplinary integrity and which are amenable to thematic treatment.
9. Requires a radical re-think of most of the domains, especially language, oracy and literacy.
10. For the purposes of planning divides the national curriculum and the community curriculum into three segments:
 - a nationally-determined description and rationale which specifies in broad terms the knowledge, understanding, skills and dispositions to be taught through the primary phase, an expanded statement for each domain (see 'the national component', above), and the standards of achievement and quality of learning⁶⁸ to be secured by the time a pupil transfers to secondary school (statutory);
 - nationally-determined programmes of study for each domain (for programme scope see 'the national component' above), which in combination should be viable within no more than 70 per cent of the yearly time available (non-statutory);
 - a locally-determined community curriculum for those of the eight domains where this is appropriate and feasible which also identifies the particular local needs which the curriculum as a whole should address and the distinctive educational opportunities which the local community and environment provide.
11. Is planned nationally by independent expert panels for each domain together with a whole curriculum panel. (The question of how such work should be co-ordinated should await a review of the remit and functions of the QCA and the other national agencies). Each panel includes school representatives and experts in the contributory disciplines and their classroom application. The national planners are charged with ensuring that the knowledge, understanding, skills and dispositions that are required and recommended attend closely to the specified aims and can be accommodated within the 70 per cent of time available for the National Curriculum; and they are asked to identify those aspects of each domain which require regular attention and those where flexibility in timetabling is appropriate.
12. Is planned locally by community curriculum partnerships (CCP) convened by each local authority, or where this is desirable and appropriate by local authorities acting together; each panel includes school representatives, community representatives and experts in the contributory disciplines, and its work must involve consultation with children. The Community Curriculum includes both those elements agreed collectively among schools and each school's response to ways that the lives of the children themselves can be respected and built upon.
13. Merges the existing SACREs within the new local framework, making them one of the eight domain sub-committees of each CCP, and ensuring that their membership is expanded to include the necessary perspectives on belief and morality outside the context of particular faiths.

⁶⁸ We have insisted that 'standards' and 'quality' are not necessarily the same, and the use of both words is intended to encourage debate about what, in the broadest sense, pupils should experience and achieve by the time they leave primary school.

14. Is implemented flexibly and creatively by each school, though having regard to the requirement to plan and teach all eight domains and to achieve high quality teaching and learning across the entire curriculum regardless of the amount of time allocated to each domain.
15. Is implemented in a way which pursues the aims in the overlapping contexts of (i) domain-specific content and activity (ii) generic pedagogy and (iii) the life of the school as a whole.

Conditions for success

Success in the enterprise of reconceptualising, planning and implementing the new primary curriculum would appear to depend on the following changes to current mechanisms, many of which are considered in later chapters of this report:

Reforming institutions, procedures and requirements

- Redefining the statutory functions, in respect of the curriculum, of DCSF, QCA, local authorities and the national strategies.
- Reinvigorating local authorities as agents and facilitators in curriculum development.
- Winding up the primary national strategy in its present form, re-integrating literacy with English and extending the concern with standards to cover the whole curriculum rather than just 'the basics'.
- Making what is non-statutory genuinely so, and changing those requirements or procedures formulated by the DCSF, Ofsted and TDA which currently make the non-statutory in effect obligatory.
- Reforming national assessment, especially at age 11, so that it does its job without compromising children's statutory entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum.

Building professional capacity

- Rethinking both primary ITT and CPD to ensure that all eight domains are properly attended to, and the potential of generic pedagogy in pursuit of the aims is properly understood.
- Ensuring that epistemology, pedagogy and discipline-based pedagogical content knowledge are given much greater prominence in primary ITT.
- Re-thinking teaching roles and staff deployment in primary schools, with particular reference to the balance of generalist, semi-specialist and specialist teaching, in order to ensure that every school has the necessary expertise to teach every domain well.
- Requiring collaboration between professionals in primary, early years and secondary settings in order to ensure smooth transition from foundation to primary and primary to secondary.

- Encouraging collaboration between schools in order both to share expertise and develop the community curriculum.
- Auditing the capacity of each local authority with a view to ensuring that it is able to take the envisaged lead role in co-ordinating the development of the community curriculum.
- Making the pursuit and proper use of evidence central to each of the above.

