PART 18 MT

Confidential Filing

Policy on Education Policy

General Policy on Education

EDUCATION

[An attached folder {Reactions to Main Report. and Record of Attainment Booklet.]

Part 1 : May 1979

Part 18 : April 1988

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
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PART 18 ends:-

CST to SS/Wales 26.5.88

PART 19 begins:-

PART TWO 1.6.88

Published Papers

The following published paper(s) enclosed on this file have been removed and destroyed. Copies may be found elsewhere in The National Archives.

1. "English our English, the new orthodoxy examined"
   John Marenbon
   Centre for Policy Studies, June 1987
   [ISBN 1-870265-07-6]

2. Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the teaching of English language, Chairman Sir John Kingham
   Department of Education and Science, March 1988

Signed C Wayland Date 24 September 2015

PREM Records Team

026/3298

[redacted] cc BG.

CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

The Rt Hon Peter Walker MBE MP
Secretary of State for Wales
Welsh Office
Gwydyr House
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2ER

26th May 1988

Dear Peter,

HMI REPORT 'ASPECTS OF EDUCATIONAL PROVISION IN WALES 1986-87'

Thank you for copying to me your letter of 19 May to John Wakeham.

I agree that the 1986-87 report is a very considerable improvement on its predecessors. I welcome in particular the marked shift of emphasis, compared to earlier years' reports towards discussion of service delivery. You acknowledge that further work still needs to be done, in the light of the Education Reform Bill initiatives and the development of the English report. I hope that it can include, amongst other things, work on the relationship between levels of provision on the one hand and the results achieved on the other. But I recognise the work that has already been done and am content for the report to be published. It will however be important for officials to agree the terms of the accompanying release.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister and other members of the Cabinet, and to Sir Robin Butler.

Yours Ever,
John

JOHN MAJOR

EDUCATION Policy PT18

FROM. LORD THORNEYCROFT.

NLW

Prime Minister 2

An interesting memorandum, but unless hard there general sentiments can be translated into legislation. I have asked for DES advice. N.L.W I.G.

HOUSE OF LORDS

26. May. 1988.

Dear Prime Minister.

I enclose a note on the religious clauses in the Education Bill. It includes the outline of a solution which just might be negotiable with the conflicting interests. I think you might be willing to look at it and to use your influence to smooth these troubled waters.

Yours.

I don't think this solution is either possible or desirable. It should be within the powers of the LEA authority to ensure that there are separate teachers who can teach Biblical education NW

RELIGION IN THE SCHOOLS

A note by Lord Thorneycroft

This paper is an attempt to analyse the views of the main groups at present concerned with this subject and to suggest the outline of some solution which might be broadly agreeable to most of them.

The Agnostics. These would prefer to remove both religious teaching and religious worship from the schools. They regard it as ~~moving~~ wrong to indoctrinate children with a religious faith. Religious education and development should stem from sources outside the schools.

This approach is not without some powerful arguments in its support. Thomas Jefferson firmly separated Church and State in America and America remains to an important extent a deeply religious country. We might, but did not, start from the same position. An attempt to adopt it now would I believe be misunderstood and deeply resented by wide sections of public opinion.

The Christian approach. Perhaps more accurately described as the approach preferred by many Christians. This would assume that in a Christian country, if religion is to be taught in schools, it should be the Christian religion and that if worship is to take place it should be God Almighty, the One God, who should be worshipped.

Fifty years ago, just before the then Mr. Butler introduced his Education Act, this approach was accepted broadly without question. It was assumed and stated to be assumed that religious education was understood to mean Christian religious education.

The Compromise position. The present religious clauses of the Bill are an attempt to legislate on the basis of terms negotiated by the Bishop of London. They are offensive to many Christians. While providing and indeed highlighting the need for religious education they studiously avoid giving any indication as to what religion Parliament has in mind and indeed provide in terms that no preference should be accorded to any one religion over any other.

The existing Bill goes on to prohibit in specific terms the teaching of any catechism or religious creed. This is, to say the least, an odd provision to find in primary legislation. While ordaining that acts of religious worship should take place it specifically requires that they should not discriminate between one religion and another. As the Bill at present stands it would be wrong to give specifically Muslim religious teaching to a school containing 90% Muslims as it would be to give specifically Christian teaching to a school containing 90% of pupils of English, Welsh or Caribbean origin. The Bishop of London is considering how best to introduce the word Christin on to the face of the Bill but it may be found that more than one word is needed to change the general slant of the Bill which is at the moment almost wholly tilted towards a form of multi faith education.

The Problem. The Bishop of London faces many problems but it does not appear that any of them really stem from any of the ethnic groups. If there are schools which are largely Muslim no-one would object to them receiving religious education in the Muslim faith preferably with the help and agreement of leaders of the local Muslim Community. So far as is known, no ethnic group has opposed Christian Teaching.

The problem, and it is a real one, is that among the thousands of Christian Teachers, there are a number of agnostics who are not prepared to have anything whatever to do with Christian teaching in their schools.

This view is shared by some local Education Authorities and under the arrangements for drawing up a syllabus any of these groups can impose a veto. Even the removal of this veto would not however solve the problem. What is to be done with a school where no teacher is qualified or willing to give Christian religious teaching or officiate over Christian religious worship - or perhaps over any form of religious activity? It would seem to me that it would be best in such a school if no attempt was made to engage in religious activities. Certainly nobody will be quicker than children to recognise the artificiality of such an

exercise. In some cases the opportunity has been seized to substitute political for religious teaching.

OBJECTIVES

Amid these difficulties we can identify some objectives.

(a) The religious life of pupils of whatever ethnic origin should be catered for. Wherever possible provision should be made to give them education and encouragement in their own faith be it Muslim, Christian or any other. but not 'genuine' faiths.

(b) An attempt should be made, if only in the teaching of history, or literature to familiarise children of English, Welsh or Caribbean origin, with the facts and the superb language of the Christian tradition. No man or woman can be said to be educated in this country unless they have some knowledge of the authorised version of the Bible, including both the Old Testament and the story contained in the New Testament.

(c) Wherever possible children of English, Welsh and Caribbean origin should be given specific Christian religious education and engage in collective Christian Worship.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Solutions are not easy but I think that any solution should try to include the following:

(a) We cannot by legislation compel teachers who do not wish to give religious education to do so. They should not suffer in their careers for holding these views. I think that we should say so. Christian education by an agnostic or Christian worship led by an unbeliever would soon be recognised by children and should not be sought for.

(b) We should state objectives and these must surely include the fact that any substantial number of pupils of any ethnic origin can be educated if parents so wish in their own faith be it Christian, Muslim or whatever.

(c) Clearly all parents should have the right to withdraw their children from religious education or worship if they so wish.

(d) Children should be encouraged to meet together and be talked to about the problems of humanity and their relations with one another. This should not however be taken as a substitute for education and worship in their own faiths. The attempt to impose a multi faith type of education and worship as at present in the Bill should be dropped.

(e) Wherever possible the assistance of the local religious community should be enlisted to help in the development of religious knowledge of whatever faith is being taught.

Where the Christian religion is being taught help will obviously be drawn from wider circles than the Anglican Church.

(f) This type of solution will clearly mean that in some schools no Christian religious activity and perhaps no religious activity at all will be possible. I think that this will be better than a solution in which the theme is so degraded that the most ardent unbeliever can participate in teaching it. In such places parents and local religious leaders will have to do their best outside the school.

(g) We should then be attempting a quiet unprovocative teaching of the appropriate relgious faiths that make up the varied pattern of our community. We should not attempt to muddle them up or we will surely muddle the children that we are teaching. We must accept that in some areas what we achieve will fall short of what we would wish and in some schools we will fail altogether but this is happening now.

The kind of solution here suggested is I believe simply a mirror of what is happening in the best of our State schools already. The Bill should be amended on Report in order to reflect these practices.

I believe that part of our problem in these religious clauses arises from an attempt to draft them in a form more appropriate to the imposition of a core curriculum in general subjects.

We can and should impose a core curriculum in general subjects but we certainly cannot impose any worthwhile form of universal religious education. We should therefore lay down objectives on the lines above. These should be clear, directed toward teaching knowledge of a specific religion and unmuddled. From then on we should have faith in the parents and Governors to whom we are giving additional powers as well as in the Local Education Authorities and above all in the Teachers. This seems not only to be the wisest but in many ways the only course that is open to us.

Thorneycroft

EDUCATION POLICY PT 18

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

cc Professor Griffiths

SIX MONTHLY MONITORING MEETINGS ON EDUCATION

Following my letter of 20 May to Tom Jeffery at DES we have discussed the arrangements for six monthly monitoring meetings on the progress achieved on admission of pupils to maintained schools and other key aspects of the education changes.

Kenneth Baker would much prefer these meetings to be on a bilateral basis with the Prime Minister without other colleagues present. I said I saw no objection to this, particularly if no other members of E(EP) expressed an interest. We agreed that the first meeting might be in the early autumn, and be preceded by Kenneth Baker sending in a paper.

BFU

Could CF please arrange for this note to be brought forward in early September.

PAUL GRAY
25 May 1988

ECL/37

SECRET & PERSONAL

PRIME MINISTER 25 May 1988

E(EP) Assessment and Testing

As a result of the various reports of the Black Committee, I am afraid that this subject has now become thoroughly obscured by a dense fog of technical pedagogy. Personally I cannot understand the significance of various aspects of the additional Black reports. I am also convinced that the education Ministers concerned do not fully understand the details of what is being proposed.

The Secretary of State would like to choose some parts of Black and reject others. Apart from the issue of the regional organisation of exams, which he wishes to reject, he is nervous about picking and choosing other parts of the report for fear of antagonising the educational establishment. The Secretary of State is effectively asking E(EP) to agree to this approach in order that he can issue the draft Parliamentary Answer (Annex C).

I believe this is a potentially dangerous path to tread. Annex C is much too vague and general. It will give enormous power to the Secondary Examination and Assessment Council to interpet the Black report as it sees fit. And Black is a member of SEAC. The fact that all decisions taken by SEAC are subjet to the approval of the Secretary of State should not be given great weight. He will intervene only with great reluctance.

SECRET & PERSONAL

Recommendation

ie in much more specific terms than Annex C to Mr. Baker's paper. PARA.

The government must issue its own statement on assessment and testing. It should draw on the Black Reports, but should be clearly seen by the world at large, as different. It should be what you want. It should be comprehensive and cover the detailed procedure to be followed in testing and assessment. But it should be written with clarity and directness, such that it is capable of being read by governors and parents.

The Secretary of State should be asked to prepare such a paper for the next meeting of E(EP).

Brian Griffiths

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

SW2AFQ

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

MEETING OF E(EP): 25 MAY

Following your talk with us this morning, Brian Griffiths had a long session this afternoon with Kenneth Baker, Angela Rumbold and senior DES officials. This does not seem to have taken us much further forward and leaves serious questions about the approach DES are advocating.

You may like to start the meeting by referring to the terms of the Manifesto (copy attached). The key question is whether the DES proposals will deliver that commitment. Particular points to raise include:

- Is the basis of assessment turning out to be formative rather than summative?

- Refer to paragraph 4 of the first supplementary report of TGAT (the highlighted passage immediately below Brian's note at Flag C).

- How much of the assessment process will be national tests and how much in-school assessment? Will there be explicit publication of both? What exactly will parents be given and how will it enable them to compare the performance of their children with others?

- How much aggregation of the testing information is proposed? How much valuable information will be lost in the process?

One further paper has come in since this morning, namely a minute from Peter Walker supporting Kenneth Baker's paper. He has sent this note in because neither he nor Wyn Roberts can attend the meeting. It is attached immediately below this minute.

S. Mains D. Clerk

(PAUL GRAY)

24 May 1988

CONFIDENTIAL

There are more teachers in proportion to pupils than ever before.

British schools are world leaders in the use of computers in the classroom.

But money alone is not enough. Increased resources have not produced uniformly higher standards. Parents and employers are rightly concerned that not enough children master the basic skills, that some of what is taught seems irrelevant to a good education and that standards of personal discipline and aspirations are too low. In certain cases education is used for political indoctrination and sexual propaganda. The time has now come for school reform.

Four Major Reforms

First, we will establish a National Core Curriculum.

It is vital to ensure that all pupils between the ages of 5 to 16 study a basic range of subjects – including maths, English and science. In each of these basic subjects syllabuses will be published and attainment levels set so that the progress of pupils can be assessed at around ages 7, 11 and 14, and in preparation for the GCSE at 16. Parents, teachers and pupils will then know how well each child is doing. We will consult widely among those concerned in establishing the curriculum.

Second, within five years governing bodies and head teachers of all secondary schools and many primary schools will be given control over their own budgets.

They know best the needs of their school. With this independence they will manage their resources and decide their priorities, covering the cost of books, equipment, maintenance and staff. Several pilot schemes for financial devolution to schools have already proved their worth, such as those in Cambridgeshire and Solihull.

Third, we will increase parental choice.

The most consistent pressure for high standards in schools comes from parents. They have a powerful incentive to ensure that their children receive a good education. We have already done much through the 1980 and 1986 Education Acts so that parents can make their voice heard. But parents still need better opportunities to send their children to the school of their choice. That would be the best guarantee of higher standards. To achieve this:

We will ensure that Local Education Authorities (LEAs) set school budgets in line with the number of pupils who will be attending each school.

Schools will be required to enrol children up to the school's agreed physical capacity instead of artificially restricting pupil numbers, as can happen today. Popular schools, which have earned parental support by offering good education, will then be able to expand beyond present pupil numbers.

These steps will compel schools to respond to the views of parents. But there must also be variety of educational provision so that parents can better compare one school with another.

We will therefore support the co-existence of a variety of schools – comprehensive, grammar, secondary modern, voluntary controlled and aided, independent, sixth form and tertiary colleges – as well as the reasonable rights of schools to retain their sixth forms, all of which will give parents greater choice and lead to higher standards.

We will establish a pilot network of City Technology Colleges. Already two have been announced and support for more has been pledged by industrial sponsors.

cc BG

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FROM THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR WALES

23 May 1988

Dear Alison

HMI REPORT: 'ASPECTS OF EDUCATION PROVISION IN WALES 1986/87

... I am enclosing, with apologies for the omission, a copy of the report which should have accompanied my Secretary of State's letter of 19 May to the / Lord President. Copies also go to the Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, the Private Secretaries to other Cabinet Ministers and to Trevor Woolley.

Yours sincerely

Keith Davies

E K DAVIES

Ms Alison Smith
Private Secretary to
The Lord President

SOME ASPECTS OF EDUCATIONAL PROVISION IN WALES 1986/7

A REPORT BY HM INSPECTORS

Introduction

Reports by HMI on the observed effects of LEA expenditure policies have taken increasing note over the years of the many influences which bear upon schools and colleges, including the policies and funding of central as well as local government and of other agencies such as the MSC, the financial contributions of parents, and the impact of falling rolls. During the academic year 1986/7 the effects of a number of important developments (TRIST, the LEA Training Grants Scheme, GCSE, ESG and Circular 21/84 on initial teacher training), which were introduced or gathered momentum as the year progressed, were beginning to be felt. As a result, this particular record of HMI's monitoring of the system is expressed on a broad canvas, but does not attempt to be comprehensive in its treatment and gives more attention to some aspects than to others.

The assessments made in this report reflect the evidence of inspections over the period of the report, in this case the academic year 1986/87. During the year more than 40 individual primary schools and nine secondary schools were formally inspected but a much larger number of schools in both phases were included in surveys, or were the subject of other inspection visits. There have been formal inspections of three colleges of further education and surveys in this sector of computer-aided manufacture and design in engineering and hotel and catering courses which included most colleges in Wales. Individual centres and/or aspects of youth, adult and community education have been inspected in all eight LEAs. The year also saw the last of the series of formal inspections of initial teacher training institutions in Wales which began in 1984 in the wake of Circular 21/84, and the first survey of in-service education and training.

PRIMARY EDUCATION

Premises and Resources

Premises have an important influence on the quality of pupils' learning. Many primary schools enjoy well designed and attractive modern buildings in which staff and pupils have access to a wide range of appropriate facilities. However a significant proportion are housed in Victorian premises. Although many are sturdy buildings which have been reasonably maintained over the years, several pose particular problems, typical of their age, and all of them have a somewhat forbidding appearance, often exacerbated by poor internal and external decoration. Provided maintenance has been good and remodelling has occurred, these buildings can contribute to satisfactory provision. Others, however, do not provide a suitable learning environment.

Most primary schools make commendable efforts to provide a colourful and stimulating learning environment whatever the difficulties of the premises. A good deal of the work displayed reflects pupils' work in progress, though adult images tend to predominate in some schools.

On the whole, schools make reasonably good use of their accommodation. The use of shared facilities, such as the hall or the television viewing room, is carefully organised so that all classes can take advantage of them. Accommodation which is no longer occupied by a class is usually put to good use, for example, as a space for activities associated with a specific area of the curriculum.

Resources are generally adequate for the range of everyday activities provided in all schools. The more routine the activity, the less the probability that a school will have difficulty in providing appropriate resources. The great majority of schools have sufficient paper and other consumables. The more sophisticated the learning experience, the less likely it is that the school will have wholly adequate resources to meet the needs. Virtually all schools have, and most use, computers - but the use of them as adjuncts to learning across the curriculum is limited unless the school can provide (usually from parental funds) more than the often encountered one or two shared machines.

Many schools have adopted commercial schemes in language and mathematics and an increasing number are purchasing similar materials in other subjects. The

cost of such purchases is frequently heavy, and, though increasingly supported by parental funding, often means that resources in other curriculum areas are relatively neglected. Certain aspects of English and mathematics themselves may also suffer; library books (especially fiction) may be old and worn and mathematics apparatus insufficient to support fully the important practical aspects of the subject. Resources for art, craft and music and equipment for the under fives are often limited; the high cost of suitable items means that only intermittent purchases can be made. Apparatus for physical education is generally satisfactory.

The organisation of pupils' work too often discourages the use of resources (including reference books) as an integral part of pupils' learning, and there is a tendency in many schools not to use the resources available to best effect. Use of the environment of the school as a resource for learning is limited.

Staffing and Organisation

The great majority of primary teachers have been trained for the age they teach. There is a small number of teachers, originally trained for secondary, who have been redeployed to primary. The amount of preparation they have received varies considerably, from brief intermittent training, to year long courses in which training is partly college and partly school based. Particular difficulties are experienced by those transferring from secondary to infant classes, especially when their new classes contain a range of age, ability, and, sometimes, language.

The period under review has been one of considerable change in some LEAs. There is no longer the volume of early retirements common some years ago, but LEAs' efforts to take surplus places out of use, to make staffing responsive to fluctuations in school rolls and to place headteachers in schools of a size commensurate with their protected salaries have entailed a good deal of staff movement in some areas. All LEAs have responded to the government's Education Support Grant (ESG) initiatives and several heads and other senior staff have been seconded for extended periods as advisory teachers. In general, LEAs have been strict in the operation of their staffing ratios and have in a few cases made them tighter (for example, by varying the number of pupils needed to justify an additional teacher or to free the head from full-time charge of a class).

Inspection reports suggest that the INSET record of teachers in recent years has been modest (the years in question include the period of industrial action). Many of the courses attended have been of short duration and held locally. Mathematics and the use of computers have figured prominently in these courses. A growing number of schools require staff attending courses to report back to their colleagues, but there are few schools where course attendance has been organised as part of a policy designed to enhance the expertise of staff holding posts of responsibility for areas of the curriculum.

Much of the curriculum is taught by class teachers. There is some specialised teaching, mainly in Welsh, craft, music and games, for which classes may be exchanged between teachers, or amalgamated. The work of most classes is controlled by a timetable of some kind. In the infants this may be no more than an indication of a broad range of learning activities; in the juniors it may make greater use of subject titles. A substantial proportion of primary classes devote mornings to work in language and mathematics and afternoons to the remainder of the curriculum. Arrangements for the use of the hall cut across this pattern. In most junior classes all the pupils in a class will be engaged on a specific curriculum area at the same time; in many infants' classes pupils will be engaged on more than one activity at any one time. The fact that pupils all do the same subject at the same time makes for pressure on resources, and not least on the teacher's time. The result is often that there is inadequate group work, insufficient time to give help to all individuals who need it, and a considerable burden of marking. There is also little encouragement to develop links between subjects and in particular to exploit the role of language across the curriculum. The scope and quality of the work attempted in subjects other than English and mathematics are adversely affected by their being taught in the shorter afternoon sessions and by the general lack of cross-curricular links.

Class teaching occurs quite frequently (even when a class has more than one age group, and, sometimes, a range of ability and language), but its main purpose is to organise the work of the class and give the initial stimulus for a piece of work that pupils work on thereafter as individuals.

It is also the means of sharing experiences, such as a story or a recent remarkable event. Much of pupils' time is spent working as individuals from course books or workcards, especially in English and mathematics. Pupils

generally work at their own pace on individual assignments which are nonetheless frequently similar in nature to those of their fellow pupils. Some of these tasks are undemanding and most have little in them seriously to challenge the ablest or specifically to support the less able. Group work designed to encourage pupils to cooperate on joint tasks towards common ends remains rare. Many infants have opportunities to move about their classrooms and to engage in practical activities; juniors have fewer opportunities - and in general primary pupils spend an undue proportion of their day engaged on sedentary tasks.

Curriculum and Standards of Work

Most primary schools provide the following subjects or curriculum areas: English, Welsh, mathematics, science, religious education, history, geography (frequently included within an area entitled 'humanities', 'environmental studies', 'topic' or 'project'), art and craft, music, physical education. An increasing number of schools also provide, either as free-standing elements or as aspects of the areas listed, drama, health education, safety education, moral education and the use of micro-computers. What is actually taught in the areas described varies considerably from school to school. There are, however, some common features. Science is attracting increasing attention, work with micro-computers is gaining ground, and there is growing emphasis on health education. There is also evidence that work in the various subjects is better planned than it was, usually through the allocation of specific curricular responsibilities to members of staff and the compilation of schemes of work. There is, however, still much to be done to ensure that what is planned is carried through into practice; too often schemes of work are but indistinctly reflected in the work of classes.

With a few notable exceptions, schools give inadequate attention to multi-cultural issues and to the securing, as a matter of policy, of equal opportunities across the curriculum for boys and girls.

Insufficient and insufficiently challenging oral activity continues to be a significant weakness of much work in English. Improvements depend to a large degree on more flexible classroom organisation. High standards can be and are achieved where pupils have opportunities to discuss their tasks in detail and extend their grasp of oral language. Some of the work done in drama is encouraging in this respect.

Reading standards are generally satisfactory, in terms of both decoding and comprehension. A few schools emphasise the enjoyment of reading and encourage pupils, parents and teachers to share their enthusiasm. In general, however, too little use is made of book corners and libraries to encourage pupils to browse or to refer to books as a routine part of their work, and abler pupils have fewer opportunities than they could profitably use to acquire and apply higher reading skills.

Writing remains rather limited in scope in many schools. Pupils complete many unchallenging tasks and are not sufficiently encouraged to develop writing skills for a wide range of purposes. Where they are so encouraged, splendid results ensue, suggesting that a great deal of potential remains unexploited elsewhere. Many schools fail to capitalise on the range of learning experiences they provide outside language as a source of inspiration for writing. Those that do are able to give pupils experience of many types of writing and to broaden the range and improve the effectiveness of their expression. There are encouraging signs of a developing interest in the writing of verse; the scheme whereby practising poets spend time in primary schools has stimulated much good work.

In general, standards in **Welsh as a second language** are improving; the system of specific grants and in particular the activities of the 'athrawon bro' have been partly responsible. There is now a much greater emphasis on giving pupils the means of early communication in Welsh and less on teaching the language according to a predetermined grammatical sequence. Nonetheless, standards remain disappointing in some areas, even in places where there is considerable Welsh in the community. The main difficulty in many schools is ensuring adequate continuity and progression in pupils' learning of Welsh. Standards of Welsh as a first language are generally pleasing (including the work done with the increasing numbers of originally English-speaking pupils whose parents have chosen Welsh-medium education for them). The quality of the work is associated with the pervasive influence of a particular language scheme which offers not only a wide range of language experiences but also a thorough exploration of each of them. Pupils in general respond well to the challenge which the scheme undoubtedly poses and much work of a good standard is produced. The extension of good practice to the use of Welsh as a medium across the curriculum has been more limited and less successful.

Standards in **mathematics** are satisfactory over a limited range of arithmetical skills, adequate in several areas, but unsatisfactory in a number of others, all of which are important to mathematical development.

