

**16 September 2013****Agenda Item: 6****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION, STANDARDS AND  
INCLUSION****PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM IN ENGLAND****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Government's proposal to revise the National Curriculum from September 2014 and seek approval for the views of headteachers regarding the proposed development of the National Curriculum to be sought and reported back to the Committee.
2. This report also updates Members on the proposals to change the testing arrangements for primary aged children, a proposed change which is running concurrently to the proposed alterations to the National Curriculum.

**Information and Advice**

3. On 7 February 2013, the Secretary of State for Education announced a public consultation on the new draft National Curriculum. Having considered responses to that consultation, a revised proposed National Curriculum Framework for Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 has been published with a view of securing Parliamentary approval during autumn 2013. Subject to the outcomes of a further consultation, which ended on 8 August 2013, the Department for Education (DfE) intends to finalise the new curriculum this autumn so that schools will have a year to prepare to teach to the new programmes of study from September 2014.
4. The Government also aims to change the subject area known as Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT) to computing. A consultation on these proposals ended on 3 June 2013.
5. The Government has confirmed that the majority of the current National Curriculum will be disapplied from September 2013 to give schools more scope to prepare for the introduction of the new National Curriculum from September 2014. This means that the teaching of all National Curriculum subjects remains compulsory but schools can now choose either to follow the existing programmes of study or to adjust them to support the transition to the new National Curriculum. This is particularly important for pupils who are in Year 4 during 2013-2014 as they will be the first cohort of primary aged children to sit the new revised national Key Stage 2 tests in May 2016.

6. The draft National Curriculum for primary aged children is slimmer but the DfE emphasises how it focuses upon essential subject knowledge and is broadly similar in content to the curricula taught in the countries which Government considers to be the most educationally successful across the world. The core subjects of English, mathematics and science continue to be priorities and these subject areas are enriched by a foundation curriculum which includes history and geography. Religious education continues to be a compulsory subject.
7. **Appendix 1** presents an overview of the key stages mapped to year groups and indicates the allocation of core and foundation subjects to each key stage. The appendix also confirms the statutory teaching of religious education and sex and relationships education. At Key Stage 4, after the age of 14 years, the arts (comprising art and design, music, dance, drama and media arts), design and technology, the humanities (comprising geography and history) and modern languages are not compulsory, although in maintained schools there will be a statutory entitlement to be able to study a subject in each of these four areas, which will be known as 'Key Stage 4 entitlement areas'.
8. The revised National Curriculum will outline the knowledge and skills required. The proposed programmes of study (POS), whilst slimmer than those currently in use, will contain a new section on spoken language skills and will emphasise the importance of vocabulary development in the primary English POS. The importance of accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar is also highlighted. The Design Technology POS has been revised to increase rigour, flexibility and to reflect better the needs of industry; the explicit reference to 'Climate' has been removed from the KS3 Geography curriculum and the revised POS for KS2 History has been slimmed down, is less prescriptive and has a core focus on British History, with additional content on world history. The proposed list of languages to be taught at KS2 has been removed and primary schools are now free to choose which foreign language to teach. The Government has confirmed that the curriculum will not be supplemented by additional statutory guidance on teaching methodology as 'how' teachers choose to plan and teach the curriculum is regarded as professional responsibility.
9. A key change is the removal of the National Curriculum attainment targets. Schools will be able to introduce their own approaches to formative assessment in order to support pupil attainment and progression. Schools will be expected to integrate their assessment framework into the school curriculum, so that schools can check what pupils have learned and whether they are on track to meet expectations at the end of the key stage. In relation to the end of Key Stage 2, a new, externally assessed test will focus on reading, writing and grammar. The outcomes of these tests will be used to measure progress from the end of Key Stage 2 to the end of Key Stage 4. The details of changes to national assessment and reporting remain unclear at this time.
10. New GCSE programmes of study for Key Stage 4 have been developed in English, mathematics, science, geography and history, to be taught from September 2015 and assessed for the first time in June 2017. The Examination Boards will play a key role in informing the exact content and assessment arrangements of these GCSE syllabuses, which are expected to be wholly tested by final examinations at the end of Key Stage 4.
11. The National College for Teaching and Leadership has commissioned a report and recommendations on the effective delivery of the new curriculum from 20 National

Leaders of Education. Support is already available from the College to support headteachers to begin to plan the new curriculum. The DfE is also working with the College to align initial teacher training with the curriculum changes from September 2013. Professional development opportunities have recently been announced through the DfE 'Network of Computing Excellence' and development programmes continue to be nationally funded through the National Centre for the Teaching of Mathematics (NCTM) for mathematics and through the National Science Learning Centre (NSLC) for science. New funding is also available for the development of primary school sport and the matched funding for the purchase of nationally accredited phonics schemes continues.