In arguing for national reform we envisage not the familiar scenario of government reaching for a new national strategy, initiative or task force, or national bodies telling local authorities and schools what to do, but the reform of the national bodies and requirements themselves. Without a combination of reform in this sense allied to rigorous professional capacity-building in schools, local authorities and teacher training, the primary curriculum will continue more or less as it is, with its labels cosmetically adjusted but its most fundamental problems unresolved.

6 – POSTSCRIPT: THE CAMBRIDGE REVIEW AND THE ROSE REVIEW

The Cambridge Primary Review attends closely to policy but is entirely independent of the policies of any government, political party or official organisation. Substantively, it is a wide-ranging enquiry into the present condition and future character of primary education which is grounded in an impressive body of evidence and a wealth of expertise and experience. Intellectually, it strives to uphold the principles of academic rigour and freedom to which all British universities subscribe. Procedurally it is an exercise in democratic engagement and civic hope of the kind recommended by the Rowntree Trust's Power Inquiry into the state of Britain's democracy, in which the current deficit of 'influence, equality and respect' due to both ordinary citizens and acknowledged experts is made good, and 'it becomes the norm for policy and decision-making to occur with direct input from citizens.'⁶⁹

That being so, our analysis and proposals on the curriculum must on no account be read merely as a reaction to the Rose Review's interim report. The Cambridge Primary Review was initiated in 2004 and began work in 2006, long before the Rose enquiry into the primary curriculum was thought of, and the curriculum was always one of its central themes. By the time that the Rose Review was launched, in January 2008, the Cambridge Review had already published 12 of its 29 interim reports. We have brought forward the publication of our evidence and proposals on the curriculum so that they can contribute to the invited debate about Rose.

More importantly, we wish our analysis and ideas to inform the debate about the primary curriculum which is now long overdue and which the published remit and consultation arrangements for the Rose Review appear to discourage. Our evidence and proposals stand fundamentally for the longer term, and will make their fullest sense in the context of our final report, which will be published later in 2009. That report will consider matters as important yet as diverse as: childhood; children's development and learning; parenting and caring; home and school; cultural diversity; pedagogy and classroom practice; assessment and testing; standards and quality; the relationship between schools and other agencies; teachers and their training, deployment and development; school leadership and improvement; the structure of primary education as a whole and its relationship to pre-school and secondary provision; the way the entire system is funded and administered, and the context of policy in which it is set. It is an indication of the significance and complexity of curriculum that each of these bears on it in some way. Most of these, as Sir Jim Rose has always acknowledged, are outside the remit of his review.

In Part 1 we drew attention to the lack of proper consultation on the first national curriculum in 1987-8 and at the time of the 1997-8 national curriculum review, and to the consequent persistence of the problems discussed in this report long after they could and should have been sorted out. We expressed there the hope that this time all parties would take advantage of the unusual opportunity afforded by the coincidence of two major reviews of the primary curriculum – the DCSF Rose Review and the Cambridge Primary Review.

However, the Rose Review interim report ends with a section which somewhat dampens our optimism. With the interim Rose report issued on 8 December 2008 for 'consultation', the QCA is to produce draft programmes of study for the six specified areas of learning and

⁶⁹ Power (2006)

have them ready by 31 December 2008, just two working weeks after the consultation period opens⁷⁰ and two months before it closes on 28 February 2009.⁷¹ QCA will then consult 'informally' on these drafts in order to have final versions ready for the full Rose report a month later. This arrangement appears to make redundant all consultation responses on the Rose areas of learning which are received during January and February 2009. Thus, though the later statutory consultation will allow discussion of the detail, this will be within an apparently non-negotiable framework of three secondary curriculum aims, four 'skills for learning and life' and six 'areas of learning', and of the educational, social and operational assumptions that these embody, all of which are – or ought to be – very much open to question. At the time of going to press (early February 2009), we understand that the detailed progression statements and programmes of study have reached an advanced stage, a full month before the end of the consultation period. We also understand that the 'informal' consultations on these have excluded representatives of local authorities and teachers' professional associations who have attended meetings about the Rose report.