Number work is done thoroughly in most schools. Pupils have a generally sound understanding of number bonds and place value (though they are often slow when responding orally) and can perform operations efficiently. They are, however, sometimes unsure of the relationships between basic operations and often waste time doing unnecessary re-calculations. They also tend to be required to practise to excess skills which they have clearly long mastered and are not frequently enough required to put these skills to use in investigations or in solving problems.

Pupils know the properties of, and can recognise, the commoner two-dimensional shapes, but are less knowledgeable about the three-dimensional objects they encounter in the world around them. Pupils are taught to measure, using arbitrary units initially. They measure carefully but often do not have enough opportunities to estimate beforehand and as a result their appreciation of relative sizes and distances is poor. The means of calculating area is taught systematically and pupils are generally given useful practical experiences. Nonetheless, perimeter and area are frequently confused. Work in weighing and in measuring volume is frequently given much less emphasis and pupils' understanding is often weak in these areas.

The importance of graphs is acknowledged in most schools but the work done is often notably lacking in continuity and progression. There is also a certain amount of confusion about which form of graph is the most appropriate means of displaying the data in a given case. Opportunities for using graphs across the curriculum are infrequently exploited.

There is a general tendency in mathematics for the work prematurely to become sedentary, book-based and mechanical. Practical work is still not given its due place in the work of pupils of most ages. There is renewed interest in and emphasis on mental work, but room for much more in many schools. There is little to extend the ablest or to show all pupils the uses of mathematics across the curriculum and in everyday life. An increasing number of schools encourage pupils to use electronic calculators and computers, but there is scope generally to make greater use of the new technology.

Standards in **science** are improving, but the subject remains sporadic in its occurrence among and within schools. In infants' classes much of the work is concerned with projects which help to develop self-awareness and with observation of the natural world; in junior classes this interest continues but the physical and technological aspects of the subject grow in prominence. There is still in many junior classes a tendency to see science as mainly the doing of experiments, often involving teacher demonstration and the compilation of unduly uniform accounts, without adequate engagement of pupils in hypothesising, investigating and problem solving. Health education is part of the work in science in several schools. Issues are handled sensitively and pupils' awareness of self and others is often enhanced.

Work in **humanities subjects** (or as variously titled) remains in general rather uncertain of purpose and often of disappointing quality. The difficulties of achieving coherence and balance are considerable, but there has been a pleasing increase in the number of planning documents designed to bring order to the work. Pupils' achievements remain generally rather unsatisfactory and often represent a poor return for the energy and resources which have been expended. Much of the work fails to develop specific forms of historical and geographical understanding, although some of the more successful examples have been effective in developing historical empathy and the skills of mapping. The most successful work has clearly in view the specific concepts and skills being aimed at, and the content, resources and methods are adopted with these in mind. Work in religious education is often limited in scope and more concerned with covering content than with helping pupils to acquire concepts and attitudes. The quality of the work is frequently modest and sometimes poor. Most schools have yet to grapple with the challenge of teaching religious education in a society of many faiths. Moral education forms an important part of personal and social development in the great majority of schools, and the work done is frequently effective.

Adequate standards are attained generally in the **creative-aesthetic areas** of the curriculum (including art, craft, music and physical education). The educationally unnecessary and generally undesirable separation of boys and girls for craft and games continues in many schools but is gradually decreasing. In art and craft, work in two dimensions is still commoner than work in three, and modelling and other craft activities in general occur much less frequently than painting. The range of media and of associated skills remains rather limited in many schools. Singing in large, and instrumental

playing in small groups form the bulk of the work in music, the former being often supported by broadcasts and the latter by visiting teachers. Other aspects of music command less attention. Standards of singing and of instrumental playing are satisfactory on the whole. Opportunities for pupils to hear and appreciate recorded music are infrequent and experiences in creative music making remain very limited. Standards in physical education are generally satisfactory, and very good in a few cases, though the work in a good number of schools is subject to interruption for a variety of reasons (including the weather when schools have no hall). The emphasis continues to be on gymnastic skills and there have been few significant developments in the field of expressive movement and dance.

A slowly increasing number of pupils whose **special educational needs** are the subject of formal statements are being taught for part of the time in ordinary classes. Some of these pupils are physically handicapped; in their case additional ancillary help is usually provided and with it they are able to participate in a wide range of activities. These arrangements are generally satisfactory. Most of the others have mild or moderate learning difficulties, though there are a few schools where pupils with severe and persistent difficulties are so taught. In most cases these statemented pupils spend only a small proportion of their time learning alongside other pupils. In nearly all schools statemented pupils are full members of the school community and take part in the full range of social and community activities.

Pupils who have learning difficulties but who are not the subject of statements continue to receive additional help from their class teachers (and often from heads) and, especially for reading, from visiting remedial teachers. The work of the visiting teachers is generally satisfactory. A good deal of systematic teaching ensures success for many pupils. On the other hand, liaison between visiting and class teachers remains weak and there has been only limited progress towards locating the additional help, where this accords with pupils' needs, inside rather than outside the classroom.

A majority of LEAs use standardised tests as part of their procedures for identifying pupils with learning difficulties before transfer to junior classes or schools. Standardised tests also form part of the procedures adopted in all LEAs for the identification of pupils whose special educational needs may need to be the subject of formal statements. All LEAs also have some form of cumulative record of pupils' attainments (and frequently of other

aspects of their life and work in school) which accompanies pupils through the primary and on to the secondary school. Individual schools also frequently use standardised tests themselves as part of their general assessment procedures. Few schools assess the contribution of the curriculum overall to pupils' personal and social education. The areas of the curriculum outside language and mathematics are in general lightly assessed - or assessed infrequently.

Pupils' work is continually assessed in class, both formally and informally, and much of this **assessment** results in feedback (usually oral) to the child which confirms or modifies the learning steps the pupil is about to take. Lack of flexibility in classroom organisation quite often means that this sort of assessment occurs less often than it should. The bulk of the assessments made by teachers take the form of the marking of pupils' written work and the completion of checklists of various sorts. Marking is generally done conscientiously but the volume of work sometimes leads to superficiality. Some teachers make encouraging and stimulating comments, especially on pupils' extended writing, but some perfunctory ticking does less than justice to pupils' efforts and is of little value. Completed checklists covering skills in various areas of the curriculum (but chiefly language, especially reading, and mathematics) give little indication of the particular success with which individual pupils have mastered a skill or the particular difficulties they may have had in acquiring it. In this respect this form of assessment is poorly designed to act as a diagnostic base on which further work may be founded. In practice, there is little diagnostic analysis of pupils' work and in consequence insufficient differentiation of subsequent tasks. LEA cumulative record cards are conscientiously completed, but the comments tend to be brief and summative and because they are compiled at the end of the school year they can only be used purposefully if there is close liaison with the next class. There is much informal discussion of pupils before transfer and an increasing number of schools pass on pupils' work either in its entirety or in the form of files of selected samples. But the repetitious nature of much of the work done in the early weeks of the school year in many schools suggests that there is room for improvement in liaison between classes.

Social and Community Dimensions

Primary schools are, in general, places where pupils feel secure and where their efforts are recognised and rewarded. Relationships among pupils and between them and adults are usually good. There is often a coherence and unity of purpose in the pursuit of social aims which is missing from work in the curriculum. There are exceptions to the general rule; some schools find that unruly behaviour is commoner than it was and affects even the youngest children. Pupils' outside play is often naturally boisterous but there are some signs of aggressiveness which appear to be modelled on adult behaviour observed outside school.

The range and frequency of extra-curricular activities are returning to normal after a difficult period. The dedication of staff, the cooperation of parents and the enthusiasm of pupils make for a varied provision in many schools.

An increasing number of parents help with the day-to-day work of the schools. Some of the leaflets of information for parents go well beyond what is statutorily required and there are few schools which do not offer parents at least one annual opportunity to examine and discuss their children's work in detail in the school with the head and class teacher. In addition to helping with extra-curricular activities parents may also help in classrooms (especially with the youngest children) and several schools invite parents with special expertise to share it with staff and pupils. Parents also continue to make substantial payments to schools for the purchase of resources which the school feels unable to afford from its capitation.

SECONDARY EDUCATION

Premises and Resources

All but a few schools now have enough teaching spaces and many have been able to dispense with the use of temporary or otherwise unsuitable accommodation. A small number of school buildings constructed to high specification during the 1980's are of excellent design and, it would appear, durability. The quality of the majority of school buildings is, however, variable. Some are well maintained and continue to offer wholesome learning environments. In many others, dingy and depressing surroundings, in a part or the whole of a school, result from poor standards of internal and external maintenance,

manifested in a variety of ways in different schools. These include damaged interior fitments, minor repairs not made good, worn floor coverings, decaying exterior woodwork and peeling paintwork, and rooms and circulation areas left undecorated for many years. Playing fields are usually at least reasonably maintained but flower beds and shrubberies, together with more specialist outdoor sports facilities, such as cricket squares and nets and tennis courts, often bear a sadly neglected appearance.

With few exceptions, schools have ample specialist teaching spaces. A recent survey showed that nearly all schools taught at least 90% of their science in years I-III in laboratories; schools are generally well-endowed with traditionally-planned workshops and art rooms. The quality of specialist accommodation is rather more variable, especially when viewed against current curricular needs; the most serious mismatch occurs in craft, design and technology (CDT), though there are examples of poor provision in science and other practical subjects. Against this, many schools now enjoy splendid facilities for swimming and a wide range of individual sports and leisure pursuits, often shared with the local community.

Capitation allowances to schools have remained fairly static overall in recent years, with some injection of extra funds to some or all schools for specific purposes, for example TVEI, GCSE and Certificate of Education (CoE) courses. Overall, the provision of books and materials in most schools ranges from barely adequate to satisfactory. Within most schools, some departments are well-resourced, especially those which have been active in curriculum development over a number of years and have purchased wisely to meet perceived needs. There are many other departments which have adequate resources for a narrow range of learning approaches, but not for the wider and more ambitious range of learning experiences associated with GCSE courses. Most of these departments are in varying stages of improving their resources to meet the new demands. Special funding for the GCSE has helped considerably, but has not succeeded in making good all the deficiencies in schools and departments which started from a low baseline of provision. Such departments have tended to give priority to the purchase of books and materials for years IV and V and for A-level courses, and in these areas, most are now at least adequately, and often well resourced. The position is less favourable in years I-III, where much reliance continues to be placed on a limited range of textbooks, often a single title or series, usually for class study only and rarely issued on extended loan. The limitations of the range and quality of resources

available in these circumstances are being increasingly exposed as the learning approaches in years I-III are modified to provide continuity with those adopted for GCSE. There has been a significant increase in the availability of **computers** in secondary schools, although provision remains variable from school to school. Most schools now have a microcomputer base with a number of machines, but these, however, are often of several different types and ages. Many rooms, because of the lack of networking facilities and an inadequate number of machines, are unsuitable for use by groups following a class-based programme - the commonest requirement in subject teaching. Some LEAs have provided schools with considerable support for the purchase of computers; for example, in Clwyd, where the authority has provided out of its own resources a modest extension of a Phase I TVEI pilot project, most schools have enhanced their facilities in information technology and some are now generously provided. West Glamorgan also has invested heavily in advanced technological equipment on behalf of its schools, though to a considerable extent at the expense of schools' basic capitation allowance.

There has been a move in some schools away from public examination courses in computer studies towards the provision of modules in computer awareness and related topics within core teaching programmes (eg personal and social development), especially in years IV and V, but also in the earlier years. The encouragement of computer use within subject courses also usually forms part of this strategy, and many schools have made a useful start in providing subject departments with single computers for their own use. With a few exceptions (though the number is growing), use by subject departments of this facility is largely confined to the sixth form, where individual students can make use of a range of suitable programs to support their work. In the earlier years these machines tend to be used only occasionally and for class demonstration purposes.

Pupils' use of **school libraries** is generally poor; levels of borrowing, especially beyond years I and II are disappointingly low in the great majority of schools and good use of the library within subject courses is rare. This is due in part to arrangements for access to libraries but to a far greater extent to their unattractiveness, their lack of proper organisation and control, the impoverishment of stock and a failure to introduce the technological advances which should accompany resource-based learning. The funding from capitation for library provision and the allocation of time of ancillary or teaching staff to library duties are very rarely at a level sufficient to provide an adequate service.

Specific grant for Welsh has provided a useful range of resources for the age range 11-16, but there remains only a limited range of printed materials in Welsh to support A-level studies.

Curriculum and Standards of Work

There were no sharp changes in the curriculum offered by schools in 1986/7. The abandonment of foreign languages other than a school's first continues; while of very small proportions in 1986/7, it is a more significant phenomenon over a longer period. Around a quarter of Welsh schools now offer only one foreign language, though many of these offer Welsh as a first or second language.

Most schools continue to offer a very largely common curriculum to all pupils in years I-III, with some differentiation of provision in foreign languages, and (more rarely) science, for pupils of various abilities and more generally for pupils with learning difficulties. Patterns of provision are generally satisfactory at this level. However, the practice in many schools of timetabling practical subjects (eg CDT wood, CDT metal, food, textiles) in rotation, in modules of a term or less, often leads to fragmentary and disjointed learning experiences and a failure to develop foundation skills adequately in any of these areas.

In years IV and V, there has been a substantial move towards arranging subject options in a way which ensures a degree of curricular balance (eg a science, a practical/creative subject, a 'humanity', a foreign language) in each pupil's choice. This has largely prevented grossly unbalanced subject choice, though in their mode and quality of delivery the individual components do not always match their intended function. The arrangement has also enabled schools to retain better control over group sizes: maximum group sizes rarely exceed 20 in practical subjects, the low 20's in science and the mid-20's in other subjects.

There has been some tendency towards rationalisation of curricular provision in forms IV and V; in a few schools, subjects such as geology, economics, rural science and human biology, have been either discontinued or incorporated within broader studies. Alongside this, new subject courses have been provided; for example, most TVEI project schools have introduced several new GCSE courses for pupils in forms IV and V and some schools offer pre-

vocational curricular packages for specific groups of pupils, both in years IV and V and, with the advent of the Certificate of Pre-vocational Education (CPVE), in the sixth form. These developments have been accommodated despite falling pupil numbers and consequent reductions in staffing, and have not, as yet, led to the withdrawal of subject options on any significant scale, save possibly for the provision of 16+ examination courses in the lower sixth.

Although the work of some schools has benefited from many years of curriculum review and development, the principal catalysts in the current period of rapid change in teaching and learning approaches have derived from sources external to the schools, viz TVEI, GCSE and, to a lesser extent (since they are concerned with specific categories of pupil), CPVE and the WJEC Certificate of Education (CoE) pioneered by the Mid-Glamorgan authority. By 1986-7, all LEAs had a group of schools (usually four or five) involved in TVEI pilot projects, one LEA having commenced in 1983/4, five in 1984/5 and two in 1985/6. These projects are based on new or enhanced courses which seek to enrich the learning experiences of identified groups of pupils aged 14-18, though in practice, other pupils have also benefited.

At their best, **TVEI courses** provide pupils with admirable experience of active, practically-orientated learning which emphasises problem-solving and applications of learning outside the school, for example, in the community and the world of work. The extra equipment and resources made available have, in many schools, helped to make the work more attractive to pupils and there are many examples of high motivation and achievement within varied and well-balanced programmes of study. Not all TVEI experiences meet these high standards; some aspects of the work remain disappointing, for example, visits, work experience and other 'outgoing' activities are not always well exploited in the classroom. For some pupils, the balance of the curriculum has been adversely affected; sex stereotyping remains prominent in pupils' choice of some courses and the ablest and least able pupils are less likely to choose TVEI courses than pupils of about average ability. However, despite these areas of concern, the overall effect of the introduction of TVEI has been beneficial to the pupils concerned.

The advent of the new **GCSE courses** in year IV was the dominant factor in curriculum planning during 1986/7, especially at departmental level. Despite a significant number of difficulties and uncertainties, the net impact of this innovation on pupils' work has been favourable. In most subject departments,

the introduction of GCSE has resulted in an observable improvement in the quality of pupils' experiences. GCSE schemes, through the careful attention that has been given in each subject to the inclusion of a defined range and variety of experience, and to the means of assessing it, have helped to provide better breadth, balance and relevance in pupils' curricula. The work done in English, Welsh, foreign languages, history and art has benefited particularly from recent efforts to define the purpose and range of the learning to be attempted, of which GCSE developments have formed a part. In Welsh and French, for example, the gains have included a greater concern than formerly with communication through speaking, listening and reading the language, as well as with the formal skills of grammar and syntax; many schools have gone to much trouble to ensure that this work uses resources which authentically reflect aspects of French or Welsh life. In history, many schools are helping pupils to use evidence in a discriminating way and to build up a vivid and empathic personal picture of times past - work which goes on alongside the traditional concern with the development of generalised knowledge and understanding, albeit of a reduced body of content.

In some other subjects, it is taking longer for the work done to achieve the potential illustrated in the most successful approaches. In CDT, for example, only a minority of departments have achieved reasonable success in accommodating the elements of design, problem-solving and evaluation which distinguish the modern subject from traditional craft-orientated approaches. In some schools where a reasonable GCSE-based study programme has been drawn up in years IV and V, the achievements of pupils are inhibited by the poor levels attained by pupils in new skills and abilities (such as those described in relation to CDT) within a still-limited years I-III course. In science, the welcome emphasis upon experimental work by pupils brought by GCSE is a major advance; however, there is rather less evidence in many schools of the development of higher order scientific skills, such as hypothesis-testing and the application of scientific principles to problem-solving, even in the work of abler pupils.

Assessment of course work and differentiation of assessment remain the aspects of GCSE which give rise to the greatest uncertainty and anxiety amongst teachers. There is evidence of growing confidence in these aspects in science subjects, based on the experience of carrying out assessment exercises, but many departments have been slow to respond to the demands. There is a particular and regrettable tendency in some schools to regard course work as

an additional project or a discrete series of exercises to be done by pupils in their own time, rather than an integral part of normal classwork and homework. This tendency may cause considerable difficulty as pupils are faced with the task of finalising numerous collections of course work as they approach the end of the course. Some departments point (with some justification) to the burden of information content in some GCSE schemes which, they claim, limits the time which can be spared for the organisation and monitoring of course work. In most schools, there is inadequate differentiation of demands on pupils, with a tendency to pitch course work and practical exercises at a level where most pupils can obtain good marks.

Public examination results at the higher levels of attainment have shown modest gains since 1980. In the previous five years, between 23.2% and 23.9% had attained O-level grade C or the equivalent CSE grade 1 pass in five or more subjects. Since 1983 the proportion has ranged from 20.4% to 28%. The proportion of pupils attaining at least one higher grade has also increased, from less than half in the earlier period to 54.5% in 1985 and 53.2% in 1986. It remains to be seen whether the richer, more varied study programmes associated with GCSE will give rise to still higher standards of public examination performance from 1988 onwards.

Provision for pupils of lower ability in senior forms has improved markedly in recent years. Significantly more are now pursuing public examination (O-level or CSE, now GCSE) courses, and the proportion leaving school with no GCE or CSE grades has been reduced considerably from its high level of a decade or so ago. Between 1975 and 1980, for example, this proportion ranged from 25.1% to 30.5%, whereas in 1986 it stood at 16.1%, having fallen in every year since 1979. All but a few of these are pupils who leave school at Easter or Whitsun, many having taken courses leading to alternative forms of certification, such as the CoE or the City and Guilds of London Institute/Business and Technician Education Council (CGLI/BTEC), some of which are cross-curricular packages, often geared to a pre-vocational theme. These programmes have, in general, enhanced the experiences of less able pupils and provide much-needed elements of order and progression in their work. This is particularly the case where the opportunities offered by some pre-vocational courses for enhancing links with the world outside school have been fully grasped and where the resulting experiences inform and illuminate all elements of the programme. In CoE courses, some commendable work is done, especially where pupils have access to learning materials of good quality. However,

considerable unevenness remains in the quality of provision and of pupils' response in all courses of this kind. Some programmes are limited in scope and the expectations of pupils within them are too low; coursework assessments are sometimes based on unduly low level tasks. Some of the work in communication and numeracy is repetitive and mechanical in nature and provides few opportunities for pupils to improve these basic skills by applying them in relevant settings. At times, vocational needs are too narrowly interpreted - for example, when the course is dominated by a limited range of business-orientated language exercises. Some of the best work is to be found where subject departments take a keen corporate interest in the planning of the various elements of the course; some of the poorest occurs where individual teachers are left largely to their own devices.

Standards of **work in years I-III** show more variation than those attained within examination-orientated courses in years IV and V. Many departments which have given close attention to curriculum development throughout the school over a number of years have been able to take GCSE in their stride. In such cases the work in years I-III is already varied and well-structured, reflecting a coherent and perceptive view of the subject; some departments are phasing-in appropriate new schemes of work gradually. There are others, however, where the work in years I-III, to varying degrees, lacks confidence and consistency - where, for example, new work has been introduced as discrete elements which, as yet, do not form a sufficiently integral part of the learning process. Examples include the introduction of investigational and project work in mathematics, fieldwork and data analysis in geography, and experimental work in science and home economics: all worthwhile activities, but too rarely linked to the understanding and wide application of the principles represented in the activity. Elements of new approaches, for example, an increased emphasis on oral work in French, are sometimes introduced piecemeal, in advance of a thorough-going review of the full range of learning modes. In a minority of subject departments, the work continues to be limited in scope and in the range of demands made on pupils; such programmes provide an inadequate foundation for later GCSE courses. This is particularly apparent in many schools in subjects where GCSE approaches have necessitated considerable change, such as CDT, home economics and, to some extent, foreign languages.

Most pupils apply themselves to their work with some enthusiasm in the first year or so of secondary schooling; most continue to work diligently throughout

the first three years, during which the curriculum remains largely common to all. The pace and degree of difficulty of much of the work tend to be best suited to pupils of average ability, and most pupils achieve well in relation to the standard demanded. There is some tendency, especially in mixed ability classes, for abler pupils to be working below the level of which they are capable. This is particularly the case where tasks are heavily directed by the teacher (through demonstration and explanation) or by structured written or practical exercises in a way which largely circumscribes the pupils' work and level of response. Many of the worksheets through which data response and experimental activity are organised in science and humanities subjects are open to this criticism, as are activities in home economics, where teacher demonstration and imitative practical work by pupils take place in alternate weeks. Where pupils are given more open-ended tasks, such as design and problem-solving activities and extended, analytical or creative writing, high standards are achieved.

A minority of pupils in years II and III fail to keep abreast of the work, either because of lack of effort (reflected, for example, in poor attendance and an unwillingness to complete homework), or because they find the pace and/or difficulty of the work too great. Schools attempt various strategies to provide extra help to such pupils, through remedial work or special teaching on a withdrawal basis, participation of remedial teachers in mainstream lessons, and withdrawal of pupils for a period to a separate class. None of these has proved consistently effective in providing the individual help which these pupils need. The large size (approaching or exceeding 30) of some mixed ability classes in years I-III militates against the efforts of subject teachers to provide the necessary support.

A rather larger minority of pupils - the proportion reaches a majority in certain schools - have a degree of difficulty with formal language skills which inhibits their academic progress. Most have made a reasonable beginning in reading and writing prior to their entry to secondary school but fail to develop adequately higher language skills, such as those associated with reading for a range of purposes, the organisation of written composition and the sensitive use of analytic and descriptive vocabulary, which would enable them to take full advantage of learning opportunities in senior forms. While many pupils benefit in years I-III from well balanced and varied programmes in their first language (English or Welsh), the language of instruction across the other curricular subjects is often used in too restricted a range of

contexts and registers to promote the confident development of language. Work in sciences and humanities, for example, rarely incorporates the careful attention to vocabulary, the sequencing of argument, oral preparation and the drafting and re-drafting of written work which characterises the best language courses. The lack of cross-curricular language policies in many schools contributes to these weaknesses.

At **sixth form** level, most students pursuing A-level courses are working diligently and achieving good standards within the programmes provided. In most schools the provision of text and reference books at this level is adequate and most students use them well for directed reading. These wider studies, however, are often undertaken additionally to a class programme heavily dominated by teacher exposition, accompanied by voluminous notes, either handed out by the teacher or taken in various forms by students. The volume of material thus acquired by students, though commonly well ordered and presented in their files, is sometimes of daunting proportions. Standard examples and generalised or theoretical information are sometimes treated in too much detail, while less attention is given to wider reading, to real-world applications or to enhancing students' understanding of the general context. The best work at A-level involves students regularly in seminar-type work which explores the applications of general principles in a range of contexts and allows individual students to prepare and deliver personal contributions.