12. The DfE is working with Ofsted on a revised framework to take account of the new curriculum and is also working closely with publishers to ensure the development of appropriate curriculum resources. DfE support plans also include further guidance and audit tools for each subject to map gaps in the delivery of the new programmes of study. Resources, particularly for Key Stages 2 and 3, continue to be available through the BBC 'Bite Size' web site which will evolve as the new national resources are made available. In partnership with the Standards and Testing Agency (STA), the DfE is developing new national tests.
13. Locally, headteachers are planning within existing partnerships to ensure that the new programmes of study are implemented appropriately. The Education Improvement Service, part of the Support to Schools Service (SSS), is planning to hold a curriculum conference for primary and special schools late in the spring term 2014, when it is hoped that final programmes of study will be available. We will seek a view of how headteachers regard these proposed changes, once they have been finalised, and report back to Committee.
14. A keynote speaker has been invited to lead the opening session of the curriculum conference both to support and challenge headteachers to ensure that the curriculum they develop will enable learners to secure key basic skills, develop specific vocational skills and will also develop the capacity to think, learn, adapt, innovate and create. Nottinghamshire Teaching School Alliances and other Nottinghamshire partnerships have been invited to offer workshops at the curriculum conference. The aim will be for these schools to share the processes they are using to develop their curriculum, the outcomes of their development work to date and the allocation of time to specific curriculum areas. The conference will also provide an opportunity for all schools to begin to share their plans for ensuring that the new curriculum is implemented from September 2014 in all schools. Plans are also in place to source workshops from the most effective schools across the County in relation to computing, meeting the needs of the most vulnerable learners and challenging the most able learners. Members of the Committee will be invited to attend this conference.
15. The final plans for the conference will be made once further national support information and personnel are in place. Support for secondary schools will come through the curriculum leaders' networks, which the majority of secondary schools have attended for a number of years. Secondary headteachers are working in collaboration with the Education Improvement Service to prepare a number of headteacher briefings throughout 2013-2014 which will include relevant curriculum updates and developments.

16. **Appendix 2** of the report consists of a series of hyperlinks which may be helpful to Members who wish to view the proposed changes in greater detail.

### **Other Options Considered**

17. This is a report to summarise the key changes in relation to the proposed National Curriculum in maintained schools in England. No other option is appropriate.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

18. Members will wish to note the report so that they are aware of the proposed changes to the National Curriculum and the resultant changes in national assessment arrangements.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

19. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Financial Implications**

20. There are no immediate financial implications to the County Council as maintained schools remain funded and responsible for the planning and delivery of the National Curriculum.

### **Crime and Disorder Implications**

21. The Department for Education believes that the National Curriculum presents the essential knowledge that pupils require in order to become responsible citizens. It aims to ensure that all pupils in maintained schools learn to appreciate and understand human creativity and achievement.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

That:

- 1) the Government's proposed revisions to the National Curriculum from September 2014, subject to the outcome of consultation, and proposed changes to the testing arrangements for primary age children be noted.
- 2) officers seek the views of headteachers regarding the proposed development of the National Curriculum and report back to the Committee.

**John Slater**

**Service Director: Education Standards and Inclusion**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Marion Clay  
Group Manager, Support to Schools Service  
T: 0115 9772073  
E: [marion.clay@nottsccl.gov.uk](mailto:marion.clay@nottsccl.gov.uk)

**Constitutional Comments (LM 04/09/13)**

22. The Children and Young People's Committee has delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendations in the report.

**Financial Comments (KLA 01/08/13)**

23. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

DfE webpages on National Curriculum consultation:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/nationalcurriculum2014/>

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

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