This statement on the Rose Review website appears to underline our concerns:

Where the sceptics [on the fate of subjects] are silent ... is in voicing constructive views on solving one of the key problems we are trying to fix. How can we best help primary class teachers solve the 'quarts-into-pint-pots' problem of teaching 13 subjects, plus religious education, to sufficient depth, in the time available? The QCA, with the help of subject experts, is on the case and we will do our best in the interests of primary children to solve it by the time we get to the final report.⁷²

This confirms that the task of the Rose Review is one of curriculum re-arrangement rather than reform, and that the perception of what needs to be 'fixed' – and, more important, of what can continue unchallenged and unchanged – is not up for discussion.

Despite this, we hope that the Rose review – as well as teachers, parents and the many others who are concerned about the condition and future of this vital phase of education – will be receptive to the ideas in this report from the Cambridge Primary Review, will respect the breadth and depth of the evidence on which it draws, and will think seriously about the alternative vision that it offers.

⁷⁰ That is, discounting the period between Christmas and the new year.

⁷¹ Rose (2008), para 2.130.

⁷² 'Update from Sir Jim Rose': Rose Review website, accessed 4 February 2009, <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/primarycurriculumreview/>

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Appendix 1

THE CAMBRIDGE PRIMARY REVIEW

The Cambridge Primary Review is a wide-ranging independent enquiry into the condition and future of primary education in England. It was supported from 2006-9 by Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and is based at the University of Cambridge. The Review was launched in October 2006 and will publish its final report in spring 2009. Between October 2007 and May 2008 it published as interim reports 28 research surveys and an account of the 2007 regional Community Soundings. In January 2009 it published a two-volume special report on the primary curriculum.

The launch of the Cambridge Primary Review was preceded by nearly three years of planning and by consultation with government, opposition parties, DfES/DCSF officials, the all-party Commons Education and Skills (now Children, Schools and Families) Committee, public bodies involved in the primary phase of education, the teaching unions and a range of other interested organisations.

The Review was initiated and directed by Professor Robin Alexander, Fellow of Wolfson College at the University of Cambridge and Professor of Education Emeritus at the University of Warwick. Its Advisory Committee is chaired by Dame Gillian Pugh, Visiting Professor at the University of London Institute of Education, Chair of the National Children's Bureau and formerly Chief Executive of Coram Family.

REMIT

The remit for the Cambridge Primary Review, as agreed between Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and the University of Cambridge in 2005-6, is as follows:

1. *With respect to public provision in England, the Review will seek to identify the purposes which the primary phase of education should serve, the values which it should espouse, the curriculum and learning environment which it should provide, and the conditions which are necessary in order to ensure both that these are of the highest and most consistent quality possible, and that they address the needs of children and society over the coming decades.*
2. *The Review will pay close regard to national and international evidence from research, inspection and other sources on the character and adequacy of current provision in respect of the above, on the prospects for recent initiatives, and on other available options. It will seek the advice of expert advisers and witnesses, and it will invite submissions and take soundings from a wide range of interested agencies and individuals, both statutory and non-statutory.*
3. *The Review will publish both interim findings and a final report. The latter will combine evidence, analysis and conclusions together with recommendations for both national policy and the work of schools and other relevant agencies.*

PERSPECTIVES AND THEMES

The Cambridge Primary Review is conceived as a matrix of ten themes and four strands of evidence, overarched by three **perspectives**:

- The lives and needs of children and the condition of childhood today
- The condition of the society and world in which today's children are growing up
- The present condition and future prospects of England's system of primary education.

The **ten themes** to be addressed by the Review are:

1. Purposes and values
2. Learning and teaching
3. Curriculum and assessment
4. Quality and standards

5. Diversity and inclusion
6. Settings and professionals
7. Parenting, caring and educating
8. Beyond the school
9. Structures and phases
10. Funding and governance.

In respect of these themes, each of which has been elaborated as the sub-themes and contributory questions, the Review has aimed to address two fundamental questions:

- *Evidence*: how well is England's system of primary education doing?
- *Vision*: how can it best meet the needs of children and society over the coming decades?

EVIDENCE

The Primary Review has four main strands of evidence:

Submissions. Following the convention in enquiries of this kind, submissions were invited from all who wished to contribute. By October 2008, 818 submissions had been received. They ranged from brief single-issue expressions of opinion to substantial documents of up to 300 pages covering several or all of the themes and comprising both detailed evidence and recommendations for the future. The majority of the submissions were from national organisations, but a significant number came from individuals. The Review's final report will explain how this material was analysed.