The proportion of pupils leaving school with two A-level passes reached 13.7% in 1986. This was only marginally the highest level of the decade; however, allowance needs to be made also for the increasing number of school-leavers transferring to tertiary colleges to take A-level courses whose results are not included in these data. **CPVE** programmes have provided the framework within which some varied and purposeful educational activities have been developed. A range of communication, numerical, personal and general vocational skills are developed, often through participation in practical projects based upon enterprise, work experience or work simulation. Many CPVE schemes have evoked considerable interest and commitment on the part of students and most have progressed from the course to employment or full time further education.

Although there are examples of considerable merit, general studies provision continues to be on the whole weak: it appears to rank low in the priorities of schools (eg in staff allocation) and of the sixth formers themselves, and

attracts neither the careful planning by staff nor the high levels of commitment on the part of students apparent in the academic A-level courses. There is evidence in schools of some deliberate sacrifice of general studies courses, and rather more of one-year GCSE courses, in order to accommodate CPVE provision.

The strengthening of **links between secondary schools and the world of industry and commerce** continued in 1986/7, in part stimulated by TVEI and by a number of agencies external to schools and LEAs; schools/education-industry links officers (SILO's and EILO's) were in post in all eight Welsh LEAs. Initiatives taken include secondments of head teachers to industry for periods of up to a term and a number of local arrangements for visits by pupils to industrialists and by commercial employers to schools. These arrangements have strengthened the mutual awareness of schools and commercial organisations and have provided staff in senior positions in schools with valuable and thought-provoking insights, especially with regard to organisational matters. However, effective incorporation of an industrial/commercial dimension or context within pupils' everyday studies, especially in traditional curricular subjects, occurs only sporadically and is usually confined to a specific group of pupils or small areas of the curriculum. Curriculum-led links, for example between industrial establishments and particular subject departments, are in evidence in only a small number of schools but there are examples where the learning has been significantly enhanced by such links.

Specific enterprise projects of various kinds have gained a greater foothold in many schools. They occur within particular courses (often in a cross-curricular pre-vocational package such as CPVE or foundation programmes aimed at pupils of modest and lower ability), within extra-curricular or sixth form general studies activities or, more rarely, as part of a school's core provision for older pupils in the area of personal and social education. Pupils have generally responded enthusiastically to such opportunities and have engaged in a wide range of purposeful and productive activities. The best examples provide pupils with experience of an appropriate range of enterprise-orientated tasks, such as market research, product design, production organisation and control, and financial planning and management. A common weakness in such schemes, however, is the tendency to devote too much time to the repetitive jobs of production at the expense of the provision of broader insights into commercial and industrial organisation. The vast majority of schools offer pupils work experience, though only a minority are

able to provide this for all. It is most effective when provided as an element in a planned and structured course, for example careers education, pre-vocational or business/enterprise courses, and when subject courses can draw on elements of pupils' work experience to enrich classroom learning.

Overall, a number of factors are commonly associated with good quality learning and high standards of achievement by pupils in secondary schools. These include a clear and consistently held sense of curricular purpose among staff, both overall and within particular subject areas; careful planning of pupils' programmes to reflect the full range of these intentions; a strong sense of involvement by pupils in the learning, whatever pedagogy is employed; and a willingness by teachers to monitor pupils' work and to use their efforts as a basis for further learning.

These conditions, however, are very unevenly realised in secondary schools. There are a few schools where work of good or very good quality, and the factors which promote this, are to be found consistently across most or all curricular areas. In all schools, there are areas of the curriculum where provision is well planned and richly varied and where pupils of all abilities achieve well; even in areas where standards are less consistent, there are particular classes doing very good work. But the commonest characteristic of the quality of pupils' learning is its variability - from class to class within subject areas and from department to department within schools. These judgements reflect the varying degrees of success and failure which have attended authorities' and schools' efforts to generalise the best practice. This is itself a reflection of the low priority which is often accorded, by both schools and LEAs, to monitoring the provision made at departmental and school level, and to the evaluation and improvement of pupils' learning experiences.

FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Premises and Resources

Most colleges have sufficient accommodation overall, but many lack the resources to adapt facilities to changing needs. In a number of instances where there is pressure on accommodation, greater flexibility in timetabling and a college-wide (rather than a departmental) approach to room allocation would ease the problems considerably. In general, most classes are taught in

classrooms, laboratories, studios and workshops which are adequate in design and space, but there are frequently specific deficiences, for example, in the provision of facilities for practical work in catering, secretarial and tourism courses, or the lack of suitably furnished and equipped general purpose science laboratories to 'service' other courses in colleges where discrete science courses are not offered. Some colleges continue to use demountable classrooms for general teaching and, in a few cases, for specialist work also. These usually fail to provide a suitable ambience for learning and sometimes lack even basic facilities such as OHP screens. In the non-advanced sector, demographic factors, coupled with a decline in some traditional industries and a growth in others, have resulted in some accommodation, for example, mechanical engineering workshops, being under-used, while intensive use is made of rooms for business, computing and secretarial studies.

Specific funds, such as the ESG for information technology, and other grants for computer-assisted design facilites, have helped colleges to equip departments with new technology. However, many colleges have problems in replacing or up-grading conventional equipment in the established vocational departments, particularly expensive capital items in engineering, agriculture and catering. Some colleges have failed to adapt the rooms in which computers are installed to provide good working conditions and facilitate effective use. While the introduction of new technology has had considerable impact in some areas, for example, aspects of business studies and engineering, computer facilities are often unavailable to support and enhance the work in science, catering, caring and hairdressing courses.

The environment within which staff and students work varies considerably within and between colleges and also between LEAs. While there are a number of attractive, well-planned specialist working areas, in many instances the continued neglect of interior decoration, or the failure to redecorate following routine maintenance or more extensive repair work, result in unsatisfactory standards.

In non-vocational adult education, students have access to good resources in an attractive ambience in a substantial number of centres, but less favourable conditions prevail in many schools and colleges. Innovation within existing resources is frequently constrained by the reluctance or inability of institutions and LEAs to plan the use of funds.

Commonly, courses in colleges with low numbers or those in adult centres which have covered the same ground for many years continue to absorb resources that could enable these institutions to provide for a new or emerging need.

Students

The number of students in further and higher education remains largely unchanged overall. While institutions are less selective than hitherto in some vocational areas, there are also examples of suitably qualified applicants finding difficulty in gaining admission to certain vocational courses in others. FE colleges are seeking ways of providing access for mature students to enrol on vocational courses and are also placing greater reliance on progession from one level of vocational study to another. There is growing interest in non-vocational education and more emphasis, in an area that has traditionally catered for liberal and leisure studies, upon award-bearing provision. A number of initiatives in non-vocational education are supported in part by specific grants from the Welsh Office and MSC.

The introduction of two-year work-related YTS has led in some colleges to an increase in enrolments on part-time off-the-job training and education and on block release courses. In agriculture, the number of students studying beyond the requirements of YTS has so declined that the needs of the industry may not be met. The demand for full-time courses remains strong in secretarial and business studies, in the humanities and in art and design.

The Wales Advisory Body for Local Authority Higher Education continues to give priority in its planning to part-time and sub-degree courses and to encouraging recruitment to areas such as electrical and electronic engineering, mathematics and computing, which account for about 14% of total enrolments. However, with one exception, colleges are unable to recruit to targets in these priority areas and, in some cases, a significant proportion of the students who are recruited fail to complete courses successfully. Colleges frequently exceed their set recruitment targets, sometime substantially, in programmes such as management and business studies, which now represent a fifth of total enrolments.

In adult continuing education there has been little change in the number, background interests and needs of students. Where adult education is supported and encouraged by LEAs, a number of centres have successfully

extended their programmes, attracting clienteles more fully representative of their communities. In one LEA, total enrolments have increased by 15% over the year without change in LEA funding. Government-sponsored projects sometimes succeed in providing for students with special needs not normally found in LEA classes. There is ample evidence to indicate that specific funding encourages LEAs to provide for categories of special need including the unwaged and those lacking in basic skills. It is equally evident, however, that little advantage is taken of the lessons learnt from such activities once direct funding ends; only infrequently is the work continued by the LEA.

Staffing

Courses in FE colleges and institutes of higher education are generally staffed by lecturers with appropriate and relevant academic, professional or vocational qualifications. Colleges have no difficulty in recruiting suitably qualified staff, except in areas such as computing, electronics and business and management studies, where competition from other employers is strong, and in new areas such as tourism and leisure. The stability in staffing, which is a characteristic of many colleges, facilitates continuity, and students benefit from the considerable teaching experience of tutors. There are indications, however, in vocational courses, that continuity in staffing is sometimes at the expense of up-to-date industrial experience, with the result that the relevance and effectiveness of some courses are reduced. Some colleges and authorities encourage and enable staff to liaise closely with industry and commerce so that tutors can up-date their expertise. Much, however, depends on the enthusiasm and initiative of individuals as the present arrangements for this aspect of staff development are unevenly developed.

The considerable number of short term projects funded by the Welsh Office, MSC and others, together with uncertainty over the level of enrolments, results in continuing reliance on part-time staff and full-time staff on short-term and temporary contracts, some of which have extended for as long as five years. In some instances this practice is helpful in that colleges are able to draw on a wide range of expertise and up-to-date industrial experience. But in others where part-time staff may be responsible for a significant proportion of the teaching, the advantages are at times outweighed by the fragmentation of courses, discontinuities in student learning and the low level of support

which staff are able to offer students outside the teaching programme. Heavy reliance on part-time staff imposes additional administrative and managerial tasks on full-time tutors and course review and curriculum development may be affected. Colleges rarely include part-time tutors in their staff development programmes and most find it difficult to arrange for such tutors to attend course meetings. In the youth service and in non-vocational adult education there is generally an appropriate balance between full and part-time tutors and many authorities arrange inservice training for full and part-time staff.

Course Provision and Standards of Work

Significant recent developments are the introduction of BTEC First Awards and the setting up of new courses in advanced technology applications and information technology as applied to communications and related electronic engineering and micro-electronics. Among other new areas of course provision are tourism, leisure and recreation studies, and information studies and systems in business. ESG funding has stimulated the application of IT in some NAFE courses; developments in computer-assisted design and computer-assisted manufacture have continued. Provision for special needs and for social care and health care studies has been increased, often to fill long-standing gaps in local course provision, but there is still scope for further expansion in these areas. Colleges have become involved to varying extents in making provision for the unemployed, largely as a result of MSC funding.

In spite of increases in overall NAFE programmes, there remain areas where demand exceeds provision. These include: office and business studies, hairdressing and beauty therapy and, to a more limited extent, art and design. In AFE and NAFE some of the wide range of opportunities in many areas in engineering, construction, agriculture and computing have not been fully taken up, mainly because of a shortage of suitably qualified applicants.

Most of the courses offered in **FHE** lead to recognised vocational, professional and academic qualifications validated by external examining boards. The work is set within the syllabus requirements of these boards, but, in practice there is often considerable scope for units or modules which reflect local needs, and for college-devised vocational courses in advanced further education. However, in **NAFE**, few departments modify or provide alternative units to those issued as standard by the examining board. The past year has seen considerable changes in the nature of the work undertaken in some areas

because of revisions made by examining boards. In general, the move has been towards assignment-based learning; this has led departments in some colleges to review the disposition of both staff and resources. The response to changes has, however, been variable: in some departments and colleges course teams have been formed, integrated assignments developed and time allocated to team meetings and staff development; in other colleges, the departments remain divided into sections and teaching continues to be based on specialist subjects. Where conditions are favourable, course teams have devised interesting programmes, for example in catering and business studies, in which several subject areas have been drawn together in integrated activities which enable students to relate various areas of study to vocational tasks and thus to see relevance in their work. In these situations, student motivation is improved and learning is more effective. However, there are also examples of assignments of a trivial, undemanding nature, lacking specific learning objectives and relevance to real situations. Such tasks give little encouragement to students to make use of library facilities or to draw on experiences at work; in many cases library and other resources are inadequate to meet the needs created by more challenging assignment-based approaches.

Much of the classroom work is characterised by teacher exposition, supported by a good volume of notes. Generally, lectures are well structured and presented at an appropriate pace. Learning is enhanced in those situations where extensive use is made of visual aids and resource materials. However, there are often insufficient opportunities for students to be active participants in their own learning and occasionally the pace of the work is seriously impaired when students have to copy notes from the blackboard or from dictation. Where an assignment-based approach has not been adopted there is little encouragement to undertake independent reading or individual or group research and emphasis tends to be on transmission of information rather than on problem-solving and application of knowledge.

New competence-based syllabuses in some vocational areas enable departments to devise schemes of work which ensure that learning is systematic and work-related and that tasks are progressive. Most departments reach high standards in the teaching of practical skills, though, in construction, higher standards are generally achieved in this aspect of the work at craft than at technician level. Generally, the nature and quality of work are linked to the availability and disposition of resources. For example, in some engineering departments CAD facilities allow draughting to be taught by a series of graded

assignments using computer keyboards, VDUs, and other facilities. In other cases, computers have been linked to CNC machines to enable students to work on projects linking drawing, planning and production of components. The development of electronics assignment facilities has also enabled learning to have a more significant 'hands-on' element, though some colleges fail to exploit fully the potential of these arrangements. On the other hand, lack of facilities for reception and accommodation studies restricts the work in some catering courses and developments in applied science are inhibited by the non-availability of computers for such activities as interfacing with other equipment and simulation of laboratory/workshop practices and control systems.

A limited range of courses in commercial, office and business studies, catering, tourism and agriculture are available in Welsh. Welsh Office specific grant has funded production of some support materials for this work.

Self-funding and other entrepreneurial activities continue to be developed, but by only a minority of colleges and departments. Most of these initiatives are related to the provision of training, short courses and full course programmes for public services, but there are also useful initiatives in consultancy and scientific/technological services to industry. These offer important, but as yet not fully developed, opportunities to profit from the availability in HFE of expert staff and up-to-date equipment and facilities which are not always fully used.

There has been an increase in open-learning and supported self-study opportunities within colleges but more coordinated approaches within LEAs and colleges are needed if the full potential of these modes of learning are to be exploited.

The opportunities for adult study vary markedly between LEAs and also within individual authorities. There is evidence that in the authorities where funding for this sector is low, it is possible, given good leadership, consultative procedures and marketing, to offer attractive, purposeful programmes. There is also evidence of poor provision in some areas within LEAs that overall provide adequate resources for an acceptable, though basic, programme.

In most areas **adult continuing education** is undertaken largely within non-vocational classes organised independently of courses within colleges of

further and higher education. This organisational division can be unhelpful for some individuals, particularly the unemployed and others anxious to acquire new skills for employment or to improve career prospects. It can also lead to less efficient use of resources. The scale of provision for the adult unemployed in relation to resources available within the public sector is limited and generally isolated from the work of other agencies. With few exceptions there is less LEA support than previously for adults handicapped by inadequate basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Two projects, one largely funded under the Urban Aid programme, have been notably successful in generating desirable changes within youth and adult work. In one, the education service has improved the quality of its work with young people and in the other, adults with special needs, who would normally not benefit from traditional programmes, are profiting from new courses negotiated with them. During the year programmes in some LEAs have been extended, within existing resources, to admit more students, while in others the decline of recent years is unchecked, leaving large areas with virtually no provision.

The nature of adult education programmes has remained largely unchanged for many years, with the arts, crafts, domestic subjects, languages, humanities and physical recreation dominant, although attention is being given to new technology. The nature of many programmes is such as to attract more women than men and has limited appeal for those with below average educational attainment. Exceptionally, a centre is allowed to adopt an entrepreneurial approach and some have as a result extended and improved the range and quality of their provision.

The nature and quality of work in most classes is satisfactory; in many instances, though good use is made of audio-visual material to provide greater variety in the learning experiences, its potential is under-exploited.

The teaching of Welsh as a second language is a notable feature of adult provision, involving about 700 students each year. Specific grant has enabled centres to establish a range of courses at various levels. Students come from many walks of life but a substantial number are non-Welsh speaking parents whose children attend bilingual schools. Those in intensive courses show great commitment and achieve encouraging standards. Progress on other courses is more uneven but through diligent effort many students learn to understand and speak Welsh reasonably well. Although there is a shortage of suitably qualified tutors in some areas, standards of teaching are generally adequate.

Uncertainty about the level of future funding and the continuing neglect of maintenance and re-decoration are particularly damaging to the effectiveness of **youth work.** In most units the range of activities, outside sports, is limited, thereby confining the appeal of clubs to a minority. Nonetheless, work of good standard is found in a minority of clubs, often those with access to the resources of schools, where the curriculum is varied and the methods adopted give due emphasis to the educational functions and processes of youth work.

INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING

Premises and Resources

Extensive refurbishment occurred in the course of the year in most colleges offering initial teacher training and there has been a significant change in the ethos of all. By the acquisition and arrangement of books and teaching materials and the use of display, particularly of children's work, the role of each as an institution engaged for the most part in the training of teachers for primary schools has been made manifest. Most have established demonstration classrooms, equipped with furniture and resources to serve as good quality teaching spaces for classes of infants and/or junior age pupils and, in at least one case, with a viewing gallery, video cameras and suspended microphones for the close observation, and relaying and recording of teaching/learning experiences.

Though some hutted accommodation continues in use on one campus, by the end of the academic year, the quality of provision for teacher training throughout Wales was everywhere satisfactory and in some cases good.

Students

Recruitment in initial teacher training in the past year closely followed the pattern of previous years. In no institution is the target of BEd student entrants with O-level passes in English and mathematics and at least two A-level passes achieved easily. Two had particular difficulty and even with the admission of substantial numbers of 'exceptional entrants' (mature applicants who do not possess the normal entrance requirements) fell well short of their targets.

In all the institutions, the average A-level points scores of those students who entered with the normal requirements were, as in previous years, modest (in the range 4.2 to 5.1). Considerable satisfaction was drawn from the qualifications obtained by students who concluded their courses in July 1987. However, the weakness in the recruitment is a matter for concern to the system and in varying measure to all the institutions. During the year there has been considerable investment of time and money in more vigorous marketing strategies, particularly by the two that have most difficulty in recruiting normally qualified students.

Staffing

Analyses made during inspections over the last three years revealed as the typical profile of a teacher training institution an aging staff, many 15 to 20 years in post, the vast majority having only secondary teaching experience, in many cases of rather short duration. The records of research and publication were, in a small number of cases in all the institutions, impressive, but most tutors could provide little evidence of effort in this direction. Of greater concern was the widespread lack of firsthand experience of teaching in the primary classroom, though emphasis on primary initial training was already well established before the round of inspections commenced.

The criteria for accreditation in Circular 21/84 include a requirement that tutors engaged in pedagogy have and continually update experience of classroom teaching with the appropriate age group. This has precipitated a number of developments in the past year. All the teacher training institutions in Wales are small and there is little scope for development within staffing establishments; staff turnover has been traditionally low. Nevertheless the exploitation of marginal opportunity for growth and early retirements have allowed four institutions to appoint several new staff straight from primary schools and all have made some new appointments. It remains rather difficult, however, to reconcile in individual cases the need for academic strength in particular subject areas with that for primary, especially early years, teaching experience. In four institutions, secondments from the classroom are regularly used to provide a valuable input of primary experience, and everywhere closer relations with schools, and the use of practising teachers as visiting speakers, were benefiting courses. Also, in response to the CATE requirement, all institutions were encouraging tutors to undertake teaching

commitments in primary schools and were devising rolling programmes to release staff for this purpose. By the end of the academic year there was a small but significant increase in the 'recent, relevant experience' that staff collectively could offer to students. A clearer sense of purpose and relevance was evident in most institutions, related in part at least to appointments directly from primary schools.

Course Provision and Standards of Work

Validation and accreditation of new courses engaged one teacher training institution after another through 1986-7. In one or two cases after submission of further information, ultimately the three public sector institutions and the one voluntary college which had presented their new BEd degree proposals were informed that CATE had recommended they be approved by the Secretary of State. By the end of the academic year only the most recently inspected institution and one other were not in the accreditation pipe-line.

One institution, granted temporary approval of its new BEd, embarked upon it with the September 1986 intake. The remainder continued teaching the course which had been seen by HMI, though in every case somewhat modified, in the main to introduce an element of school experience for students earlier than that course structure formally permitted. These 'old' courses had in common a Diploma in Higher Education/BEd structure: two years DHE, followed by one-year of professional studies and teaching practice to the BEd qualification or two years to BEd (honours). This had the advantage of allowing students to pursue two years of higher education at the end of which they could elect to proceed with a BEd course, or a BA (Combined Studies) or some other training or occupation. In practice, students tended to declare their choice of route on entry and few changed direction subsequently. While the proposed benefits of flexibility have never been realised, the chief disadvantage of this structure from the point of view of teacher training (that is, the postponement of school experience until the third year of the course and the concomitant difficulty of linking students' subject studies with pedagogy), has always posed problems. Of the newly-accredited courses, only one retains a two-plus two structure, concentrating on subject studies in the first two years and professional studies in years III and IV, and linking these two major segments with an interlude of field studies during which students work together at the teaching applications of their academic subjects. Even in this case, however,

there are some school visits in Part I and voluntary attendance at schools by students is formally encouraged.

Though they afford less room for manoeuvre, the one-year PGCE (Primary) courses in two colleges have also been adjusted to meet the criteria in Circular 21/84 and by the end of the academic year these institutions had been informed that approval had been recommended by CATE. In July 1987, therefore, four of the six teacher training institutions were looking forward to a new intake and a new course in September.

In the course of the year teacher training institutions were actively promoting **relationships with schools.** In responding to the Circular they were seeking to involve practising teachers in the process of selecting student applicants for training; they were setting up liaison panels and consulting headteachers and LEA advisers about the more intensive use of schools for school experience and intermittent visits in addition to somewhat extended block teaching practice. The documentation relating to school experience and teaching practice was being reviewed and revised so that schools could become better informed about students and the progressively more demanding expectations of teaching practice from year to year through the course. A better basis for mutual understanding was beginning to emerge of the role of the class teacher and of the tutor in the supervision and assessment of students on teaching practice. Though much remained to be done, particularly in respect of teaching practice in infants schools/departments, because of the severe shortage of appropriately experienced tutors, by the end of the year some progress had been made towards establishing a partnership between training institutions and schools over the selection and professional training of students.

The **college-based programmes of work**, enhanced by increased school experience and a greater emphasis on professional relevance, were broadly satisfactory, though development was constrained by the structure of the 'old' courses. There was a greater emphasis on involving students in the learning process through discussion and more conscious deployment by some tutors of a variety of teaching methods, involving, for example, the use of learning aids such as audio and video recordings, the overhead projector and the micro-computer, to serve as models to students. Many individual sessions included lucid and stimulating presentation of information and education theory. Often, however, there was a failure to underline the direct relevance of topics to schools and

teaching, particularly to analyse recently collected examples of children's work in the relevant age range and to probe in sufficient depth students' accumulating first-hand experience of schools.

IN-SERVICE EDUCATION AND TRAINING (INSET)

It has been a year of transition in the sphere of INSET but this does not account for the disappintingly low levels of involvement in professional development of the great majority of those in the education service.

The teachers' industrial action caused the cancellation of many local, regional and HMI Teachers' Short Course Programme INSET events; even GCSE INSET was affected to an extent which placed some authorities and departments in some schools at a disadvantage in the early stages of preparation for the new examination's syllabuses and substantially changed approaches. This was not the only deleterious influence, however: the INSET programmes of most LEAs have been modest in scale for some years and the entire planned primary provision in one authority was cut in 1986-87; though some LEAs invited and gave due consideration to course proposals and eventually published an INSET programme, others did not, but relied upon the uncoordinated initiative of advisers and teachers' centre wardens. In the absence of policy and procedures for the dissemination of INSET experiences and follow-up by the advisory service much of their impact has been lost.

Against this background certain features of better practice stand out. There is still that minority of teachers and tutors who pursue their own professional development enthusiastically, giving their own time (and often money) to study and intellectual refreshment; some teachers' centres are adequately supported by LEAs and ably organised to serve the needs of schools in their locality; a small number of advisers are particularly active and influential in promoting good practice in schools; a few schools, even in the difficult circumstances of the last year, kept up valuable initiatives in school-based INSET. The attention given by some LEAs and schools to publications such as the "Curriculum Matters 5-16" series and to the implications for schools of the designation of 1986 as 'Industry Year' was beneficial though localised. The Specific Grant funding of certain priority areas of INSET such as school management training, special educational needs, mathematics, science and CDT, made a significant contribution in the course of the year, but not throughout Wales, as this provision also was subject to

disruption in the course of the teachers' industrial action. The most widely successful INSET experiences, however, were those provided under the aegis of the Education Support Grant (ESG) and the TVEI-related Inservice Training Scheme (TRIST). The success of **ESG**, particularly in promoting good practice in science and mathematics in primary schools (though there were notable achievements in other categories also, such as 'Welsh Heritage and Culture', in some LEAs), was largely based upon the seconded appointment of advisory teachers, themselves keen and successful practitioners in schools, to work alongside class teachers and gradually build up their familiarity with teaching materials and their confidence. The duration of the contact with particular schools, the readiness of the school to build upon what was offered to one or two classes, and the support of a framework of LEA policy, were the significant features which made for success. Unfortunately, only a limited number of schools could be reached in this way.

Though it was by definition confined to secondary schools and tended to be mostly concerned with the technical, electronic and vocational areas highlighted by the TVEI scheme, **TRIST** was in many places a notable success, both in providing INSET of some quality for the staff involved and, perhaps more importantly, in providing the officers of LEAs and school coordinators with experience of the organisation of a systematic INSET scheme.

Though few INSET events occurred in the summer term (apart from GCSE provision, given full scope following the end of the teachers' action), with the experience of TRIST as a guide, most LEAs addressed themselves promptly and efficiently to the task of implementing the LEA Training Grants Scheme and looked forward to a much increased emphasis on professional development in the education system in 1987-88.

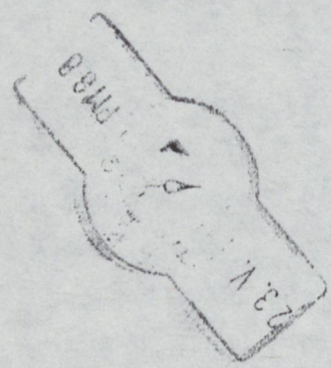
CONCLUSION

The standards of work achieved in those aspects of educational provision covered in this report are generally satisfactory. However, the evidence points to an unfortunate unevenness in the nature and quality of pupils' and students' experiences as their learning proceeds. Good work done in one class, one subject or one course may not be matched by that done in the next. Pupils' and students' learning therefore tends to lack adequate continuity and progression.

The period covered by the report saw the beginning or development of several initiatives, the eventual outcomes of which will not be manifest for some time. Given their scale and significance, and bearing in mind the difficulties of the immediately preceding period, LEAs, schools, colleges and other providers have, on the whole, responded resolutely and imaginatively. Some of this response has depended unduly on the enthusiasm and initiative of individual institutions and staff, and there is in general a continuing reluctance to acknowledge that more can be done by providers acting in concert than can be achieved by them working on their own.

Although premises do not determine the nature and quality of provision, they can and do have a palpable effect on the attitudes of teachers and learners alike. Some premises are rapidly becoming unsuitable for the learning required in the last decades of the twentieth century. But many could, despite their shortcomings, provide an adequate learning environment were they to have the necessary maintenance and refurbishment. An education service which is being asked to take on a wide range of new initiatives will do so with greater confidence if the teachers' and learners' physical surroundings enliven and attract rather than impede and depress.

At the end of the academic year 1986/7 the government announced its proposals for a range of reforms and developments in the education system, including in particular its proposals for a national curriculum. The aspects of provision and of current developments which have been covered in this report - and many others - will be profoundly affected by these proposals. The challenges facing schools, colleges and indeed all providers are substantial and will require a large measure of cooperation and goodwill. The evidence of this report suggests that, if this is forthcoming, the challenges will be suitably met.



APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

23 May 1988

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: CURRICULUM COUNCIL FOR WALES

The Prime Minister was grateful for your Secretary of State's minute of 20 May. She is content for your Secretary of State to proceed on the basis proposed.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of E(EP).

PAUL GRAY

Jon Shortridge, Esq.
Welsh Office

CCBG

APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

PRIME MINISTER

Prime Minister'

Brian Griffiths has no comment.

Content?

RRCC 20/5.

Yes pw

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: CURRICULUM COUNCIL FOR WALES (CCW)

I have seen Kenneth Baker's minute to you of 18 May about the National Curriculum Council and School Examinations and Assessment Council. I am content with what he proposes.

The consultation duties which in England rest with the NCC will in Wales be my responsibility as Secretary of State. Nevertheless the CCW will have a key role in the development of the national curriculum in Wales - I am required to consult it - and we have agreed that it, too, should be set up in shadow form during the passage of the Bill.

Subject to your agreement I propose to appoint Mr Hywel Evans headteacher of Aberconwy School, as Chairman of CCW. Mr Evans is a former Principal of the teacher training college of Cartrefle in Wrexham. He is a member of the Wales Committee of the School Curriculum Development Committee and has chaired it on occasion. He inspires widespread confidence in Wales and also has the respect of SCDC nationally, on which he is a representative. Wyn Roberts has known him for many years: he is open-minded and independent and has responded positively to the national curriculum proposals.

I intend to appoint a Council covering all the main interests, as Kenneth proposes for NCC. My priority is to select individuals who can make a strong personal and practical contribution to the development of our aims for the national curriculum. I propose to announce as many of the names as possible together with the chairman before the Spring Bank Holiday.

.... I am copying this minute to members of E(EP).

20 May 1988

P W

SRWBLI

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PRIME MINISTER

MEETING OF E(EP): 25 MAY

I attach the papers for Wednesday's meeting on assessment and testing. This is the first chance there has been for a discussion of this key aspect of the education reforms since the leak of correspondence on this issue earlier in the year.

You will want to assure yourself that following the further work by TGAT and DES, things are proceeding on the right lines.

The papers are:

Flag A - E(EP)(88)11 - Mr. Baker's paper for the meeting

Flag B - Cabinet Office brief, which raises a number of important questions on the paper

Flag C - a note by Brian Griffiths, together with attachments, which raises fundamental doubts about TGAT/DES approach.

Rec 6.

(PAUL GRAY)
20 May 1988

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CC 5/p

PRIME MINISTER

20 May 1988

T.G.A.T.

This is the first proper discussion which E(EP) is having on the crucial subject of testing.

The subject is more complex than it at first appears. The problem is that words are used in subtly different ways and that professional educationalists write in code - meaning one thing among themselves but something quite different to other people.

My conclusion is that if the recommendation of the Black Report goes forward as the Secretary of State suggests it will not be what we intended in the Election Manifesto and will give us no guarantee that standards will be raised.

This note is divided into the following sections:

(a) **the Manifesto Commitment**

"First, we will establish a National Core Curriculum.

It is vital to ensure tht all pupils between the ages of 5 to 16 study a basic range of subjects - including maths, English and science. In each of these basic subjects syllabuses will be published and attainment levels set so tht the progress of pupils can be assessed at around ages 7, 11 and 14, and in preparation for the GCSE at 16. Parents, teachers and

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pupils will then know how well each child is doing. We will consult widely among those concerned in establishing the curriculum."

(b) **The National Curriculum 5-16 - A Consultation Document July 1987**

"(b) Attainment Targets

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23. Attainment targets will be set for all three core subjects of Maths, English and science. These will establish what children should normally be expected to know, understand and be able to do at around the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16, and will enable the progress of each child to be measured against established national standards. They will reflect what pupils must achieve to progress in their education and to become thinking and informed people. The range of attainment targets should cater for the full ability range and be sufficiently challenging at all levels to raise expectations, particularly of pupils of middling achievement who frequently are not challenged enough, as well as stretching and stimulating the most able. This is a proven and essential way towards raising standards of achievement. Targets must be sufficiently specific for pupils, teachers, parents and others to have a clear idea of what is expected, and to provide a sound basis for assessment."

(c) **Recommendations of the TGAT Report**

Please see over.

XXIII. A LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

227. The recommendations we have made in this report are listed below.

PURPOSES AND PRINCIPLES

1. The basis of the national assessment system should be essentially formative, but designed also to indicate where there is need for more detailed diagnostic assessment. At age 16, however, it should incorporate assessment with summative functions. (Paragraph 27)

2. All assessment information about an individual should be treated as confidential and thus confined to those who need to know in order to help that pupil. (Paragraph 28) I assume that parents need to know?

3. For summative and evaluative purposes results should be aggregated across classes or schools so that no individual performances can be separated out. (Paragraph 29)

4. Assessment of attitudes should not form a prescribed part of the national assessment system. (Paragraph 30)

5. To realise the formative purpose of the national assessment system, pupil results in a subject should be presented as an attainment profile. (Paragraph 33)

6. An individual subject should report a small number (preferably no more than four and never more than six) of profile components reflecting the variety of knowledge, skills and understanding to which the subject gives rise. Wherever possible, one or more components should have more general application across the curriculum: for these a single common specification should be adopted in each of the subjects concerned. (Paragraph 35)

7. The national system should employ tests for which a wide range of modes of presentation, operation and response should be used so that each may be valid in relation to the attainment targets assessed. These particular tests should be called "standard assessment tasks" and they should be so designed that flexibility of form and use is allowed wherever this can be consistent with national comparability of results. (Paragraph 50)

8. Assessment tasks should be reviewed regularly for evidence of bias, particularly in respect of gender and race. (Paragraph 52)

9. Attainment targets should be exemplified as far as possible using specimen tasks. Such tasks can then assist in the communication of these targets. (Paragraph 56)

10. A mixture of standardised assessment instruments including tests, practical tasks and observations should be used in the national assessment system in order to minimise curriculum distortion. (Paragraph 59)

11. Teachers' ratings of pupil performance should be used as a fundamental element of the national assessment system. Just as with the national tests or tasks, teachers' own ratings should be derived from a variety of methods of evoking and assessing pupils' responses. (Paragraph 60)

12. When the subject working groups provide guidance on the aggregation of targets into a small number of profile components, they should have regard to the need for each component to lead to a report in which reasonable confidence is possible. (Paragraph 61)

13. Teachers' ratings should be moderated in such a way as to convey and to inform national standards. (Paragraph 62)

14. The national assessment system should be based on a combination of moderated teachers' ratings and standardised assessment tasks. (Paragraph 63)

15. Group moderation should be an integral part of the national assessment system. It should be used to produce the agreed combination of moderated teachers' ratings and the results of the national tests. (Paragraph 77)

16. An item bank of further assessment instruments should be available for teachers to use in cases where they need additional evidence about particular pupils. (Paragraph 78).

17. The final reports on individual pupils to their parents should be the responsibility of the teacher, supported by standardised assessment tasks and group moderation. (Paragraph 80)

18. Wherever schools use national assessment results in reports for evaluative purposes, they should report the distribution of pupil achievements. (Paragraph 84)

THE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM IN PRACTICE

19. The ages for national assessment should be 7, 11, 14 and 16; with reporting occurring near the end of the school year in which each cohort reaches the age involved. (Paragraph 92)

20. Each of the subject working groups should define a sequence of levels in each of its profile components, related to broad criteria for progression in that component. For a profile component which applies over the full age-range 7 to 16, there should be ten such levels, with corresponding reduction for profile components which will apply over a smaller span of school years. (Paragraph 101)

21. Levels 1 to 3 should be used for national assessments at age 7. (Paragraph 103)

22. The formal relationship between national assessment and GCSE should be limited, in the first instance, to this one reference point: and accordingly the boundary between levels 6 and 7 should correspond to the grade F/G boundary for GCSE. (Paragraph 105)

23. As they develop the upper four levels of their profile components, the subject working groups should adopt present practices for determining GCSE grades at A/B, C/D, mid-E, and F/G as a starting point. (Paragraph 106)

24. GCSE should be retained in its present form until the national assessment system is initiated at earlier ages. (Paragraph 107)

25. Assessment and reporting for the national assessment system should be at the same ages for all pupils, and differentiation should be based on the use of the single sequence of levels set up to cover progression over the full age range. (Paragraph 112)

26. Support items, procedures and training should be provided to help teachers relate their own assessments to the targets and assessment criteria of the national curriculum. (Paragraph 116)

27. A review should be made of the materials available to schools for detailed diagnostic investigation of pupils' learning problems, and that the need for extra help with production or advice about such materials should be considered. (Paragraph 117)

28. A working group should be established, with some shared membership between the subject working groups, to co-ordinate their proposals for assessment, including testing, at the primary stages, in the light of a comprehensive view of the primary curriculum and of the need to limit the assessment burden on teachers. (Paragraph 123)

29. National assessment results for any individual pupil should be confidential, to be discussed between pupil, parents and teachers, and to be otherwise transmitted in confidence. National assessment results for a class as a whole and a school as a whole should be available to the parents of its pupils. (Paragraph 131)

30. The only form in which results of national assessment for, and identifying, a given school should be published should be as part of a broader report by that school of its work as a whole. (Paragraph 132)

31. Any report by a school which includes national assessment results should include a general report for the area, prepared by the local authority, to indicate the nature of socio-economic and other influences which are known to affect schools. This report should give a general indication of the known effects of such influences on performance. (Paragraph 134)

32. National assessment results, for pupils at age 11, aggregated at school level, should be published as part of each primary school's report. There should be no requirement to publish results for pupils at age 7. (Paragraph 137)

33. National assessment results for pupils at ages 14 and 16, aggregated at school level, should be published as part of each school's report. (Paragraph 138)

34. At age 7 the standard assessment tasks for the national assessment should comprise a choice of three prescribed tasks for each child; each task should be designed to give opportunities for systematic assessment of competence in the range of profile components appropriate to age 7.

35. At age 11 the tests for national assessment should include three or four standard tasks which cover a range of profile components, possibly supplemented by more narrowly focussed tests for particular components. (Paragraph 153)

36. Records of Achievement should be used as a vehicle for recording progress and achievement within the national assessment system. (Paragraph 162)

37. Eventually changes will be necessary to the GCSE and other criteria. Changes derived from the development of the national curriculum should have priority in an orderly process of amendment. (Paragraph 163)

38. Like all children, those with special educational needs require attainable targets to encourage their development and promote their self-esteem. Wherever children with special educational needs are capable of undertaking the national tests, they should be encouraged to do so. (Paragraph 169)

39. A special unit within a chosen test development agency should be dedicated to producing test materials and devising testing and assessment procedures sufficiently wide-ranging and sensitive to respond to the needs of these children. (Paragraph 169)

IMPLEMENTATION

40. Each subject working group should decide on a limited number, usually 4, of profile components in relation to which any pupil's performance will be assessed and discussed. A criterion-referenced set of levels should be set out for each component, to span the full range of performance over the ages for which the component is applicable. (Paragraph 178)

41. Subject working groups should specify, in broad terms and for each profile component, the appropriate tests (standardised assessment tasks) which should be prepared, and the advice and help which should be given to teachers about their corresponding internal assessments. (Paragraph 183)

42. Combination of profile component levels to give a subject level should be by a specified procedure. Uniform ways of describing profile components and the level within each should be specified in language that is helpful to pupils, teachers, parents, employers and other users. (Paragraph 186)

43. Subject working groups should give general advice about the degree of novelty of the assessments they envisage, so that the construction of them and the provision of in-service support for teachers can be appraised. (Paragraph 188)

44. The new assessment system should be phased in over a period adequate for the preparation and trial of new assessment methods, for teacher preparation, and for pupils to benefit from extensive experience of the new curriculum. This period needs to be at least 5 years from the promulgation of the relevant attainment targets. (Paragraph 199)

CONFIDENTIAL

(d) **Issues to be raised**

1. **Age related targets - are they being abandoned?**

The Government's educational policy rests on the reintroduction of objective age related standards of attainment i.e. the identification of knowledge and skills which most children should be expected to have, understand and do at key stages in their development.

> "Attainment targets ... will establish what children should normally be expected to know, understand and be able to do at around the ages of 7,11 14 and 16 and will enable the progress of each child to be measured against established national standards."
>
> **("The National Curriculum 5-16" July 1987.)**

TGAT's Report on the assessment of attainment does not believe that such age related standards can be identified. "It must be stressed that 7, 11, 14 and 16 are simply ages at which level each pupil has reached is determined and reported - they are **reporting** ages only". (Italics in original)

> **(TGAT: First Supplementary Report; reactions to the main report, para 4)**

"Many of the early assumptions (which I take to be the National Curriculum 5-16 as quoted above) about age related attainment targets no longer apply in those terms".

CONFIDENTIAL

(TGAT: First Supplementary Report; reactions to the main report, para 4)

Instead TGAT proposes that childrens' performance should be established by reference to a system of ten levels between the ages of 5 to 16 identified independently of age and ability purely through usage and statistical treatment. "Once devised the system (of ten levels of attainment) will rest on the levels and criteria alone through which different pupils may progress at different paces."

In other words age related attainment targets will have no place in the incoming system if TGAT's recommendations are accepted.

The purpose of objective age related targets is to provide readily understood standards at which pupils and teachers can aim, improve performance over time and provide reliable criteria for comparison. TGAT's approach rests on a statistical treatment of what children demonstrate they can do without reference to their age or ability or the expectations which can properly be derived from both these considerations at national level.

Under TGAT's system standards are derived from the methods of assessment used when the original intention of stated government policy is that assessment should measure pre-determined standards. "Attainment targets should be grouped .... to make the assessment and reporting manageable"

(draft Parliamentary Answer).

The cart has been put before the horse and government policy reversed.

CONFIDENTIAL

2. **What will be given to parents?**

It would seem from Black, that each child would be assessed on a number of different aspects of each subject. Assessment of these would then be aggregated into a profile of that particular subject. The parent would then be presented with a single number on the scale 1-10 which showed how the pupil performed. For example at age 11 students should in general achieve levels 4, 5 or 6. The key point is that the parent would be presented with an aggregated assessment of the child's performance.

"On balance just as we saw dangers in specifying too many profile components so we also conclude that the numbers of attainment targets should be kept small and they should not be too specific and detailed."

I enclose a draft document from the London Borough of Croydon which attempts to give parents more detailed information as to how their children are performing. If we take testing seriously it is surely important to be as specific as possible about attainment targets and also to give parents information which is as disaggregated as possible - in this way they learn far more about how their children are doing.

My suspicion is that those people who do not want a proper system of assessment and testing are using the framework which follows our election manifesto but are emptying it of any substantial content.

CONFIDENTIAL

Recommendation

It is vital that attainment targets are explicit and that results are presented in a disaggregated form.

3. **What should be the proper mix of standardised tests and subjective assessment?**

If we wish to raise national standards of achievement in our schools it is important that the mix between standardised tests and subjective assessment is heavily biased in favour of the former.

It is not at all clear however from the Black Report that this will be so. Indeed there are many suggestions that the bias will be in precisely the opposite direction.

Recommendation

The Secretary of State needs to be pressed to make sure that standardised tests are the most significant element in his overall framework of assessment and testing.

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

09

LCBG

PRIME MINISTER

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: A NATIONAL SYSTEM OF ASSESSMENT AND TESTING

Neither Wyn Roberts nor I will be able to attend the meeting of E(EP) re-arranged for Wednesday 25 May which will discuss Kenneth Baker's paper, as we will be involved in the Welsh Grand Committee. I am therefore writing to express my support for Kenneth's proposals, which apply in general terms to Wales also.

The first report of the Task Group on Assessment and Testing has been generally welcomed. Its framework has been adopted as a basis for the working group on Welsh in the National Curriculum which is just starting work. Now that the Schools Examination and Assessment Council has been announced it is important for us to clarify our intentions on assessment and testing. The broad principles set out in Kenneth's paper will help in this, providing a system which is both rigorous and cost-effective. SEAC can be asked to get on straight away with the job of advising on the detailed implementation.

In Wales, we expect to introduce Maths, Science and English on the same timescale as in England. Welsh will probably follow a year later. It would be sensible to indicate this in the proposed Parliamentary Answer, with an addition after the second sentence of the final paragraph along the following lines:-

> " These subjects will be introduced in Wales on a similar timetable. In addition my Rt. Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Wales expects to introduce Welsh for the early years of both primary and secondary schools in Autumn 1990".

/ I am copying this to other members of E(EP) and to Sir Robin Butler.

E.K. Davies

PW

Approved by the Secretary of State and signed in his absence

RESTRICTED

P 03125

PRIME MINISTER

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: ASSESSMENT AND TESTING

E(EP)(88)11

DECISIONS

Mr Baker wishes to announce the Government's response to the work of Professor Black's Task Group on Assessment and Testing (TGAT), so that preparations can be made to introduce the National Curriculum, and the associated teacher assessment and national test procedures, from autumn 1989 onwards.

2. You may wish to concentrate discussion on:

i. the broad principles of the Task Group's report as set out in paragraph 6 of Mr Baker's paper, which he proposes to accept. Issues which you may want to raise on these principles include the use of a ten-point scale for reporting assessments (does it allow sufficient differentiation between pupils?); assessment by teachers (should there be more emphasis on national tests?); and publication of aggregate results for individual schools (should they be required to publish them for 7-year-olds?);

ii. the main questions which Mr Baker himself has listed in paragraph 8. Points you may want to raise include whether sufficient attention has been paid to the needs of the most and least able; and what can be done to make the Group's proposed arrangements less complex and expensive to implement;

iii. publication of the report and the draft Parliamentary Answer which Mr Baker proposes to give, set out in Annex C. One particular point relates to the Task Group's third

supplementary report on the moderation system which he describes in his paper as 'over-weighty' but does not actually reject in the Answer.

BACKGROUND

3. In July 1987 Professor Paul Black of King's College, London was commissioned to chair the Task Group and to recommend a broad framework for a national system of assessment and testing, as part of the development of the National Curriculum. Mr Baker welcomed the Group's main report when he published it on 12 January. Subsequently you expressed concern to Mr Baker about the complexity of the Group's recommendations, their potential cost, their reliance on the judgement of teachers as well as on national test results, their involvement of Local Education Authorities (LEAs) and the time it would take to implement their proposals (this correspondence appeared in the press in early March). The Group have now produced 3 supplementary reports, on the public response to their recommendations, on the application of their broad framework to individual subject groups and on the implications for teacher training and for other forms of support they consider necessary to implement their proposals. Mr Baker wishes to publish these supplementary reports, and the Government's response, in time for the Lords Report stage of the Education Reform Bill.

ie the leaked letter! PRCG.

ISSUES

Differentiation in pupils' performance

4. The Group appears to suggest that a 10-point scale should be used for reporting assessments, and that it should cover all levels of attainment between the ages of 5 and 16. With only 10 points to cover such a wide range of ability there may be little differentiation between pupils' performance. For example, the Group propose that all 7 year olds will be at levels 1, 2 or 3, with the expectation that most will be at level 2. You may wish to ask Mr Baker whether the recommendations will do enough to differentiate between pupils.

Balance between teachers' assessments and national tests

5. Mr Baker's paper says that the balance between personal assessment by teachers and national tests can be decided at some future date (paragraph 8(b)). There is of course a risk that assessment by teachers will be insufficiently rigorous. You may wish to consider whether guidance on this should be given to the subject working groups now. You may also wish to ask whether Mr Baker is satisfied with the proposed arrangements for moderation of the marking of national tests, and whether scope will exist for teachers to adjust marks in national test results, through the moderation procedures, before they are passed on to parents.

Publication of results on assessments of 7 year olds

6. You may wish to consider whether schools should be obliged to publish aggregate results of assessment at age 7. Publication will be required at ages 11, 14 and 16. The Group recommend that publication of results at 7 should be at a school's discretion, on the grounds that there will be considerable variations in performance at that age caused by factors beyond a school's control, such as home background and the extent of pre-school provision. Home background will of course continue to be significant at the older ages. Arguably, it is desirable that publication of results at 7 should be a requirement, so that the performance of as wide a range of schooling as possible should be open to public and parental scrutiny. Failure of particular schools to give children a proper grounding in basic skills such as reading and writing is something that needs to be spotted early.

Provision for most and least able

7. Last October Mr Baker asked the Group to consider the application of their proposals to those who were most and least able. Their recommendation to exempt from assessment the least able and those with special educational needs, at the discretion of head teachers, has not been controversial. But little consideration appears to have been given to the development of the

most able, so you may wish to ask for further work on this. In particular, TGAT recommend that 7 year olds should not be tested beyond levels 1-3. You may wish to question this: it would be unfortunate if rigidities in assessment impeded the progress of the most able.