Soundings. This strand had two parts. The *Community Soundings* were a series of nine regionally-based one to two day events, each comprising a sequence of meetings with representatives from schools and the communities they serve. The Community Soundings took place between January and March 2007, and entailed 87 witness sessions with groups of pupils, parents, governors, teachers, teaching assistants and heads, and with educational and community representatives from the areas in which the soundings took place. The *National Soundings* were a programme of more formal meetings with national organisations both inside and outside education. Some of these, with government, statutory agencies, public bodies and unions, took the form of regular consultations throughout the Review's duration. Others, which included three seminars with specially-convened groups of teachers and two sessions with representatives of major non-statutory organisations, took place between January and March 2008 and explored issues arising from the Review's by then considerable body of evidence. The National Soundings helped the team to clarify matters which were particularly problematic or contested, in preparation for the writing of the final report.

Surveys. Several months before the launch of the Review, 28 surveys of published research relating to the Review's ten themes were commissioned, on the basis of competitive bidding and peer review, from 70 academic consultants in leading university departments of education and allied fields. The resulting research reports and their accompanying briefings and media releases were published in cross-thematic groups over several months, starting in autumn 2007. They provoked considerable media, public and political interest, and provided the top UK news story on several occasions.

Searches and policy mapping. With the co-operation of DfES/DCSF, QCA, Ofsted and TDA, the Review tracked recent policy and examined official data bearing on the primary phase. This provided the necessary legal, demographic, financial and statistical background to the Review and an important resource for its consideration of policy options.

The balance of evidence. The four evidential strands sought to balance opinion-seeking with empirical data; non-interactive expressions of opinion with face-to-face discussion; official data with independent research; and material from England with that from other parts of the UK and from international sources. This enquiry, unlike some of its predecessors, looked outwards from primary schools to the wider society, and made full but judicious use of international data and ideas from other countries.

Other meetings. In addition to the formal evidence-gathering procedures, the Review's director and other team members met national and regional bodies for the exchange of information and ideas. At the time of going to press (January 2009) 140 such meetings had taken place or were scheduled, in addition to the 94 community and national soundings, making a total of 234 sessions.

REPORTS

The Primary Review has published both interim and final reports. The main series of 29 interim reports, which included 28 of the commissioned research surveys and the report on the community soundings, served a formative function, seeking to provoke further debate which then fed back into the Review. The Review has an active and still-expanding website – www.primaryreview.org.uk – on which the interim reports were published together with a record of their extensive media coverage. Electronic and print versions of the reports and briefings were widely circulated.

The two special reports on the primary curriculum were published in January 2009 as a contribution to debate about the interim report of the government's Rose Review of the primary curriculum.

The Cambridge Primary Review final report (Volume 1) draws on the various strands of evidence outlined above to address the ten listed themes and attendant questions. It combines findings, analysis, reflection and conclusions, together with recommendations for both policy and practice. Volume 2 contains most of the commissioned surveys of published research, updated in light of the most recent research and policy. Taken together, it is hoped that all this material will both provoke immediate responses from stakeholders and provide a significant empirical and reflective resource for the longer term.

OUTLINE TIMETABLE

- Phase 1: **Preparation** (January 2004 – October 2006)
- Phase 2: **Implementation** (October 2006 – summer 2008)
- Submissions (October 2006 – April 2007)
 - Community Soundings (January – March 2007)
 - Research Surveys (July 2006 – January 2008)
 - Searches (November 2006 – summer 2008)
 - National Soundings (January – March 2008)
 - Other meetings (October 2006 – October 2008)
- Phase 3: **Dissemination** (October 2007 – late 2009)
- Interim reports and briefings (October 2007 – May 2008)
 - Special report on the primary curriculum (January 2009)
 - Final report (spring 2009)
 - Other dissemination events and activities (from spring 2009)
- Phase 4: **Longer term evaluation and follow-up** (from late 2009)
- Programme to be agreed.