Complexity and Costs

8. The third supplementary report by the group makes proposals on the administration of the new system which, as Mr Baker acknowledges, seem very bureaucratic. In particular they suggest setting up a regional tier of administration formed by GCSE groups and LEAs in partnership. Mr Baker's paper says (paragraph 5) that these proposals are 'over-weighty' and the draft announcement describes them as 'complex and costly'. It promises however that the issues they raise will be discussed with the LEAs and others. You will wish to consider whether the announcement should go further and reject these proposals.

9. The main burden of establishing complicated assessment and testing procedures will fall on the teachers who have to use them. There will, however, be additional costs for Government arising from increased demand for in-service teacher training and from the costs of moderation. Mr Baker says that he will keep a careful watch on the resource implications, and that he will be able to accommodate the additional demands from within his existing provision. The Economic Secretary, Treasury is expected to point out that Mr Baker's existing PES provision only extends for the 3 years up to 1990-91, and that the most substantial costs may well arise in years after that. No clear estimates of the additional costs of assessment and testing have been provided; Mr Baker's paper says that it is difficult to distinguish some of these from the costs of establishing the National Curriculum more generally (paragraph 9). Mr Baker will be examining the Group's proposals for the level of support required to operate their system of assessment and testing, to establish how the costs can be reduced. You may wish to ask him to report back to the Sub-Committee on this.

Role of Local Education Authorities

10. Mr Baker's paper does not comment on the Group's proposals on the role of LEAs. The Group resisted pressure to allow LEAs to adjust national test scores before publication to take account of socio-economic deprivation. They have however recommended that LEAs should be required to provide a description of the socio-economic factors which could affect performance for inclusion in any publication by a school of its national test results.

Timetable to implementation

11. Mr Baker sets out his proposed timetable for implementation in the final paragraph of his draft statement (Annex C). Work on the National Curriculum, and use of associated assessment and test procedures, will start in autumn 1989. Thus the first results for 7 year olds, after a 2 year programme of study, will be expected in the summer of 1991, with 14 year olds following a year later. Mr Baker proposes that the first year should be regarded as a trial, so that publication of results would begin in the summer of 1992. You may wish to discuss whether this is a reasonable timetable.

Announcement

12. Mr Baker's draft written answer, containing the Government's response to the Group's proposals, is at Annex C. Depending on the discussion, some amendments may need to be made, and it may be appropriate for Mr Baker to circulate a revised draft.

HANDLING

13. You will wish to ask the Secretary of State for Education and Science to introduce his Note. The regional Secretaries of State may wish to comment. The Economic Secretary, Treasury may wish to mention the expenditure implications. Other Ministers may wish to contribute to the discussion.

RTJW.

R T J WILSON
Cabinet Office
20 May 1988

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

20 May 1988

Dear Lady Cox.

Thank you for your letter of 15 May about the composition of governing bodies for polytechnics and colleges. I am pleased that you were able to welcome the Lord Chancellor's response when your amendments were considered in Committee on 16 May.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

The Baroness Cox

CONFIDENTIAL

file

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

20 May 1988

Dear Tom,

ADMISSION OF PUPILS TO MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

The Prime Minister was grateful for your Secretary of State's minute of 9 May and the description of the action in hand. She welcomes your Secretary of State's determination to sort out as many admission limit queries as possible by September 1989, and is content to proceed on the basis set out.

The Prime Minister thinks it would be useful to institute a series of six-monthly monitoring meetings on the progress achieved on this and other key aspects of the changes planned and in hand. Such discussions might also cover progress on issues such as financial delegation, the national curriculum, City Technology Colleges, ILEA and the Polytechnic and University Funding Councils. I will be in touch in due course about the arrangements for these meetings.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to the members of E(EP) and to Sir Robin Butler.

Yours,
Paul

Paul Gray

Tom Jeffery, Esq.,
Department of Education and Science.

CONFIDENTIAL

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From The Secretary of State for Wales

The Rt Hon Peter Walker MBE MP

Prime Minister
Content for this report to be published? (Chief Secretary - note of 26 May below - concurs). PRC 6 27/5

19 May 1988

CT/3283/88

HMI REPORT: 'ASPECTS OF EDUCATIONAL PROVISION IN WALES 1986/87'

In recent years it has been the custom to publish annual reports by the HMI in Wales about the effects on the education service of local authority expenditure policies. A corresponding series by the HMI in England has also been published.

Last year colleagues expressed some criticism of the reports and I indicated then that a review of the form and content of future reports was being carried out. At that time the 1986/87 academic year was already well advanced and I pointed out that the report for that year was already in preparation and might not fully benefit from the review.

In fact a great deal of work has been put in. The report now draws on a wider range of evidence about the way in which education is delivered than has been the case in the past. There is a clear change of direction from commentary on the effects of expenditure policies per se to commentary on the way education is actually delivered in schools and further education institutions. This is all to the good and the report is, I believe, a substantial improvement on its predecessors.

Further development will need to be considered both in the light of the changing circumstances caused by the Education Reform Bill and the development of the corresponding English document. But that is for the future. In the meantime, I hope colleagues will recognise the progress that has already been made. With their approval, I propose to publish the report and a press release as soon as possible.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, other members of the Cabinet and to Sir Robin Butler.

The Rt Hon John Wakeham MP
Lord President of the Council

cc PSG

CT/3311/88

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

NBPM
RRcb
20/5

ADMISSION OF PUPILS TO MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

I have seen Kenneth Baker's minute of 9 May attached about the timetable for the implementation of open enrolment to schools.

I share his views. Open enrolment will make an immediate impact in Wales and I would expect it to be in place in the majority of schools by September 1989. However, it would be very damaging if the courts could show that we had not allowed enough time to consider cases where there was an application to reduce standard admission numbers to match the actual present day capacity of the school.

I am copying this to Kenneth Baker, to other members of E(EP) and to Sir Robin Butler.

19 May 1988

PW

C.F.
cc Policy Unit
+ P-c.
PRC 6
2015

PRIME MINISTER

ACADEMIC TENURE: VOTE IN THE LORDS

You will wish to know that the Government lost the vote in the Lords this afternoon on Lord Jenkins' amendment. The vote in favour of the amendment was 152 - 126.

The terms of the amendment are to insert in Clause 173(2):

> "To ensure that academic staff have freedom within the law to question and to test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges they may have at their institutions."

I attach the Clause in the Bill so you can see the effect of the amendment.

DES have already issued a line on the vote as follows:

> "The Lord Chancellor in his speech indicated very clearly that it was the Government's intention to bring forward amendments to the Bill to ensure that academics had proper freedom to do their work and that they are not dismissed merely on account of their views. The Government is in discussion with the Vice Chancellors, and in fact this week withdrew amendments at the Vice Chancellors' request dealing with these matters. Discussion with the Vice Chancellors will continue and the government will bring forward amendments at a later stage."

I do not imagine you will have any difficulty with this line. It commits the Government to bring forward further amendments either to the Jenkins' amendment itself or to other parts of this section of the Bill. This seems right because the terms of the Jenkins' amendment look very wide and could offer major

opportunities for getting round the abolition of tenure. DES' present intention is to move the further amendments in the Lords.

Content to note the action already taken and in hand?

PG
19 May 1988

KAYADO

(a) the amount of compensation agreed or awarded in respect of that purchase, together with any interest payable by the Board in respect of that compensation in accordance with section 11 of the Compulsory Purchase Act 1965; and

1965 c. 56.

(b) the amount of the costs and expenses incurred by the Board in connection with the making of the compulsory purchase order.

Academic tenure

The University Commissioners.

173.—(1) There shall be a body of Commissioners known as the University Commissioners (in this section and sections 174 to 178 of this Act referred to as "the Commissioners") who shall exercise, in relation to qualifying institutions, the functions assigned to them by those sections.

JENKINS AMENDMENT

(2) In exercising those functions, the Commissioners shall have regard to the need—

(a) to enable qualifying institutions to provide education, promote learning and engage in research efficiently and economically; and

(b) to apply the principles of justice and fairness.

(3) The following are qualifying institutions for the purposes of this section and sections 174 to 177 of this Act, namely—

(a) any university or other institution to which, during the period of three years beginning 1st August 1987, grants in aid are or have been made by the Universities Funding Council, or by the Secretary of State acting on the advice of the University Grants Committee;

(b) any constituent college, school or hall or other institution of a university falling within paragraph (a) above; and

(c) any institution not falling within paragraph (a) above which is authorised by charter to grant degrees and to which, during the period of three years beginning 1st August 1987, grants are or have been made by the Secretary of State.

(4) Schedule 9 to this Act shall have effect with respect to the Commissioners.

Duty of Commissioners.

174.—(1) The Commissioners shall exercise the powers conferred by section 175 of this Act with a view to securing that the statutes of each qualifying institution include—

(a) provision enabling an appropriate body, or any delegate of such a body, to dismiss any member of the academic staff by reason of redundancy, whether or not in pursuance of a scheme established for the purpose;

(b) provision enabling an appropriate officer, or any delegate of such an officer, acting in accordance with procedures determined by the Commissioners, to dismiss any member of the academic staff for good cause; and

(c) provision establishing procedures determined by the Commissioners for hearing and determining appeals by any members of the academic staff who are dismissed or under notice of dismissal, whether or not in pursuance of such provision as is mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b) above.

PRIME MINISTER

MEETING OF E(EP): 19 MAY

There is just one formal paper on the agenda - the handling of the Higginson Report on 'A' levels. But there are a number of relevant papers:

Flag A: E(EP)(88)10 - a joint paper by Messrs. Baker and Walker.

Flag B: A further personal minute Kenneth Baker has sent you late this evening.

Flag C: Cabinet Office brief

Flag D: Two notes by Brian Griffiths - the first on the main paper and the second on Mr. Baker's later minute.

The formal Baker/Walker paper proposes a forthcoming response to the Higginson Report and an announcement that the Government endorses its recommendations for the general practice that should govern 'A' levels. But Mr. Baker's personal minute records his more cautious second thoughts (or perhaps more accurately the more cautious thoughts that his junior ministers have pressed on him). He is now coming back to the sort of approach that the Cabinet Office brief steers you towards; Brian's second note suggests you strongly endorse this revised approach. Brian's first fuller note spells out a number of aspects of the Higginson Report which will trouble you.

One point on handling. The formal paper is a joint one by Messrs. Baker and Walker. But Mr. Baker's personal minute has

been sent only to you, and does not make clear whether Mr. Walker is aware of it or of the thoughts in it. I suggest you start the meeting by inviting Mr. Baker to introduce the paper, when he will doubtless spell out his second thoughts. Mr. Walker can then join in as he sees fit.

PLCG.

PAUL GRAY

18 May 1988

SLHAWK

PRIME MINISTER

GOVERNING BODIES FOR POLYTECHNICS

When you saw the latest papers over the weekend, you were doubtful about the DES proposal to resist Lady Cox's amendments to Schedule 5 of the Bill and to rely solely on the draft Articles of Government. I therefore persuaded DES to amend the line to be taken in Committee in the Lords on 16 May and for the Lord Chancellor to indicate that, while still doubtful about Lady Cox's amendments, he would draw her comments to Mr. Baker's attention.

Meantime, Lady Cox wrote to you over the weekend alerting you to the background, and urging the Government to take her amendments away and to consider them. She did indicate, however, that she would accept a compromise under which Schedule 5 was left unchanged as long as the managerial Articles of Government were satisfactory to the Polytechnic Directors.

I attach the Lords' Hansard for 16 May and a reply to Lady Cox for your signature.

Kenneth Baker will come back in due course with his proposals on the way forward.

PAUL GRAY

18 May 1988

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PRIME MINISTER

'A' LEVELS: HIGGINSON COMMITTEE REPORT
E(EP)(88)10

DECISIONS

1. The joint paper, by the Secretaries of State for Education and Science and for Wales, seeks agreement that:

i. they should publish the report of the Higginson Committee on 'A' levels;

ii. Mr Baker should answer a Parliamentary Question with the text in Annex D which endorses the general principles recommended by the Committee and backs the aim of 5 "A" or "AS" level subjects for the majority of full-time A-level students;

and iii. they should invite the Schools Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC) to examine "the feasibility, practicality and cost" of the Committee's detailed recommendations.

2. The central question is whether the Sub-Committee is prepared at this early stage, without more ado, to endorse the Higginson Committee recommendation that students should normally take 5 'A' or 'AS' level subjects in future, rather than 3 as at present. This would be a major educational reform with considerable implications for schools and universities. It raises important issues about whether there would be a decline in existing standards, and whether it would lead to demands for a fourth year in degree courses in England and Wales. And it could arouse considerable public interest. If the Sub-Committee is content to endorse the general principles of the Report, without waiting for work to be done on the feasibility, practicality and cost of the recommendations, it will wish to agree to the approach which the Secretaries of State are

proposing. If it would prefer to consider the issues at a slower pace, the alternative would be to commission the further work and simply publish the report, inviting comments without endorsement.

BACKGROUND

3. In November 1986 Mr Baker sought your agreement to a review of the aims and objectives of 'A' level courses, their subject content and grading standards. You agreed to a review on the understanding that it would not provide a vehicle for any dilution of the existing standards of 'A' levels. You also suggested that the review should be asked to consider whether a core syllabus for each 'A' level subject should be established to cover all examining boards. Dr Gordon Higginson, and the other four members of his committee, were appointed in March 1987. Mr Baker proposes that their report, finished last month, should be published at the same time as he tables a written answer outlining the Government's response.

4. The report indicates that present 'A' level courses are taught for 8 periods a week, making 24 periods in total for a normal 3-subject course (para. 3.7). The remaining 16 periods are devoted to a combination of general - non-examinable - courses and private study. Last year the option of 'AS' levels was introduced; these are intended to be of the same standard as 'A' levels, but with half the course content, therefore requiring 4 periods a week. Under the new proposals 5 slimmer 'A' levels - requiring 6 periods a week each - would be the norm. This would result in 30 periods of teaching a week on examinable courses, placing a heavier load on students and teachers. The replacement of one or two of these 'A' levels by 'AS' levels would provide a slight reduction in this load.

5. The report argues that greater breadth at 'A' level - so that, for example, scientists could keep up a modern language to 'A' level and those on arts courses continue to take maths/computing - would produce more balanced and rounded 18 year olds. They suggest that such a curriculum would be more in line with the perceived needs of industry and commerce than the present system.

ISSUES

Academic Standards

6. One central question is whether a move to making the normal 'A' level course comprise 5 subjects would be consistent with maintaining high standards. The Higginson report argues that it is, and indeed that the time spent on each subject can be shortened while also increasing the intellectual rigour of the course. You may however want to probe this.

a. What will be given up if the amount of time spent on a subject is reduced? The Higginson report says that 'A' level courses should do more to encourage 'such non subject-specific skills as communication and some of the personal qualities which are widely considered to be desirable - initiative, independence and a capacity to understand human behaviour' (para. 3.8). The report also says that time can be saved by reducing to a minimum time-consuming tasks with limited intellectual demands, and removing altogether the temporary committal to memory of inessential information (para. 3.9). It is not clear what all this would add up to in practice. Might it not open the way for 'A' levels to be easier and woollier, not more rigorous?

b. Will there be a deliberate move away from the standards set by Universities? There are references in the report to the 'unnecessary dominance of University needs in the determination of 'A' level objectives', and to the need to take more account of the fact that many 'A' level candidates do not go on to University (paragraph 4.4). Arguably, however, it has been the influence of Universities which has maintained the present high standards in 'A' levels.

c. Can the new Advanced Supplementary (AS) level courses, as is said, maintain the same standards as traditional 'A' level courses when they occupy only half the time (four periods a week as against eight)? The report stresses the importance in its proposals of the 'AS' level courses. These, for example, provide for some science study for arts students and

vice versa. The question is whether it is realistic to expect them to maintain standards. For instance, it is not clear what is meant by the statement in the report that 'AS' courses would be 'broad and practical'. (para. 5.13)

d. Will there be enough provision for the very able? The report says that there will be a weaker case for retaining the present Special (S) papers which are taken by the very able (para. 8.9). You may want to probe this.

Implications for universities

7. You will want to ask whether these proposals might have a fundamental impact on universities and on the content of undergraduate courses. Could much of the first undergraduate year be needed to cover ground previously included in 'A level syllabuses? Could there be pressure for a fourth year in University degree courses in England and Wales, as there already is in Scotland where the broader system of Highers has for many years led on to 4-year degree courses. Although the report says that it sees no case for a general lengthening of undergraduate courses as a result of its proposals (paragraph 11.2), the analysis provided to reach this conclusion is sketchy. Significantly, the report approvingly quotes evidence suggesting that the consequence of its proposals may be the removal of the teaching of a research-orientated approach to physical sciences and engineering in the third year of undergraduate courses (para. 11.2). You may consider that it would be inappropriate for the Government to welcome this report until more work has been done on the implications of its recommendations for higher education.

Assessment

8. The report contains two novel recommendations on assessment which, while not central to the conclusions, may attract attention. First, it proposes a shift from written assessment at the end of an 'A' level course to a mixture of in-course assessment (accounting for 20% of the final marks) and greater emphasis on oral and practical assessment. Second, it proposes that 'A' level grades

should be supplemented on an exam certificate with information about different aspects of the candidate's performance in each subject. You may wish to consider whether these proposals would provide sufficient objectivity in assessment, or give rise to varying standards between schools. Presumably both proposals would need to be worked up considerably before their practicability could be fully assessed.

Resource Implications

9. The resource implications of the report's recommendations, both in terms of the teaching load on schools and if there is any question of extending undergraduate courses, could be considerable. The report itself recognises that there could be 'significant' in-service teacher training costs (para. 9.6). The paper says the Ministers recognise that the changes to 'A' levels should not proceed unless the costs of the implementation can be met within planned resources. The Economic Secretary, Treasury will be anxious for Mr Baker and Mr Walker to stick to that. He may also suggest that the further work needed on resource implications, if the proposals are to be pursued, should be undertaken within Government rather than by the School Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC). There are potential savings to be realised by reducing the 8 separate 'A' level examining boards to a smaller number; Mr Baker will however endorse the report's recommendation that, given the disruption this would cause, such rationalisation should be a relatively low priority.

Announcement and Further Work

10. The main decision for the meeting is whether Mr Baker should, as in his draft statement, announce that the Government 'endorses the Committee's recommendation for the general principles which should govern 'A' levels'. The draft statement also speaks enthusiastically of the proposed move to a 5-subject course. The question is whether such a statement should be made when, as Mr Baker himself acknowledges (paragraph 9 of his paper), some fundamental questions remain to be considered before the Government

can be certain that a 5-subject course would be practicable. You may want to explore the case for a more neutral statement, which leaves open the Government's options on the principles as well as the details of the report, and which tests public reaction to the proposals.

11. If it is agreed that the report's recommendations should be developed further, you will wish to ask Mr Baker for a timetable for future work. We understand he may suggest that implementation should be a little later than first examinations in 1994, given the various other radical changes currently being made to schools.

HANDLING

12. You will wish to ask the Secretary of State for Education and Science to open the discussion. The Secretary of State for Wales may wish to comment, as a joint author of the Note. The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and the Secretary of State for Employment may wish to comment on the desirability of broadening the curriculum for 16-18 year olds. The Secretary of State for Scotland may wish to compare the proposals with the system of Highers in Scotland. The Economic Secretary, Treasury may wish to comment on the resource implications.

RTJW.

R T J WILSON
Cabinet Office
18 May 1988

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

18 May 1988

'A' LEVELS : HIGGINSON REPORT

The Higginson Report is a curate's egg. Its affirmation of 'A' levels as important exams which need to be rigorous, stretching and stimulating is welcome.

Its criticism, however, of the high level of factual content in 'A' levels (reminiscent of the charge against GCE), and the need for the SEC/SEAC to develop (a) general principles to govern all 'A' level syllabuses; (b) principles specific to each subject and (c) assessment critiera by subject, shows the unhealthy influence which HMI has had on the Report.

Despite the vocabulary used by the Report in describing 'A' levels - 'rigour', 'breadth', 'depth', 'demanding', 'higher level skills' - its central recommendations, if implemented, would substantially change the face of 'A' levels as we know them today.

It would give enormous power to SEAC and effectively put HMI in the driving seat.

Major Recommendations

The report makes eight major recommendtions:

1. 'A' levels to continue as single subject exams for high achievers.

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2. Assessment to involve more in-course evaluation.

3. 'A' level syllabuses to be leaner - slimmed from 8 periods to 6 periods per week.

4. More of the 'A' level timetable to be devoted to examinable studies.

5. Leaner subjects and more time for 'A' levels to enable most 6th form 'A' level students to take 5 subjects - a mixture of A and AS levels.

6. The SEC/SEAC to develop a) general principles - to govern all 'A' level syllabuses, b) subject-specific principles with a common core for each subject and c) assessment criteria subject by subject.

7. All syllabuses to be reviewed by SEC/SEAC against the principles above and the numbers of 'A' levels drastically reduced.

8. SEC/SEAC to approve GCE Boards' appeals procedures and to act as final court of appeal on procedural matters.

Criticisms of existing 'A' Levels

The Report starts by accepting a number of criticisms of existing 'A' levels:

(a) the programmes of study are too narrow;

(b) the system encourages premature specialisation;

(c) candidates have to memorise too much information;

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(d) assessment is inadequate because it focuses on exams at the end of the course.

The report is convincing in arguing that our 'A' levels are narrow in coverage compared with countries such as Germany, France and the US and also in relation to the requirements of business. But the one criticism which is largely ubsubstantiated is (c).

Throughout the Report there is a considerable criticism of acquiring facts e.g.

> "Each subject syllabus should focus more sharply on making sense of the facts .... it means removing altogether the temporary committal to memory of inessential and inconsequential information. (3.9)
>
> "Paring away the padding would reduce the factual content of each syllabus". (3.10)
>
> "Candidates (are) overburdened with having to memorise a large amount of information". (1.3)
>
> "There is a need for leaner syllabuses in which the proportion of factual content has been reduced". (5.2)

This criticism of 'A' levels by the Report is identical to the previous criticism of GCE, which in turn led to GCSE. In history for example this approach has meant ignoring factual knowledge of of British and world history and concentrating on historical skills (e.g. analysis of documents etc).

In my judgement this is a thoroughly invalid criticism Recently I have spent considerable time (for personal reasons) reviewing 'A' levels in economics, politics and

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geography. While each course could be reduced if the topics covered were reduced, it would be quite wrong to confuse such a reduction, with a reduction in the factual content of each course.

It is impossible to study subjects such as history, politics and economics without having acquired a substantial factual knowledge of how the real world works or the facts of history. Nothing is worse in subjects like economics and history than theory without facts. It is an immediate return to the nineteen sixties!

Proposals for changing 'A' levels

The major proposals the Report makes are to:

(a) reduce the factual content in 'A' levels - this enables a subject to be taught in 6 periods not 8 periods per week;

(b) reduce teaching on general studies subjects in the 6th form;

(c) increase the number of AS level subjects;

(d) submit the syllabuses and assessment to evaluation by SEAC.

It is important to resist reducing the proportion of factual content in existing 'A' level courses. Courses could be reduced by covering less subjects but not by reducing their factual content. If existing courses are truncated this would leave room for greater breadth through AS level subjects. But it is crucially different from the approach proposed by Higginson.

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It is equally important to resist the proposal that A level syllabuses and assessment should be evaluated by SEAC. SEAC may easily be taken over by HMI - in the way HMI have already captured the SEC and SCDC.

Apart from the issue of breadth, 'A' levels at present are working extremely well. There is no case whatever for their being tampered with by HMI. This argument can be presented in one of two ways:

either one can attack the issue directly by showing how the Higginson proposals would effectively reduce standards

or one can attack the issue indirectly, by arguing that because of the many changes taking place at present in schools it would be unwise to ask teachers to take on another major upheaval.

Conclusions

The Higginson Report looks superficially to be very helpful. This is deceptive. If implemented it would constitute a Trojan horse bringing in a new progressive approach to 'A' levels - the one area up until now which has escaped the clutches of the educational establishment.

Recommendations

1. Accept the case for greater breadth in 'A' levels e.g. a student doing English History and Geography might take an AS level in computing; or one studying Maths, Physics and Chemistry could do an AS level in a foreign language.

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2. Ensure that the present nature of 'A' levels is in no way changed except that the number of topics covered in each subject might be reduced.

3. Reject the need for any review of syllabuses or assessment by SEC/SEAC.

4. Ensure that the examining bodies retain their independence - which is their only source of strength - and are not subject to SEAC.

5. The Secretary of state should give a very guarded welcome to the Report.

Brian Griffiths

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

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SECRET

PRIME MINISTER

18 May 1988

Higginson - A Levels

The personal letter from Kenneth Baker represents second thoughts following a major disagreement in DES earlier this week between himself and Angela Rumbold and Bob Dunn. Both are very opposed to implementing the Higginson Report.

Kenneth Baker's further reflections are excellent and allow greater breadth and flexibility in 'A' level while making no concessions to HMI.

Recommendation

Accept immediately!

Brian Griffiths

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

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PG

PRIME MINISTER

HIGGINSON - A-LEVELS

I hope that the discussion about A-Levels at E(EP) may be in the nature of a Second Reading Debate - similar to the one we had recently on housing. I expect colleagues on such an important matter will be able to contribute more than just a Departmental brief.

In particular I have been reflecting further about our attitude to A-levels and I do have some concerns which I will be expressing:

i. Any education system can only absorb so much change and this is particularly true of the examination system. Our first priority must be to get the GCSE properly established. This is going to take a good deal of bedding down over the next two or three years with a regular review of the syllabuses. This will have to be undertaken by SEAC and by the examining boards. Moreover, the next new task for SEAC must be to get the assessment and examination system at 7, 11, 14 and 16 established. This may also involve the examining boards. Therefore I think that to ask SEAC and the examining boards to review all the A-Level syllabuses, which is what a narrowing of each subject would involve, is something that we really cannot undertake in the next 4 or 5 years.

ii. Although I am anxious to broaden the post-16 A-Level exam, I think to talk in terms of a 5 A-Level programme could actually deter many young people. To some youngsters, 1 A-Level is a mountain, 3 is a distant Himalayan range. On the other hand, they may be able to cope with 2 or even 3 A/S Levels. This leads me to conclude that the way forward in order to broaden the post-16 approach to education is to concentrate, in the next few years, on developing and expanding A/S Levels. This means giving A/S better status and possibly rating them rather more than 0.5 of an A-Level, may be 0.6. This will give a clear indication that we will be looking to mixtures of, say, 2 A-Levels with 2 A/S Levels; or 1 A-Level and 4 A/Ss.

iii. We have also got to consider those young people who currently do not take A-Levels and who take the various other qualifications i.e. BTEC and City & Guilds. We are now looking into all of this in the NCVQ. A lot of work is still to be done on the inter-action between the work of the NCVQ and the development of more formal A-Level education. Clearly the boundaries will overlap - there will not be such distinct routes for individual students in the future.

iv. We are going to have to publish Higginson. The education world knows we have received it; employers are interested; so are the universities. There is a very strong lobby in favour of a broadening of post-16 education. I think we should publish the report with strong support for a broadening, though decisions about how it is achieved and actual implementation should be postponed. We must make it

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clear too that if and when we implement the report, that will be our decision and not the decision of SEAC. In the meantime, I will want to promote A/S Levels very strongly and to concentrate the efforts of GCE Boards on developing good A/S Level syllabuses.

WS

K B

18 May 1988

Department of Education and Science

File

bc: BG

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

16 May 1988

MANAGEMENT OF POLYTECHNICS

Thank you for your further letter about Schedule 5 of the Education Reform Bill and the present draft of Model Articles of Government. As I explained when we spoke, the Prime Minister remains doubtful whether effective management arrangements for the polytechnics can be achieved simply via the Model Articles of Government.

The Prime Minister would therefore be grateful if your Secretary of State could give further consideration to this point. Meantime, you explained that in the Lords Committee this afternoon the Government would indicate it would be considering the arguments put forward by Baroness Cox on her proposed amendments to Schedule 5.

Paul Gray

Tom Jeffery, Esq.,
Department of Education and Science.

EDUCATION Policy pt 18

PERSONAL.

From the Baroness Cox

May 15, 1988

Dear Prime Minister,

The Education Reform Bill: Composition of Governing Bodies for Polytechnics and Colleges

I thought I should alert you urgently to the latest duplicity from the DES.

For months the Polytechnic Directors have been saying that they need a management structure if they are to manage their institutions effectively. For months the DES civil servants have been saying that the Government is so fearful of public reaction, principally from NATFHE and the students, that the Directors must accept a collegiate model of governance, which is now in Schedule 5 of the Bill.

The Directors hoped that even if the composition of the new governing bodies had to be inappropriate, the Articles of Government would allow them to manage effectively. However, the DES produced draft Articles in March which will make matters worse by giving too much power to Academic Boards.

At a meeting in the DES last Friday May 13 Richard Bird accused several Directors of wanting a "Teutonic" model, and made it plain that the Articles were to remain collegiate.

At the request of Sir Kenneth Green (Director of Manchester Polytechnic) I have therefore tabled amendments to schedule 5 for debate tomorrow which would remove the nominees (up to 8 in number) of local authorities, academics and students from governing bodies.

However, I fear I shall be a rather lone voice, and may only be supported publicly by some 12-14 Polytechnic Directors after the debate. So if the collegiate composition of governing bodies has really gone too far to be retrieved, a compromise might be for the DES to agree managerial Articles of Government, satisfactory to Sir Kenneth Green and his friends, before the Bill comes back to us at Report on or about June 20.

An entirely different future would be in store for the non-university sector, however, if the Government were to agree tomorrow to take my amendments away and consider them.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline Cox.

From the Director

MANCHESTER POLYTECHNIC

All Saints
Manchester
M15 6BH
Telephone 061-228 6171

Director
Sir Kenneth Green MA

12 May 1988

The Baroness Cox
House of Lords
Westminster
LONDON SW1

Dear Caroline,

I am writing to ask you, in moving an amendment to the Education Bill currently under discussion in the House of Lords, to express the concern that many Polytechnic Directors share regarding those sections dealing with the Governance of Polytechnics and Colleges outlined in Schedule 5.

I have received letters which entirely share my view from Harry Law, President of Portsmouth Polytechnic, Ken Barker, Director of Leicester Polytechnic, Gerry Fowler, Director of North East London Polytechnic and Clive Booth, Director of Oxford Polytechnic. In addition, my own comments, which were forwarded to Kenneth Baker in my letter to him of 29 March, have been supported in conversation with me by Ray Rickett, Director of Middlesex Polytechnic, Ken Durrands, Director of Huddersfield Polytechnic, Peter Toyne, Rector of Liverpool Polytechnic, Peter Knight, Director of Birmingham Polytechnic, Michael Robbins, Director of Plymouth Polytechnic, Bob Smith, Director of Kingston Polytechnic, Alf Morris, Director of Bristol Polytechnic and Terry Burlin, Rector of the Polytechnic of Central London.

Plus Pauline Perry (South Bank)

on 12th April

At the CDP Conference the view was taken that it would probably be difficult to get the Bill changed and that the CDP should direct its efforts particularly to ensuring that the Articles and Instrument reflected a tough managerial model. This was supported by 90% of the Polytechnic Directors present and, therefore, to the names above you can add Laing Barden, Director of Newcastle upon Tyne Polytechnic, Geoffrey Hall, Director of Brighton Polytechnic, Peter Hart, Rector of Sunderland Polytechnic, Christopher Price, Director of Leeds Polytechnic, John Stoddart, Principal of Sheffield Polytechnic and Keith Thompson, Director of North Staffordshire Polytechnic. There are two sets of issues, the one relating to the Bill, Schedule 5, and the other to the Articles and Instrument of Government.

Continued

In relation to the former, no rationale is provided for the hybrid of managerialism and representationalism reflected in the membership of the Boards of Governors of these new incorporated bodies. It is essential that such arrangements should reflect clear logic of responsibility and accountability in which decision taking can be located. Anything less will inhibit the recruitment as governors of the right kind of people from industry, business and the professions, the exercise of proper management and leadership at senior levels within institutions, and the achievement of the radical objectives outlined in the Government's White Paper "Meeting the Challenge".

In relation to the latter, Articles and Instrument have not yet been produced but there are genuine fears abroad amongst Directors that these may not provide a proper framework for the future conduct of these institutions. The particular concerns are that the Governing Body should be clearly responsible for the identification of corporate strategy and all aspects of policy, and ensuring that the institution is properly managed; that the Director, as the Chief Executive, should be accountable to the Governing Body, as would the Chief Executive of any other company, for all aspects of policy advice; that the Academic Board should be concerned with the quality assurance of existing provision and enabled only to advise the Chief Executive in matters relating to policy and strategy.

I am enclosing the two paragraphs you might wish to use, plus a copy of my paper which was sent to Kenneth Baker.

If you care to discuss these matters with me over the telephone I shall be pleased to do so.

Yours ever,

Jean

P.S. I have done what I could with the draft attached.

Enc

Many thanks for pursuing this matter!

higher education and they do not necessarily all have to be written into a Bill of this kind.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Schedule 4 agreed to.

Clauses 105 and 106 agreed to.

Clause 107 [*Provisions supplementary to sections 105 and 106*]:

Baroness Cox moved Amendment No. 237:

Page 106, line 13, at end insert—

("( ) In relation to the initial appointment to the Board of Governors of the Corporation to take effect on vesting day, the Secretary of State shall have the same powers as provided in paragraph 5 of Schedule 5 below.").

The noble Baroness said: I have been asked by my noble friend Lord Onslow to move this amendment on his behalf as unfortunately he has been delayed abroad. For the convenience of the Committee I should point out that there is a printing error in the Marshalled List. The amendment should refer to page 133, line 16. It should therefore be placed in the Marshalled List in a position which refers to Clause 136. With the leave of the Committee, perhaps I may have permission to deal with it at this point in time. It is only a very brief and probing amendment.

The amendment refers to the unique position of the ILEA polytechnics. Since these are already corporate bodies the desirable reform of their governing bodies is not achieved by other provisions in the Bill which will ensure smaller and more effective governing bodies for polytechnics outside London. It would therefore perhaps be particularly unfortunate if the Secretary of State lacked the powers to approve the initial appointment of a board of governors of ILEA polytechnics after they leave the control of the local authority. Surely they deserve assurances that their governing bodies will be revised in line with the revisions promised to their other colleagues elsewhere.

This amendment proposes that Clause 136 should be revised to give to the Secretary of State the same powers that are provided for him in paragraph 5 of Schedule 5 to the Bill; namely, that he should be the appointing authority in relation to the appointment of the first members of an ILEA corporation and that he shall secure that at least half of all the members of the corporation as first constituted are independent members. Basically I understand that this has given comparability to the ILEA polytechnics as to other polytechnics outside that authority. On behalf of my noble friend, I beg to move.

The Lord Chancellor (Lord Mackay of Clashfern): On the assumption that one alters the wording to "Page 133, line 16" the position is that the concern expressed by my noble friend on behalf of the noble Earl, Lord Onslow, relates specifically to the position of the inner London polytechnics. The Government accept that some changes will be needed to the composition of their governing bodies and their articles of government following their transfer to the PCFC sector. Once Clause 136 of the Bill has passed into law it will allow the Secretary of State to make amendments. Officials have written to the institutions about this matter.

With those assurances, perhaps my noble friend will feel able to withdraw the amendment. In other words, we feel that although the powers that are to be used in this connection are not precisely the ones to which the amendment refers, the point is covered otherwise.

Baroness Cox: I am most grateful to my noble and learned friend the Lord Chancellor for those assurances, and with gratitude I beg leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 107 agreed to.

Schedule 5 [*The higher education corporations*]:

[*Amendment No. 238 not moved.*]

Baroness Cox moved Amendment No. 238A:

Page 186, line 9, leave out ("twelve") and insert ("eight").

The noble Baroness said: In moving Amendment No. 238A I shall speak also, with the leave of the Committee, to Amendments Nos. 239A to 239D, 240A to 240C and 242A to 242F, because they all deal with proposals for strengthening the future governance of the polytechnics and larger colleges of higher education. If I seem a somewhat lone voice in support of the changes that are advocated in these amendments, let me assure the Committee that I am speaking at the behest of many polytechnic directors. I can but hope that the rest of the educational establishment will not lightly disregard the wishes of polytechnic directors, who, after all, are the people who will have to run the new institutions.

It is perhaps worth reminding the Committee that when the non-university sector, as it used to be called, came into being in its present form in 1966 the intention was that it should enjoy parity of esteem with the universities. The polytechnics and colleges, as I am sure the Committee will agree, have earned such esteem. Unfortunately, that is not reflected by representation in this Chamber. Indeed, I think that I may be the only Member on these Benches who has teaching experience in a polytechnic, and I reached only the level of head of department. I believe that the Benches opposite may be better stocked with Members who have experience of the public sector of higher education and I hope that they will support the concerns of polytechnic directors.

At this stage I should perhaps stress that academic freedom, in which I believe passionately, will in no way be compromised by these amendments. Academic quality and freedom must remain the exclusive province of academic boards; overall management and planning should belong to directors and governing bodies.

These amendments deal with the composition of the future governing bodies. Their main effect is to be found in Amendments Nos. 239C and 239D. Paragraph 3(2)(a) of Schedule 5 to the Bill as drafted envisages up to 13 members who must have experience of and have shown capacity in industrial, commercial or employment matters or the practice of

[BARONESS COX.]

any profession. Amendment No. 239C requires the capacities shown to have been managerial. In view of all the new responsibilities being given to directors and governing bodies under Clause 108 of this Bill, I feel sure that the directors are right in their wish to have strong managerial experience in their governing bodies. Amendment No. 239D is designed to enhance and streamline further the decision-making competence of governing bodies.

The basic effect of these two amendments is to produce a new paragraph 4 of Schedule 5 which would require the appointed members to choose up to four further members, at least one of whom would have to have educational experience. The appointed members would thus be free to invite representatives of local authorities, academics and students to join them on the governing body if they so wish. This system would have the added advantage that local authority members most suitable to the tasks set by the Government could be appointed by governing bodies, whereas under the present proposals they might well be excluded.

Perhaps I may just remind the Committee that the Government have laid great emphasis on the wide powers to be exercised by the boards of governors of these corporations, as is evidenced in Clause 108. In addition to their responsibilities for the provision of higher and further education and the conduct of research and other such activities, these institutions are to become more entrepreneurial, to own their own buildings, estates and other assets, employ their own staff, supply goods and services, acquire and dispose of property, borrow and invest and, in short, operate more nearly like any other company.

I also remind the Committee that the Government themselves have emphasised the enhanced role to be undertaken in the governance of these institutions by those of wide experience of industry, commerce and the professions. If the boards of governors are to be effective they must be sufficiently small to be cohesive and so constituted as to undertake the functions that they are expected to discharge. They must not discourage successful and busy people by inappropriate composition and discussion.

Surely it cannot be appropriate for the composition currently envisaged in the Bill to determine matters relating to overall strategy, the employment of staff, the acquisition and disposition of assets, the supply of goods and services, and borrowing and investment. The proposals as they now stand call into question the role of the polytechnic directors themselves as chief executives in these corporations although the Government have made it plain in another place in Standing Committee on 11th February that it is their expressed intention that that is how they are expected to function.

In conclusion, the unease generated by the lack of an apparent rationale for the provisions of governance outlined in Schedule 5 is compounded by the fact that these must be considered in the absence of any firm knowledge of whether the articles of governance referred to in Clause 109 will reflect a clear logic of responsibility and accountability in which decisions can be taken. There is a general concern among polytechnic directors that unless these articles clearly delineate the directors themselves as chief executives responsible to these boards, then the polytechnics will be incapacitated in their ability to achieve the objectives identified for them by Government.

My honourable friend the Minister in another place summed up the Government's rather muddled position—as it appears to me—when he argued that the Government have had to make a judgment about whether to opt for an exclusively management-directed governing body or a representative governing body. He confessed that the Government decided on a hybrid of the two.

However, I suggest that a hybrid model is a recipe for confusion. The polytechnic directors have indicated that they need governing bodies that will enable them most effectively to fulfil the demanding responsibilities laid upon them. I have been asked to represent their concerns to Members of the Committee. I sincerely hope that the Committee will consider them sympathetically. I beg to move.

The Lord Chancellor: The Government's consulations on the higher education White Paper produced two different views on the size and composition of the boards of governors for the higher education corporations. Some argued, as my noble friend has just done, that the proposals in the Bill did not go far enough to limit the size of these boards. Others argued that these plans went too far: that the board should be as fully representative of staff, students and other bodies as many governing bodies now are.

In the new situation, differing from the present, the boards will be responsible for the overall character, strategy and finance of the institutions. The Government fully recognise that the boards will need to include a strong voice for people from business, industry and the professions to ensure that the institutions are responsive to the wider world and in particular to the needs of employers and to help foster a spirit of enterprise in the institutions. But we also recognise that there is a long, and generally useful, tradition of representative involvement in the government of academic bodies. We think it desirable that staff and students should be party to decisions which affect them. Representation on the board of governors is a means of giving effect to that aim.

My noble friend argues that the representative element unnecessarily inflates the size of the board and—and perhaps this is her particular point—that thereby effective decision making is hindered. We certainly agree strongly that the new boards need to be smaller than many existing governing bodies. The upper limit of 25 set in the schedule means that they will be. At the same time the schedule permits institutions which wish to have a smaller governing body to go as low as 13 members, including the director or principal.

It is also suggested—and I think that this is implicit in what my noble friend said—that the representative element may well side with the staff against management. That risk is inherent in having students and staff on the board, but equally others have

med, as one of the strengths of the representative tradition, that it involves staff and students in the management of the institution and often makes them more understanding of, and responsive to, the pressures and opportunities that face management. The case for local authority representation rests on the regional significance of the higher education which these institutions provide and on their role in the local provision of further education.

The approach that we have followed is to give representatives of the staff, the students and the local education authorities a voice on the governing body so that they can be heard. But the director and the independent members will have a clear majority. There is no question of their being overwhelmed.

I think that nobody would deny that there needs to be strong management in the institutions to ensure that they fully meet their potential. The head of the institution must be able to manage. These are really matters for the conduct of the institution and the articles of government. We wish the articles to include a clear statement of the respective roles of the board of governors and the director and to give the director the necessary authority to manage within the overall resposibilities of the board of governors. The Department of Education and Science will shortly be circulating draft model articles for consideration, seeking to give effect to these principles.

I am grateful to my noble friend for stimulating, through this amendment and the related ones, a debate on the membership of higher education corporations. I shall certainly draw what she has said to the attention of my right honourable friend the Secretary of State. However, at the present we remain unpersuaded that it would be right to follow the line that she has proposed. The effectiveness of management is quite clearly recognised, but this is the way in which we hope to effect it. I hope that, with these considerations before her, my noble friend may feel able to withdraw this amendment.

Baroness Seear: I very much want to agree with the Government in wishing to keep the representational element. Colleges are essentially places in which it is the staff who determine whether the colleges will be successfully run and will meet their primary objective, which is to provide good courses and good research. There is a tendency at the present time to overdo the managerial element in the running of colleges and not to recognise sufficiently that unless the staff have a very considerable say on a collegiate basis in the way the institutions are run, those institutions will suffer very severely. I am very glad indeed to hear that the Government intend to keep the representational element for the staff, and for the students. That is essential in the running of the college.

Baroness Cox: Let me say how grateful I am to my noble and learned friend for his clarification of the Government's position. I shall read with great care the details of what has been outlined. I was especially interested in the points relating to the articles, because the articles and the structure must be seen together as a totality. I am also most grateful to him for the assurance that he will draw these matters to the attention of his right honourable friend the Secretary of State. In the meantime I beg leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

[*Amendments Nos. 239 to 239C not moved.*]

Baroness David moved Amendment No. 239CA:

Page 186, line 17, at end insert ("or to represent community interests served by the institution").

The noble Baroness said: This amendment tries to widen the representation a little and to make sure that community interests are involved, because the present clauses narrow the representative base of these bodies compared with what goes on at the moment. As these governing bodies will have more responsibilities than the present ones, it seems important that there should be very wide representation on them.

The Bill appears to have failed to acknowledge the important contribution that a broad range of community interests can make, or indeed the valuable experience built up by the present governing bodies over the last 20 years. Governing bodies set up by this Bill must be seen to be at least as accountable as their predecessors if the credibility of the newly independent institutions is to be assured.

A very wide range of educational interests are concerned to achieve increased accountability and community representation on the governing bodies of the higher education corporation. So I hope that the noble and learned Lord will be willing to put in this amendment, because it will give satisfaction to a great number of people. I beg to move.

The Lord Bishop of Manchester: I should like to support this amendment as strongly as I can before the noble and learned Lord replies. It seems to me that as the schedule is drafted at the moment the words:

"industrial, commercial or employment matters or the practice of any profession",

are not wide enough to include the great diversity that we now get in many areas of our country which are served by these great institutions of higher education. I hope very much that the Government will see their way to including this wording.

The Lord Chancellor: The Government's plans as set out in *Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge* provide for boards of governors to have strong representation from industry, commerce and the professions. We want this to foster effective management in the institutions, to ensure that they are responsive to the needs of employers and to develop a strong enterprise approach in them.

The Bill therefore provides for the boards of governors to have at least half of their members from business, commerce and the like. The inclusion in the independent category of community representatives who do not have strong links in business and so on could detract from this. But there is absolutely no reason why people who have such links should not be representative of the community. I cannot therefore accept this amendment.

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

13 May 1988

Admission of Pupils to Maintained Schools

Early in April you asked the DES whether it might be possible to implement the open enrolment provisions of the Education Bill in full by September 1989.

They have now responded; but regrettably with some rather feeble arguments. This is just the sort of response which the private sector would simply not put up with.

Rather than have yet another argument with DES I would suggest the following:

1. Approve strongly the Secretary of State's determination to sort out as many as possible admission limit queries by September 1989.

2. Suggest that as the Bill is so important to the government in this term it would be useful to have a six-monthly monitoring meting with DES [minutes invitation] (say January and July) when progress in implementing the Bill could be assessed; this might cover the following:

Schools

Financial Delegation
Open Enrolment
GM Schools
National Curriculum
RE
City Technology Colleges
ILEA

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Polys	Independence
	PCFC
Universities	UFC

I believe that if the monitoring is done thoroughly it would give you an invaluable opportunity to exert a continuing influence during the implementation of the Bill.

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

13 May 1988

Education Bill : Polytechnics

Caroline Cox has proposed an amendment to Schedule 5 of the Bill which deals with the new constitution of polytechnics. It is supported by a majority of directors; but because of the sensitivity of the subject among their academic staff, it is not something about which they feel able to speak in public.

The DES however are opposed to the amendment and sympathetic to including staff and student representation on the new governing bodies of polytechnics. From having been on the staff of universities for over 20 years I know from first hand experience that the costs of the system (excessive debate, multiplicity of committees, large numbers on committees, lack of confidentiality etc) far outweigh the benefits (representation): quite apart from the fact that some representatives may be very left-wing and politically motivated, which creates additional kinds of problems.

However the DES letter says, that the Secretary of State will take a tough line on the Articles of Government of institutions

"he proposes that the responsibilities and authority of the director should be spelt out clearly and firmly in polytechnic Articles of Government."

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Recommendation

1. Respond to the Secretary of State by saying that following the concern expressed by the directors of polytechnics you are sympathetic to Baroness Cox's amendment.

2. Rather than press this however you would allow the government to oppose it, but subject to the responsibility and authority of the director being clearly spelt out and being in line with what the overwhelming majority of polytechnic directors have requested, namely;

(a) that the terms of reference of governing bodies should be sufficiently comprehensive to embrace overall responsibility for the character and activities of the institution, including the academic side;

(b) that the director should be regarded as chief executive and therefore responsible to the Board of Governors for advice on all aspects of policy and management;

(c) that the power of the academic boards should be limited to

(i) overall responsibility for the academic quality of existing course provision;

(ii) advice to the chief executive on academic matters:

It is absolutely crucial that academic boards should not by-pass chief executives.

BG

CONFIDENTIAL

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

PRIME MINISTER

EDUCATION - MAINTAINED SCHOOLS AND POLYTECHNICS

I attach the latest papers on two issues where you have been pressing Kenneth Baker on Education Bill matters.

Admission of pupils to maintained schools

Last month you pressed DES to implement the open enrolment provisions in full by September 1989 rather than waiting until September 1990.

At Flag A are Kenneth Baker's response of 9 May and Brian Griffiths' comments on it. As Brian says the response is less than convincing. But I think you have persuaded Mr. Baker substantially to speed up the operation, and he is now aiming to have most schools implementing the new provisions by September 1989.