FUNDING

The Cambridge Primary Review has been undertaken with the generous support of Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. To date, the Foundation's Trustees have awarded the Review three grants: (i) the main Review implementation grant (Phase 2 and the first part of Phase 3 above), from 1 October 2006 to 30 September 2008; (ii) a supplementary implementation grant, from 1 October 2007 to 30 September 2008; (iii) a dissemination grant (the second part of Phase 3), from 1 October 2008 to 30 September 2009.

PERSONNEL (for full list see website)

Director of the Cambridge Primary Review: Professor Robin Alexander

Chair of the Cambridge Primary Review Advisory Committee: Dame Gillian Pugh

Chair of the Cambridge Primary Review Management Group: Hilary Hodgson, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

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Appendix 2

REPORTS FROM THE CAMBRIDGE PRIMARY REVIEW

THE INTERIM REPORTS

The 31 interim reports, 28 of them specially-commissioned surveys of published research, were released in nine groups between October 2007 and May 2008, with a further two special reports published in January 2009. On each occasion, several types of document were issued: (i) the reports in full; (ii) 3-4 page briefings on each report; (iii) 3-4 page overview briefings on each group of reports published together; (iv) a press release. These give readers the choice of accessing the reports at any level from the short summary to the full report, with a fuller summary in between.

All the reports, briefings, overview briefings and press releases may be downloaded from the Cambridge Primary Review website: www.primaryreview.org.uk.

The reports are listed below in order of publication.

12 October 2007 The community soundings

Community Soundings: the Primary Review regional witness sessions, Robin Alexander and Linda Hargreaves. ISBN 978-1-906478-00-1.

2 November 2007 How well are we doing? Research on standards, quality and assessment in English primary education

Standards and quality in English primary schools over time: the national evidence (Research Survey 4/1) Peter Tymms and Christine Merrell, University of Durham. ISBN 978-1-906478-01-8.

Standards in English primary education: the international evidence (Research Survey 4/2) Chris Whetton, Graham Ruddock and Liz Twist, National Foundation for Educational Research. ISBN 978-1-906478-02-5.

The quality of learning: assessment alternatives for primary education (Research Survey 3/4) Wynne Harlen, University of Bristol. ISBN 978-1-906478-03-2.

23 November 2007 Children's lives and voices: research on children at home and school

Children's lives outside school and their educational impact (Research Survey 8/1) Berry Mayall, Institute of Education, University of London. ISBN 978-1-906478-05-6.

Parenting, caring and educating. (Research Survey 7/1) Yolande Muschamp, Felicity Wikeley, Tess Ridge and Maria Balarin, University of Bath. ISBN 978-1-906478-06-3.

Primary schools and other agencies (Research Survey 8/2) Ian Barron, Rachel Holmes, Maggie MacLure, Manchester Metropolitan University, and Katherine Runswick-Cole, University of Sheffield. ISBN 978-1-906478-07-0.

Children and Their Primary Schools: pupils' voices (Research Survey 5/3) Carol Robinson, University of Sussex, and Michael Fielding, Institute of Education, University of London. ISBN 978-1-906478-04-9.

14 December 2007 Children in primary schools: research on development, learning, diversity and educational needs

Children's cognitive development and learning (Research Survey 2/1a) Usha Goswami, University of Cambridge, and Peter Bryant, University of Oxford. ISBN 978-1-906478-08-7.

Children's social development, peer interaction and classroom learning (Research Survey 2/1b) Christine Howe and Neil Mercer, University of Cambridge. ISBN 978-1-906478-09-4.

Children in primary education: demography, culture, diversity and inclusion (Research Survey 5/1) Mel Ainscow, Alan Dyson, and Frances Gallannaugh, University of Manchester, and Jean Conteh, University of Leeds. ISBN 978-1-906478-10-0.

Learning needs and difficulties among children of primary school age: definition, identification, provision and issues (Research Survey 5/2) Harry Daniels and Jill Porter, University of Bath. ISBN 978-1-906478-11-7

18 January 2008 Aims and values in primary education: national and international perspectives

Aims as policy in English primary education (Research Survey 1/1) John White, Institute of Education, University of London. ISBN 978-1-906478-12-4.

Aims and values in primary education: England and other countries (Research Survey 1/2) Maha Shuayb and Sharon O'Donnell, National Foundation for Educational Research. ISBN 978-1-906478-13-1.