I think Brian's quid pro quo for accepting the latest proposals - namely instituting six monthly monitoring meetings on progress in implementing the full range of the Bill's provisions - is an excellent one.

Content to respond as Brian proposes? Yes

Polytechnics

You expressed concern about the limitations in Schedule 5 of the Bill on polytechnic directors' ability effectively to manage. At Flag B is the DES response of 10 May and Brian's comments on it.

You will see that Lady Cox has proposed amendments to Schedule 5 of the Bill in line with the changes being

requested by some of the polytechnic directors. I have also attached a marked up copy of the Bill showing you the effect these would have.

Kenneth Baker proposes to resist these amendments, but undertakes to adopt a tough line in drawing up the articles of Government on polytechnics, which he thinks would give adequate responsibilities and authority to directors.

Brian suggests that you accept this approach subject to spelling out your requirements for the articles of the Government bodies.

Content with Brian's approach?

But surely the approach that Brian outlines - ie particular the authority of the Chief Executive, and that he is responsible to the Board of Governors should be spelled out in the Schedule? Is Kenneth Baker willing to commit himself absolutely to putting the Conditions into articles of Government? Is that enough. Then the articles could be changed all too easily not

RACG.

PG
13 May 1988

KAYACM

cc/35

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

ELIZABETH HOUSE
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01-934 9000

Paul Gray Esq
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1A 2AA

10 May 1988

Dear Paul

MANAGEMENT OF POLYTECHNICS

file with PG

Your letter of 5 May referred to the unhappiness expressed by a number of polytechnic directors over Schedule 5 of the Education Reform Bill and the present draft of model Articles of Government. In response I said that we would reply in full after officials had met the directors about the Articles.

Since then, Baroness Cox has tabled a number of amendments to the Bill for Lords Committee which reflect the concerns about Schedule 5; they are due to be taken on Monday. The amendments would shift the balance of the governing bodies much more towards the independent members from business, industry and professions. They would remove the requirement to include some representatives of staff, students and local authorities.

As Schedule 5 stands, the minimum number of members representing staff, students and local authorities is four and the maximum is eight: the minimum for the whole governing body is thirteen and the maximum twenty-five. The representative element is likely to be about one-third of the whole, a much lower proportion than on most current governing bodies. In the consultations which preceded the Bill there were as many calls for strengthening the representative element as for reducing it. The Schedule strikes a compromise which Ministers have consistently defended in the debates on the Bill. If amendments from one camp are accepted now, the Government will undoubtedly have to respond to counter-amendments from the other.

The main reasons for standing firm are given in the enclosed briefing which Lady Hooper could use in responding to the amendments. As you will see from paragraph 4 of the note on the effect of the amendments, some of the directors who back them are

primarily concerned with strengthening their own managerial position. My Secretary of State believes that it would be a mistake to deal with this legitimate worry about the directors' authority and freedom to manage by altering the Bill at this very late stage in a manner which would be bound to stir up controversy and which would be likely to undermine the usefulness of Boards of Governors. Rather he proposes that the responsibilities and authority of the director should be spelt out clearly and firmly in polytechnic Articles of Government. He therefore intends, following further consultation with the directors and others, to promulgate model Articles which will secure the director's position. Articles made subsequently by the institutions will be subject to his approval. As already promised, I shall write again about the line to be taken on this in model Articles after the meeting with the directors.

Meanwhile if you have any observations on the line about Schedule 5 proposed for Baroness Hooper's use, I should be grateful to have them on Monday morning.

Yours,
Tom

T B JEFFERY
(Private Secretary)

AMENDMENT NO

SCH 5/186/9
SCH 5/186/9
SCH 5/186/14
SCH 5/186/16
SCH 5/186/18
SCH 5/186/23
SCH 5/186/24
SCH 5/186/29
SCH 5/186/48
SCH 5/187/4
SCH 5/187/27
SCH 5/187/37
SCH 5/188/6
SCH 5/188/15

EDUCATION REFORM BILL

COMMITTEE STAGE (LORDS)

NOTES ON AMENDMENTS

The Baroness Cox

Schedule 5, page 186, line 9, leave out ("twelve") and insert ("eight")

Schedule 5, page 196, line 9, leave out ("twenty-four") and insert ("sixteen")

Schedule 5, page 186, line 14, leave out ("thirteen")and insert ("twelve")

Schedule 5, page 186, line 16, after ("shown") insert ("managerial")

Schedule 5, page 186, leave out lines 18 to 21

Schedule 5, page 186, line 23, leave out ("nominee")

Schedule 5, page 186, line 24, leave out from ("corporation") to ("and") in line 25

Schedule 5, page 186, leave out lines 29 to 47

Schedule 5, page 186, line 48, leave out ("nominee")

Schedule 5, page 187, leave out lines 4 to 22

Schedule 5, page 187, leave out lines 27 to 29

Schedule 5, page 187, leave out lines 37 to 39

Schedule 5, page 188, leave out lines 6 to 8

Schedule 5, page 188, leave out lines 15 to 19

RESIST

EFFECT OF AMENDMENTS

1. This part of Schedule 5 deals with the composition of the Boards of Governors of the higher education corporations. The amendments would make significant changes to the size and character of the Boards.

2. The new Boards of Governors will be ultimately responsible for the direction of their institution. They need a strong presence from business and industry to develop effective management and a strong entrepreneurial approach. But equally, there is a strong tradition of representative government in higher education institutions. The Government's plans represent a balance between the two: a majority voice for independent members from business, industry and the professions; but with some reserved places for nominations from the staff and students of the institution and from local authorities, as representative of the local community - initial nominee members. There can also be a small number of co-opted members- additional nominee members.

3. The amendments substitute a smaller governing body, very largely composed of members required to have managerial experience. The reserved places for nominee members are dropped. Co-opted members are retained but renamed "additional members". Staff, students or local authority members can be coopted. In summary, the differences are:

	Bill	Amendments
Overall size	13-25	8-17
Independent members	6-13	7-12
Initial nominee (ie representative) members:		
- local authority	1-3	0
- teaching staff	1-3	0
- non-teaching staff	1	0
- students	1	0
Co-opted members	1-4	1-4

4. Some of the heads of PCFC institutions do not want governing bodies with a representative component. They may support these amendments. Their motives are mixed. Some want more effective governing bodies. In other cases support for the amendment is not necessarily to get a governing body which will be more business-like. Some directors in this camp have made clear that they do not want strong governing bodies - however composed- imposed over their own leadership of the institutions. Against that, there is likely to be strong opposition from staff, student and local interests as well as those who believe that

institutions should be responsive to their local communities. During the consultation on the Government's proposals, there was much criticism that the representative element on the new governing bodies would be weaker than on the existing bodies.

5. A further consideration is that the amendments would also remove the small number of reserved places for local authorities. Most authorities are co-operating in the transfer of the institutions from their control, not least because they see a continued role in the institutions. There is still time for them to do serious harm to the institutions before they are transferred. The higher education corporations will have a substantial amount of part-time higher education, for which the market is essentially local and regional. Many of them will wish to offer significant numbers of places on courses of further education for purchase by LEAs. These are grounds for maintaining a limited representation of LEAs.

SPEAKING NOTE

1. Our consultations on the higher education White Paper produced two different views on the size and composition of the Boards of Governors for the higher education corporations. Some argued that our proposals to limit the size on the Boards did not go far enough. Others argued that our plans went too far; that the Boards should be as fully representative of staff, students and other bodies as many governing bodies are now.

2. Unlike now, the Boards will be responsible for the overall character, strategy and finance of the institutions. The Government fully recognises that the Boards will need to include a strong voice for people from business, industry and the professions, to ensure that the institutions are responsive to the wider world and particularly to the needs of employers and to help foster a spirit of enterprise in the institutions. But we also recognise that there is a long and generally useful tradition of representative involvement in the government of academic bodies, and we want to secure an element of that in the new Boards of Governors. We think that it is desirable that staff and students are party to decisions which affect them. They should have some reserved places on the new Boards, rather than the vaguer possibility of access to co-opted places under the amendments.

3. The noble Baroness argues that the representative element unnecessarily inflates the size of the Boards, thereby hindering effective decision-taking. We certainly agree strongly that the new Boards need to be smaller than many existing governing bodies. The upper limit of 25 set in the Schedule means that they will be. At the same time the schedule permits institutions who wish a smaller governing body to go as low as 13 members, including the Director or Principal.

4. It is also argued that the representative element may side with the staff against management. There is a danger is this, although it is equally clear that one of the strengths of the representative tradition is that it has involved staff and students in the management of the institution, and often made them more understanding of, and responsive to, the pressures

and opportunities facing their institution. Some local authority representation is justified by the regional significance of the higher education which these institutions provide, and by their role in the local provision of further education.

5. The approach we have followed is to give representatives of the staff, the students and the LEAs a voice on the governing body so that they can be heard. But the Director and the independent members will constitute a clear majority. There is no question of their being overwhelmed by an outbreak of syndicalism.

6. I therefore believe that it would be wrong to go down the road of the amendments. But nobody would deny that there needs to be strong management in the institutions to ensure that they fully meet their potential. The head of the institution must be able to manage. These are really matters for the conduct of the institution, and the Articles of Government. We wish the Articles to include a clear statement of the respective roles of the Board of Governors and Directors and to give the Directors the necessary authority to manage, within the overall responsibilities of the Board of Governors. The Department will shortly be circulating draft model Articles for consideration.

7. I would ask the noble Baroness to withdraw her amendments.

<u>If pressed, on amendment [page 186, lines 14-16]</u>

8. I acknowledge the concern that the independent members should represent management. That is in general our intention. But I am not clear that the amendment achieves the aim. It might exclude perfectly suitable professional people who have little managerial responsibility as such - and include trade unionists, who have managerial experience within their organisation.

9. We have decided that we should not exclude trade unionists from the independent category of membership. In some cases, they could have much to offer institutions.

10. I would ask the noble Baroness to reconsider this.

EDUCATION Policy pt 18

= LADY COX AMENDMENTS

SCH. 5 *Initial constitution*

2.—(1) Paragraphs 3 and 4 below provide for the initial constitution of a corporation and are subject to paragraph 6 below.

(2) References below in this Schedule, in relation to a corporation, to a variable category of members are references to any category of members in relation to which the number applicable in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 4 below is subject to variation.

3.—(1) A corporation shall consist of—

(a) not less than ~~twelve~~ 8 and not more than ~~twenty-four~~ 16 members appointed in accordance with the following provisions of this Schedule; and

(b) the person who is for the time being the principal of the institution, unless he chooses not to be a member.

(2) Of the appointed members—

(a) up to ~~thirteen~~ 12 (referred to below in this Schedule as the independent members) shall be persons appearing to the appointing authority to have experience of, and to have shown capacity in, industrial, commercial or employment matters or the practice of any profession;

managerial

(b) ~~not less than four and not more than eight (referred to below in this Schedule as the initial nominee members) shall be persons nominated in accordance with this Schedule otherwise than by other members of the corporation;~~

(c) at least one and not more than four (referred to below in this Schedule as the additional ~~nominee~~ members) shall be persons nominated in accordance with this Schedule by the members of the corporation ~~who are either independent members or initial nominee members~~ and the principal of the institution (if he is a member).

(3) The members of the corporation for the time being shall be known as the board of governors of the institution.

~~4.—(1) The initial nominee members of a corporation shall consist of—~~

(a) ~~at least one and not more than three local authority nominees;~~

(b) ~~one teacher nominee;~~

(c) ~~one general staff nominee; and~~

(d) ~~one student nominee;~~

~~and may include up to two academic nominees.~~

~~(2) In this Schedule—~~

~~"local authority nominee" means a person, other than a person employed at the institution (whether or not as a teacher) or a student at the institution, nominated by a local authority specified in relation to the corporation in an order made by the Secretary of State;~~

~~"teacher nominee" means a teacher at the institution nominated by the teachers at the institution;~~

~~"general staff nominee" means a person employed at the institution otherwise than as a teacher and nominated by the persons so employed;~~

~~"student nominee" means a student at the institution nominated by the students at the institution; and~~

~~"academic nominee" means a teacher at the institution nominated by the academic board.~~

(3) Of the additional ~~nominee~~ members of a corporation—

(a) the one required by paragraph 3(2)(c) above shall be a person who has experience in education; and

(b) the three others permitted by paragraph 3(2)(c) are—

(i) one person who has such experience; and

(ii) two persons who need not have such experience.

(4) In the case of any corporation, a person who is—

(a) employed at the institution (whether or not as a teacher);

(b) a student at the institution; or

(c) an elected member of any local authority;

is not eligible for appointment as an independent member or as an additional nominee member of the corporation.

(5) For the purposes of this paragraph, a person who is not for the time being enrolled as a student at the institution shall be treated as such a student during any period when he has been granted leave of absence from the institution for the purposes of study or travel or for carrying out the duties of any office held by him in the student union at the institution.

(6) It shall be for the appointing authority to determine any question as to whether any person is qualified in accordance with the preceding provisions of this paragraph for appointment as a member of a corporation of any description or category.

(7) Before making an order specifying local authorities in relation to any corporation for the purposes of sub-paragraph (1)(a) above, the Secretary of State shall consult such associations of local authorities as appear to him to be concerned.

Initial appointments

5.—(1) The Secretary of State is the appointing authority for the purposes of this Schedule in relation to the appointment of the first members of a corporation.

(2) In determining the number of members to appoint within each variable category, he shall secure that at least half of all the members of the corporation as first constituted are independent members.

Determination of membership numbers

6.—(1) Following the appointment by the Secretary of State of the first members of a corporation, the corporation shall make a determination with respect to their membership numbers under this paragraph.

(2) Such a determination shall fix the number of members of each variable category of which the corporation are to consist, subject to the limits applicable in relation to that category under paragraphs 3 and 4 above.

(3) In making a determination under this paragraph, the corporation shall secure that at least half of all the members of the corporation, when constituted in accordance with the determination, will be independent members.

(4) A determination under this paragraph shall not have effect so as to terminate the appointment of any person who is a member of the corporation at the time when it takes effect.

(5) A determination under this paragraph may be varied by a subsequent determination under this paragraph.

Subsequent appointments

7.—(1) Appointments of members of a corporation at any time after the appointment by the Secretary of State of the first members shall be subject to this paragraph.

SCH. 5

(2) No such appointment may be made before the first determination of the corporation under paragraph 6 above takes effect.

(3) The current independent members of the corporation are the appointing authority for the purposes of this Schedule in relation to the appointment of any independent member of the corporation.

~~(4) The corporation are the appointing authority for those purposes in relation to the appointment of any member of the corporation other than an independent member.~~

General provisions with respect to qualifications of members and tenure of office

8.—(1) A member of a corporation shall hold and vacate office in accordance with the terms of his appointment and shall, on ceasing to be a member, be eligible for re-appointment.

(2) A member of a corporation may at any time by notice in writing to the corporation resign his office.

~~(3) Where a member of a corporation appointed as a teacher nominee, an academic nominee, a general staff nominee or a student nominee ceases before the end of his term of office to be qualified in accordance with paragraph 4 above for appointment as a nominee of the description in question his office shall thereupon become vacant.~~

9.—(1) A person is not qualified for appointment as a member of a corporation at any time when he is under the age of eighteen or over the age of seventy.

(2) It shall be for the appointing authority in relation to the appointment in question to determine any question arising under sub-paragraph (1) above with respect to a person's qualification for appointment as a member of the corporation.

10. If at any time a corporation are satisfied that any member of the corporation—

(a) has been absent from meetings of the corporation for a period longer than twelve consecutive months without the permission of the corporation; or

(b) is incapacitated by physical or mental illness; or

(c) is otherwise unable or unfit to discharge the functions of a member;

the corporation may by notice in writing to that member remove him from office; and thereupon the office shall become vacant.

Allowances to members

11. A corporation shall have power to pay to the members of the corporation such travelling, subsistence or other allowances as the corporation may determine.

Election of chairman

12.—(1) The members of a corporation shall elect a chairman from among their number.

(2) The chairman shall hold office for such period as the corporation may determine.

(3) A member of a corporation who is employed at the institution or a student at the institution is not eligible for election as chairman of the corporation.

Committees

13.—(1) A corporation may establish a committee for any purpose.

File

DAS

cc: DES
AM

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

10 May 1988

Dear Michael,

Thank you for your letter of 13 April, signed also by Caroline Cox, Jim Pawsey and Anthony Coombs.

I was glad to see that, in the event, Caroline felt able to withdraw her amendment, subject to the Bishop of London bringing forward an alternative form of words at the Report stage of the Bill. There was clearly a great deal of support from all sides of the House of Lords for the spirit of her amendment, as well as anxiety about what is happening in some schools at present. I hope that the Bishop is able to come forward with an amendment on which we are all able to agree.

I am copying this letter to Caroline Cox, Jim Pawsey and Anthony Coombs.

Yours ever

Margaret

The Rt. Hon. Michael Alison, M.P.

DES

cc BG

ELIZABETH HOUSE
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LONDON SE1 7PH
01-934 9000

NBRM
ARCG B/F 1 week.
19/5

Paul Gray Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA

10 May 1988

Dear Paul

MANAGEMENT OF POLYTECHNICS

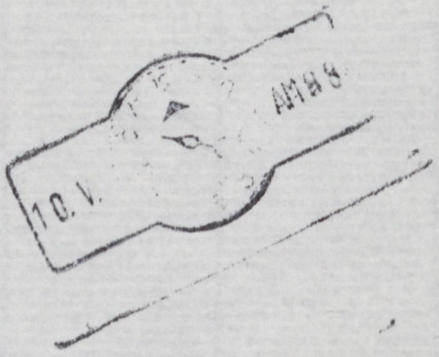
My Secretary of State has seen your letter of 5 May recording the Prime Minister's request for his views on the powers of polytechnic directors. Officials here are meeting the Committee of Directors of Polytechnics during the next few days to discuss this question which arises mainly in the context of Articles of Government. We shall be able to let you have a substantive reply to your letter shortly after that.

Yours,

Tom.

T B JEFFERY
Private Secretary

EDUCATION: Bldg Pt 18



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ELIZABETH HOUSE
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01-934 9000

N L Wicks Esq
Principal Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
SW1A 0AA

9 MAY 1988

Dear Nigel

CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Thank you for your letter of 29 April about Lady Cox's amendment and related correspondence.

As you will know, in the event Lady Cox agreed to withdraw the amendment, subject to the Bishop of London coming forward with an alternative form of words at ReportStage. The Prime Minister has still of course to reply to the letter of 13 April signed by Mr Alison, Baroness Cox, Mr Pawsey and Mr Coombs. I attach a suggested reply letter.

Yours sincerely

Tom Jeffery

T B JEFFERY
Private Secretary

Michael Alison Esq MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Thank you for your letter of 13 April, signed also by Caroline Cox, Jim Pawsey and Anthony Coombs.

I was glad to see that, in the event, Caroline felt able to withdraw her amendment, subject to the Bishop of London bringing forward an alternative form of words at the Report stage of the Bill. There was clearly a great deal of support from all sides of the House of Lords for the spirit of her amendment, as well anxiety about what is happening in some schools at present. I hope that the Bishop is able to come forward with an amendment on which we are all able to agree.

I am copying this letter to Caroline Cox, Jim Pawsey and Anthony Coombs.

EDUCATION: Policy A18

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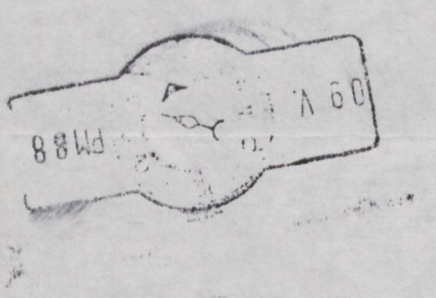

CONFIDENTIAL

Chase BR for comments.

CC BG

PRIME MINISTER

ADMISSION OF PUPILS TO MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

PM letter at flag.

1. You asked in response to my minute of 8 April whether it might yet be possible to implement the more open enrolment provisions of the Education Reform Bill in full by September 1989.

2. I share your objective of satisfying parental expectations as soon as possible. In many, perhaps the majority, of cases, the legislation will bite next year. But there will be a number of contentious and difficult individual cases which will require very careful handling if I am to avoid the threat of judicial review. That is why I am suggesting that September 1990 should be the realistic cut-off point for schools' present freedom to set admissions limits below capacity.

3. I see few problems with achieving our objectives in 1989 where there is local pressure to raise the admissions limit of a school above its standard number. If the most recent level of admissions was higher than the school's original standard number, that admissions figure will automatically become the new standard number under the provisions of the Bill. If the LEA and school governors agree that the admissions limit should be set at a figure above the standard number, they can do this at once, without reference to me. If they cannot agree on a higher number, the matter can be referred to me for determination, with supporting evidence about the physical capacity of the school, using a questionnaire provided by my Department. If governors and LEAs hesitate to make use of this procedure, I am confident that dissatisfied parents will quickly intervene.

4. Agreement on revised admissions limits in time for September 1989 should also be feasible in many cases where the LEA or governors argue that their standard number needs to be reduced to reflect true physical capacity. Some LEAs will have only a few secondary schools where the standard number is no longer appropriate and will be able to get their applications to me by the end of 1988, for speedy resolution. But we have deliberately created a

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complex statutory procedure to be followed in order to discourage any but the most genuine of cases. The proposal for a reduced standard number must be published, and a two-month period allowed for local people to object. Where the proposal is published by the LEA, I am required to consider the authority's observations on the objections, as well as the objections themselves. In some cases there will be no objection to reducing the standard number but disagreement on what the new admissions limit should be. If an LEA tries to settle some of these differences before publishing proposals, this may mean that they are not ready to publish until well into 1989.

5. The attached chart convinces me that I could not expect to settle every application for a reduced standard number in time for September 1989 implementation. Out of a total of just over 4,000 county and voluntary secondary schools in England, it seems I might expect to receive some 1,000 applications for a lower standard number. A large proportion of these applications could come from a fairly small number of LEAs which will have to review secondary admissions limits with school governing bodies throughout their area, perhaps because in the past they have responded to our encouragement to remove temporary classrooms and other surplus accommodation. At the same time we are requiring LEAs, under an amendment put down for Committee in the Lords, to reach agreement with voluntary aided school governors on arrangements necessary to preserve the denominational character of a school. If these LEAs could not get their applications to the Department until early next year we would not be able to cut any corners in the interests of rapid decisions. Failure to give applications full and proper consideration would inevitably increase the chances of a successful challenge by way of judicial review.

6. In these circumstances the likelihood is that many LEAs will not be able to establish revised standard numbers to govern admissions limits for September 1989 by the time that they are due to allocate places to pupils. Yet they cannot delay the allocation process beyond April because we require them to allow time for parents to appeal against the allocation decisions. If we insisted on September 1989 implementation, appeals hearings would take place amidst continuing uncertainty, with a large number of pupils having to wait through the summer until they knew which school they were to attend. It could be argued that I was making it impossible for the local authority or governors concerned to fulfil their statutory duties. These difficulties

could be avoided if I had the flexibility to accept in individual cases that it would be in the best interests of the pupils and their parents to concentrate on getting the right admissions figure established for 1990, whilst leaving the allocation process for 1989 to proceed undisturbed.

7. I shall not let LEAs drag their feet. I intend shortly to consult on a draft Circular to be issued immediately after Royal Assent which will encourage early action. But if the procedures we have prescribed are to be properly followed, and if legal challenges to my decisions are to be avoided, I do not think we can expect to have completed the process for all secondary schools by September 1989. I must also bear in mind that I do not want to divert every ounce of LEA and governor effort into establishing appropriate standard numbers, when they should also be using the months following Royal Assent to implement even more fundamental reforms in the Bill. September 1989 is also our target date for the submission of fully worked out plans of financial delegation and for the introduction of attainment targets and programmes of study for the core subjects in the national curriculum. Nor do I want to divert parents and governors from devoting early thought to the possibility of grant-maintained status for their schools since, as you know, we want to see the first of such schools operating in their new status from September 1989.

9. This is a complicated administrative matter. The course I propose should lead to most schools having new standard numbers by September 1989, but I fear not all. I would aim to get some of the less controversial cases settled in good time for the 1989 intakes.

10. I hope that with this additional explanation you will feel able to agree to the course of action I am proposing.

11. I am sending copies of this minute to the Secretary of State for Wales and the other members of E(EP) and to Sir Robin Butler.