Aims for primary education: the changing national context (Research Survey 1/3) Stephen Machin and Sandra McNally, London School of Economics and Political Science. ISBN 978-1-906478-14-8.

Aims for primary education: changing global contexts (Research Survey 1/4) Rita Chawla-Duggan and John Lowe, University of Bath. ISBN 978-1-906478-15-5.

8 February 2008 The structure and content of English primary education: international perspectives

The structure of primary education: England and other countries (Research Survey 9/1) Anna Riggall and Caroline Sharp, National Foundation for Educational Research. ISBN 978-1-906478-17-9.

Curriculum and assessment policy: England and other countries (Research Survey 3/1) Kathy Hall, National University of Ireland, and Kamil Øzerk, University of Oslo. ISBN 978-1-906478-18-6.

Primary curriculum futures (Research Survey 3/3) James Conroy, Moira Hulme and Ian Menter, University of Glasgow. ISBN 978-1-906478-19-3.

29 February 2008 Governance, funding, reform and quality assurance: policy frameworks for English primary education

The governance and administration of English primary education (Research Survey 10/2) Maria Balarin and Hugh Lauder, University of Bath. ISBN 978-1-906478-20-9.

The funding of English primary education (Research Survey 10/1) Philip Noden and Anne West, London School of Economics and Political Science. ISBN 978-1-906478-21-6.

The trajectory and impact of national reform: curriculum and assessment in English primary schools (Research Survey 3/2) Dominic Wyse, University of Cambridge, Elaine McCreery and Harry Torrance, Manchester Metropolitan University. ISBN 978-1-906478-22-3.

Quality assurance in English primary education (Research Survey 4/3) Peter Cunningham and Philip Raymont, University of Cambridge. ISBN 978-1-906478-23-0.

18 April 2008 Primary teachers: training, development, leadership and workforce reform

Primary schools: the professional environment (Research Survey 6/2) Ian Stronach, Andy Pickard and Liz Jones, Manchester Metropolitan University. ISBN 978-1-906478-25-4.

Primary teachers: initial teacher education, continuing professional development and school leadership development (Research Survey 6/3) Olwen McNamara and Rosemary Webb, University of Manchester, and Mark Brundrett, Liverpool John Moores University. ISBN 978-1-906478-26-1.

Primary workforce management and reform (Research Survey 6/4) Hilary Burgess, Open University. ISBN 978-1-906478-27-8.

16 May 2008 Learning and teaching in primary schools: processes and contexts

Learning and teaching in primary schools: insights from TLRP (Research Survey 2/4) Mary James and Andrew Pollard, Institute of Education, University of London. ISBN 978-1-906478-30-8.

Classes, groups and transitions: structures for learning and teaching (Research Survey 9/2) Peter Blatchford, Susan Hallam and Judith Ireson, Institute of Education, University of London, Peter Kutnick, King's College, University of London, with Andrea Creech, Institute of Education, University of London. ISBN 978-1-906478-29-2.

Primary schools: the built environment (Research Survey 6/1) Karl Wall, Julie Dockrell and Nick Peacey, Institute of Education, University of London. ISBN 978-1-906478-24-7.

13 February 2009 The primary curriculum: contributions to the debate about the Rose Review interim report

Towards a New Primary Curriculum: a report from the Cambridge Primary Review. Part 1: Past and Present, Robin Alexander and Julia Flutter, University of Cambridge. ISBN 978-1-906478-31-5.

Towards a New Primary Curriculum: a report from the Cambridge Primary Review. Part 2: The Future, by Robin Alexander, University of Cambridge. ISBN 978-1-906478-32-2.

THE FINAL REPORT

The final report of the Cambridge Primary Review will be published by Routledge in spring 2009. It will be in two volumes (the titles are provisional):

***Primary Education in England: what is and what could be* (Final report of the Cambridge Primary Review, Volume 1).**

This will contain the report proper, presenting evidence and analysis together with conclusions and recommendations for policy and practice.

***Understanding Primary Education: research surveys commissioned by the Cambridge Primary Review* (Final report of the Cambridge Primary Review, Volume 2).**

This will contain revised and updated versions of the 28 research surveys listed above, together with introductions to the volume and to each of its sections.

Related publications: final report briefings and digests, downloadable from the Primary Review website, will be published alongside the main report.