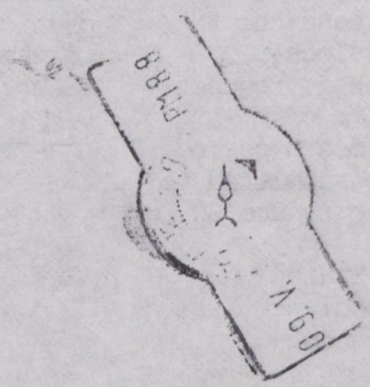
KB

Department of Education and Science 9 May 1988

Date	Follow-up action to legislation	LEA/Governors' Admissions Timetable
May 1988	Draft circular of guidance on admissions and more open enrolment issues for consultation.	
July 1988	Royal Assent	
August/Sept 1988	Circular issues in final form, with covering letter to CEOs setting out the timetable and arrangements for submitting and determining requests for revised Standard Numbers (SNs). Commencement Order and publication regulations made. LEAs and governors consider what is required in light of advice.	LEA/governors consult each other over arrangements for admissions in Sept 1989. Governors of aided schools may ask LEAs to agree admissions arrangements to preserve the denominational or other ethos of their schools.
Sept 1988	(i) LEAs and governors consult each other over physical capacity of secondary schools and the possible need to apply for revised SNs. (ii) Body not responsible for admissions may propose increase in admissions limit at a particular school, above the SN.	LEAs and governors start to issue guidance to parents for admissions in September 1989, with if necessary, provisional details of admissions limits.
Oct 1988	(i) First proposals to reduce the SNs of particular schools unlikely to be published before now. Two month statutory period allowed for objections. Some LEAs with a large number of proposals will not be ready to publish until about December. (ii) Disagreements over admission arrangements at aided schools begin to be referred to the Secretary of State (but may not be referred until much later).	
Nov 1988	Admissions authority must decide whether to agree or reject any proposals from the non-admissions authority to increase the admissions limit for a school.	

Dec 1988	(i) Non-admissions authority may apply to the Secretary of State for an order to increase the SN of a school if admissions authority rejected their request. (ii) Expiry of two-month period for objections to be submitted to earliest proposals to reduce SN. (iii) Secretary of State determines aided school admissions disagreements.	Deadline for parents to express preferences for particular schools (may be early spring in some LEAs).
Jan 1989-onwards	LEAs submit objections to their SN reduction proposals to Secretary of State, together with comments and seek a ruling on their applications. LEAs with large numbers of applications may not be ready to submit until March/April. Local MPs may lead deputations of objectors to proposals to put their case to Ministers.	About 20 LEAs with selective schools administer selection tests to pupils.
Feb - May 1989	Applications to vary SNs considered as they come in and decisions announced. Earliest decisions will be on applications to increase SNs, and on small-scale or non-contentious applications to reduce SNs. Contentious applications may require surveys of the capacity of individual schools.	
March-May 1989		LEAs/governors allocate places and inform parents of their decisions. Decisions will depend on the number of places to be offered at each school. Parents told of their right to appeal if their preference is not met, and given time to prepare their case.
June-July 1989	Decisions should be reached on most large-scale and/or contentious proposals, provided the proposals were submitted by April.	Appeals hearings held. Parents notified of outcome.

Education : Policy Pr 18



10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER

Michael Alison's letter requesting a free vote in the Lords on Christian Religious Education.

You decided not to reply to this letter before the debate last week on Lady Cox's amendment to the Education Reform Bill because it was unclear at that stage whether Lady Cox would withdraw her amendment.

In the event, Lady Cox agreed to withdraw the amendment, subject to the Bishop of London coming forward with an alternative form of words at Report stage. I suggest that you now reply to Mr. Alison in the terms of the draft attached.

N.L.W.

N. L. WICKS

9 May 1988

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file
bc BG.

PRIME MINISTER

MEETING OF E(EP): 12 MAY

Next Thursday's meeting will be considering the attached paper on ILEA which has just been circulated. We will let you have briefing before the meeting, but you may like to take a first glance at the paper over the weekend. The main points it addresses are:

(i) Following the discussion at an earlier meeting, whether there should be a specific severance scheme for teachers in inner London. Mr Baker concludes against this, but points to a fall-back under which severances could be implemented and funded by a specific grant.

(ii) How to ease the passage of the Education Bill through the Lords, following the Bishop of London's amendment which would require an independent review of the organisation of education in inner London before ILEA abolition could take place. Mr Baker proposes announcing proposals, which would have a modest expenditure cost, in four main areas, with the aim of reducing support for the Bishop's amendment.

RACG.

PAUL GRAY
6 May 1988

DS2AGX

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10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

5 May 1988

From the Private Secretary

MANAGEMENT OF POLYTECHNICS

The Prime Minister understands that a number of polytechnic directors have expressed unhappiness with Schedule 5 of the present Education Bill and the present draft of Instruments and Articles of governance, on the grounds that these will make it difficult for effective management of polytechnics and colleges. She attaches importance to the directors of these institutions being able to carry out their management functions effectively, and would be grateful for your Secretary of State's views on how directors can best be equipped with the powers they need for the successful implementation of the Education Bill.

Paul Gray

Tom Jeffery, Esq.,
Department of Education and Science.

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PRIME MINISTER

POLYTECHNICS

Sir Kenneth Green, Director of Manchester Polytechnic, came to see me this morning. (He was the person who first alerted us to the need to separate Polytechnics from local authorities.)

He is concerned about:

(a) the implications of Schedule 5 of the present Education Bill; and

(b) the articles and instruments of governance of Polytechnics and Colleges which the DES are at present drawing up.

I enclose a letter (Annex A) and paper (Annex B) which he has sent to Kenneth Baker as well as a sample of letters (Annex C) written to him by other Polytechnic directors on this issue. About three quarters of Polytechnic directors are unhappy with Schedule 5 and an overwhelming majority with the present DES draft of Instruments and Articles of governance. Directors such as Ricketts, Durrens, Law, Booth, Barker etc are strongly in favour of Green's position.

The major reason for their concern is that a major purpose of the Bill, which Robert Jackson has clearly stated, is that the Principal or Director is to be the Chief Executive of the institution. Yet their frustration is that Schedule 5 and the draft Instruments and Articles are a return to the old system in which staff and student interests have representatives on the Board which clearly and restrict the power of this Chief Executive accordingly. Communication

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within the institution could be achieved in many ways without putting representatives on the Board.

They therefore recommend that two changes need to be made:

(a) the Bill should be changed to exclude staff and student interests on the main Board - they would be much better suited to being members of the Academic Board or other ordinary bodies;

(b) DES Ministers should redraft the Instrument and Articles of governance in line with the requirements of the Directors.

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Sir Kenneth Green makes a convincing argument that the present Schedule 5 and the Articles and Instruments are a fudge: and that if we wish the Polytechnics to be run in a businesslike way we should prepare a "managerial model" for the Instruments and Articles.

2. You might express your concern to the Secretary of State suggesting that the least we can do is to equip the Polytechnic Directors with the powers they need for the successful implementation of the Bill.

BRIAN GRIFFITHS
4 May 1988

RCUACA

cc BG

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From The Secretary of State for Wales

The Rt Hon Peter Walker MBE MP

3 May 1988

CT/6061/88

MBM
RRCG
3/5

EDUCATION REFORM BILL - ADVANCED FURTHER EDUCATION POOLING

Thank you for copying to me your letter of 19 April to Nicholas Ridley. I have noted your proposals.

While our regulations governing the calculation of contributions to the AFE pools in Wales are in this respect identical to yours, we do not find ourselves in quite the same position on this particular issue.

Upon investigation, some inconsistency in the counting of part-time students on courses of less than 19 weeks duration has been found but these are errors of de minimis proportions and can be corrected. We do not propose any departure from the existing formula.

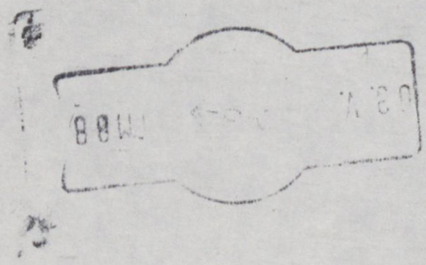
You will wish to note therefore that your proposed provision for validating the 1987/88 contribution calculations should be restricted in coverage to England only.

/ Copies of this letter go to Members of E(EP).

The Rt Hon Kenneth Baker MP
Secretary of State for Education and Science

EDUCATION Pt 18

Pol Ad/ OJ EDUCATION



Michael Alison MP
10/5

PRIME MINISTER

CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

You were unwilling to sign the letter below to Michael Alison since Lady Cox implied to you yesterday evening that there would be a vote on her amendment at Lords Committee Stage. This conflicted with the draft letter to Mr Alison.

I asked the Lord Privy Seal today whether he could discover from Lady Cox her intentions regarding the amendment. Lord Belstead has so far not been able to reach her; but will try to do so over the weekend. If Lord Belstead can confirm the amendment will not be pushed to a vote, the way will be open for you to sign the letter. This needs to be despatched on Tuesday before the debate in the Lords. I will be in touch with the Garden Room girl over the weekend if there is news from Lord Belstead.

N.L.W.

N.L. Wicks

29 April 1988

MS

Garden Rooms,

This has been overtaken by events. New draft will be here by Tuesday 10 May.

N.L.W.

29.4.5

MJ2CHW

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

3 May 1988

Thank you for your letter of 13 April about the Christian content of religious education. You will by now be aware that Caroline Cox has had discussions with the Bishop of London on this matter. As a result, I understand that Caroline has now tabled amendments for discussion at Lords' Committee stage, on the understanding that these will be withdrawn following discussion, and that the Bishop of London will introduce his own amendments at Report stage. The question of a free vote does not therefore arise.

We do seem to be making progress on all of this and I look forward to seeing the outcome when it is discussed in the Lords.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the co-signatories of your letter, Caroline Cox, Jim Pawsey and Anthony Coombs.

The Rt. Hon. Michael Alison, M.P.

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file
CCBG

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Principal Private Secretary

29 April 1988

Dear Tom,

CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute of 28 April about the prospective discussion in the Lords of Religious Education.

The Prime Minister is somewhat puzzled by your Secretary of State's report, and in particular the suggestion that the relevant clause will not be pushed to a vote. When she saw Lady Cox last evening at a CPS reception, Lady Cox told her that the question of a free vote was not settled, which the Prime Minister believes indicates, by implication, that there would be a vote. In these circumstances the Prime Minister is not prepared to write to Mr. Alison in the terms of the draft attached to your letter of yesterday, (though she has signed the letters to Mr. Pawsey, Mr. Hastings and the Reverend Higton.)

Before writing to Mr. Alison I think that the Prime Minister will need greater assurance that Lady Cox will indeed not press the amendment to a vote. Could I suggest that the Lord Privy Seal might speak to her today to establish the position so that a report can be submitted to the Prime Minister tonight with a view to despatching the letter to Mr. Alison early on Tuesday morning.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Nick Gibbons in the Lord Privy Seal's Office and to the Chief Whip in the Lords.

Yours sincerely,
Nigel Wicks

N.L. WICKS

Tom Jeffery, Esq.,
Department of Education and Science.

CONFIDENTIAL

CCBG

I am puzzled. I saw Caroline Cox at C.P.S. this evening. She said the question of a free vote was still not settled - indicating by implication that there would be a vote. Not Prime Minister to see. Any views?

N.C.W. 27.4

PRIME MINISTER

CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

You asked me to consider further the issues on Christian Religious Education which we discussed with a deputation led by Caroline Cox on 12 April.

I have since then had discussions with the leaders of the Churches. We have, I believe, made significant progress. The Bishop of London has now talked to Caroline Cox and Rodney Elton. As a result, they have undertaken to introduce their amendment as a probing amendment which, after discussion, they will withdraw without a vote on the understanding that the Church of England will be ready to introduce their own amendment at Report Stage. The Bishop of London is now actively considering possible forms of words which will in his view meet the widespread concerns which have been expressed in the Lords during Second Reading about the nature of religious education in our schools. In the Committee Stage on Tuesday, 3 May, he will also stress his view that the strengthening of the religious education provisions in the Bill already agreed with the Churches will provide a powerful reinforcement of the Church's position within the local arrangements. He is ready to stress the commitment of the Church of England to take the lead nationally and locally to secure effective implementation of agreed syllabuses which respect the Christian traditions of our country. In this, he will have the support of the Methodists and the Roman Catholic Church.

There is thus no immediate need for us to reach decisions on the amendment now tabled by Rodney Elton. I shall continue my discussions with the Bishop of London with the aim of ensuring that when this matter returns at Report Stage, the Government can actively support the lead which he offers on behalf of the

Established Church of England. On that basis I believe that we shall have the majority of the House of Lords with us, a view which the Lord Privy Seal shares.

I am copying this minute to the Lord Privy Seal and the Chief Whip in the Lords.

K.B.

KB 28 April 1988

Department of Education and Science

PRIME MINISTER

CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

There is a note in your Box from Mr. Baker about next week's debate in the Lords regarding religious education.

There are various letters outstanding from MPs and others regarding this matter. If you are content with the approach proposed by Mr. Baker, I suggest that you write to Mr. James Pawsey and Mr. Michael Alison in the terms of the draft letters attached. Draft replies are also attached to the letters which you have received from Mr. Michael Hastings of the Evangelical Alliance and from the Rev. Tony Higton in case you wish to write to them personally, but I think it would be better if the replies to their letters came from a Private Secretary.

We need to despatch the letters before next Tuesday's debate.

N.L.W.

N. L. WICKS

28 April 1988

CONFIDENTIAL cc File 2

PRIME MINISTER **28 April 1988**

Scottish Schools: Meeting with Strathclyde parents

On my visit to Scotland last week I met with nine parent leaders from three schools - Paisley Grammar, Notre-Dame and Our Lady and St Francis - all of which which are currently threatened with closure, and two of which would be saved by the new regulations the government has introduced recently.

While these parents cannot necessarily be taken as representative of other parents in either the Strathclyde region or Scotland as a whole, they expressed their views very forcibly and said that in their opinion there were many more parents who thought like them.

(a) While they were generally happy with Scottish primary schools, they were less happy with the overall performance of secondary schools largely because of mixed ability teaching and the fact that discipline was not as strong as it should be.

(b) They were committed to comprehensive schools and did not wish to see a return either to selection or charging.

(c) They were hostile to the Labour controlled Strathclyde Regional Council (even though I found out later that one parent was a ward Chairman of the local Labour party, and the husband of another parent present was a Labour member of the Regional Council) primarily because in their judgement it was strongly opposed to their exercise of parental choice ("parents charter") granted under the 1980 Act.

CONFIDENTIAL

(d) Although it had never been officially announced by Strathclyde Regional Council, they felt that school closures were targeted against single-sex schools and good academic schools (it also did not go unnoticed that the locations of the three schools present at the meeting were prime sites for redevelopment).

(e) In terms of government education policy in Scotland they were very clear that saving their schools from closure was not sufficient: they all feared subsequent discrimination from Strathclyde, whose behaviour they described on more than one occasion as vindictive.

(f) They all expressed interest in the possibility of the government introducing opting-out legislation as this would offer protection against Strathclyde: they emphasised however that one could not expect parental responses on this issue until the government had told people what precisely opting-out involved.

(g) They claimed to speak for parents in other schools in wanting the government, **urgently**, to inform them of what opting-out in practice would mean in Scotland: how otherwise could parents be expected to have views?

(h) They also stated that if the government delays making some announcement on opting-out, Strathclyde Regional Council (who have a very effective PR department) will conduct a concerted campaign against opting-out: in particular they will associate it with selection and fee-paying, make threatening noises about staff mobility between schools, etc and so damage what could prove a useful idea.

(i) They claimed they did not need years of experience on school boards in order to develop expertise to run schools: while this was true of some schools, it was certainly not true of others - and such schools deserved greater opportunity than they were at present being given.

(j) Although all of the parental groups represented had responded to the government during the consultation process, their experience in Strathclyde over the past months was such that their views would now be significantly different from then.

Conclusions

1. Parents of the schools represented, and they claimed of other schools in the region, are delighted at the government's recent initiative in issuing new regulations. I had an overwhelming impression however that unless we do more soon, they will find themselves under considerable threat, and inevitably question our genuine concern to do something.

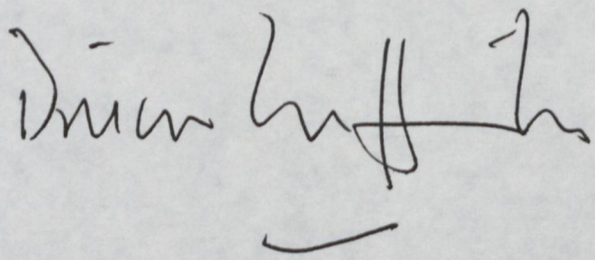
2. Even if the government does not introduce an amendment, in this Bill, they all stated that the time was now right for the government to take some further initiative.

Recommendations

1. It would be welcomed if you said something on education in your Perth speech.

CONFIDENTIAL

2. Sometime ago you asked Malcolm Rifkind to prepare a paper on opting-out: the result of your last meeting with him however is that he will consult with the RC Church in Scotland and then report: at that stage it would be very useful if you could ask again for such a paper to be prepared for colleagues, if only to get the Scottish Office doing serious work on the issue.



BRIAN GRIFFITHS

File

DSG (38)

cc: BG

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

28 April 1988

NATIONAL CURRICULUM ISSUES

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute of 26 April. She is content with the proposed terms of reference and supplementary guidance for the English and the Design and Technology Working Groups, subject to the detailed drafting comments we discussed on the telephone. The Prime Minister is also content with the proposed membership of the two Groups, subject to the points we discussed, and for announcements to be made as proposed on 29 April.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of E(EP) and to Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

Paul Gray

Tom Jeffery, Esq.,
Department of Education and Science.

DSG/

JD3BJA

PRIME MINISTER

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: WORKING GROUPS FOR ENGLISH AND TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Baker's minute of 26 April attached seeks your agreement to:

Annex A: The terms of reference and supplementary guidance for the English Working Group.
Annex B: The arranged PQ about publication of the Kingman Report.
Annex C: The proposed members of the English Working Group.
Annex D: The terms of reference and supplementary guidance for the Design and Technology Working Group.
Annex E: The membership of that group.

I also attach some detailed comments by Brian Griffiths on the terms of reference and supplementary guidance for the English Group. I have transcribed these comments on to Annex A of Mr. Baker's note. I have also marked on Annex D Brian's one comment on the proposed supplementary guidance to the Technology Group.

Brian has no comments on the other proposals, including the membership of the English and Technology Groups. These proposals do of course follow your recent meeting with Mr. Baker and Mrs. Rumbold. The DES will be putting forward next week the proposed membership of the NCC and SEAC, and Brian is in touch with them about that.

Content with the proposed membership of the two groups (Annexes C and E), and with the proposed remits for the two groups subject to Brian's comments?

PRCG.

PG

27 April, 1988.

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

27 April 1988

National Curriculum : English

Working Group on English : Terms of Reference

Suggested changes

Para 2 : omit first sentence as this begs the question of who decides current good practices and achievement. If it were to be HMI it could be a disaster.

Para 4 : omit second sentence as it is expanded in para 7.

Para 5 : omit - it seems pure mumbo-jumbo.

Para 8 : this starts by giving a false impression of the balance between internal and external assessment: "much" should be changed to "some" and in line 3 "in addition" should be replaced by "as a vital part of assessment".

Para 9 : the Committee is asked to take as its starting point the GCSE National Criteria in the next sentence however it says these are inadequate.

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GCSE in English has come in for substantial criticism. It embodies much of what we are trying to change. Para 9 is best be deleted.

Para 14 : the expansion after "relevance" is unnecessary and dangerous and it could well detract from the rigour we wish to introduce.

Para 19 : lines 12-14 : are the links between English literature and drama etc "particularly important"? I doubt if we need to give that much emphasis.

Para 21 : this should be omitted - much of what is mentioned in it is precisely what we are trying to change : see Marenbon's monograph.

Supplementary Guidance to the Chairman of the Design and Technology Working Group

Para 11 : do we need to be so precise with respect to the allocation of time: in particular do all children in year 4 and 5 need to take 2 timetable periods? This should be more flexible.

Brian Griffiths

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

CC BG

MBPM
RRG
28/4

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-212 3434
My ref:
Your ref.

The Rt Hon Kenneth Baker MP
Secretary of State
Department of Education and Science
Elizabeth House
York Road
LONDON
SE1 7PH

27 April 1988

Dear Kenneth

EDUCATION REFORM BILL: ADVANCED FURTHER EDUCATION POOLING

Thank you for your letter of 19 April. I agree that it would be prudent to include a validation provision in the Education Reform Bill in respect of AFE contributions for 1987/88. This would also protect us against the remote possibility that RSG payments, which take account of AFE contributions, might be challenged.

I am copying this letter to members of E(EP) and Sir Robin Butler.

Yours ever
Nicholas

NICHOLAS RIDLEY

100% RECYCLED PAPER

EDUCATION POL PT18 MAR 68

PRIME MINISTER

1. NATIONAL CURRICULUM: WORKING GROUPS FOR ENGLISH AND FOR DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

2. PUBLICATION OF REPORT OF THE KINGMAN COMMITTEE ON ENGLISH

attached

1. We agreed at E(EP) on 14 April that I should circulate my proposals for memberships of the English and the Design and Technology Working Groups, revised terms of reference and supplementary guidance for the two Groups, and a draft of the statement I propose to make on publication of the Kingman Committee's Report.

2. At Annex A are the terms of reference and supplementary guidance for the English Working Group. These have been revised to reflect the Sub-Committee's view that teaching about the grammatical structure of the English language should be included in the National Curriculum, that reading should be encouraged and that the Working Group should specify the types of literature pupils should cover. The Sub-Committee's other points on guidelines and on allocations of time are also included and the terms of reference have been tightened up. Changed passages are sidelined. I have shown the terms of reference in confidence to Brian Cox, and he is well content with them.

3. At Annex B is the statement I propose to make about publication of the Kingman Committee's Report, as an arranged Parliamentary Answer. It reflects the Sub-Committee's advice that we should emphasise that the Report makes an interesting contribution to discussion about the teaching of the English Language, without welcoming all its recommendations.

4. At Annex C is a list of the membership which the Secretary of State for Wales and I propose to ask to serve, as discussed with you. As the Sub-Committee recommended, we have reduced the number of members and have picked people who can contribute on teaching about the structure of the language, the spoken word and literature. Angela Rumbold and I have spoken to all those on the list of members, and they have indicated that they are willing to serve.

5. At Annex D are the revised terms of reference and supplementary guidance for the Design and Technology Working Group; changed passages are sidelined. At Annex E is the membership for the Group; I have confirmed with Lady Parkes that she will chair the Group and the other members are also willing to serve.

6. Copies of this minute go to members of E(EP) and to Sir Robin Butler. I intend to announce on 29 April the establishment of these two Working Groups and the publication of the Kingman Committee's Report. I should therefore be grateful for any comments urgently.

KB

26 April 1988

Department of Education and Science

ANNEX A

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: WORKING GROUP ON ENGLISH

TERMS OF REFERENCE

PREAMBLE

1. The Education Reform Bill, currently before Parliament, proposes the establishment of a National Curriculum of core and other foundation subjects for pupils of compulsory school age in England and Wales. For most of these subjects, including English which is a core subject, the Government wishes to establish clear objectives - attainment targets - for the knowledge, skills and understanding which pupils of different abilities and maturities should be expected to have acquired at or near the key ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16; and, to promote them, programmes of study describing the content, skills and processes which need to be covered during each key stage of compulsory education. Taken together, the attainment targets and programmes of study will provide the basis for assessing pupils' performance - in relation both to expected attainment, and to the next steps needed for the pupils' development.

2. The Government wants attainment targets and programmes of study to reflect current good practice and achievement. Both the objectives (attainment targets) and means of achieving them (programmes of study) should leave scope for teachers to use their professional talents and skills to develop their own schemes of work, within a set framework which is known to all. It is the task of the working group to advise on that framework for English, which is a core subject. The framework should ensure, at the minimum, that all school leavers are competent in the use of English - written and spoken - whether or not it is their first language.

3. The Kingman Committee, established to advise the Secretary of State on what children should know about language, has made

recommendations for attainment targets for knowledge about language at the ages of 7, 11 and 16. The working group should build on these to recommend attainment targets covering the grammatical structure of the English language. But English comprises both language and literature, including poetry and drama. The working group's recommendations on learning about language and its use should draw upon the English literary heritage; should promote the reading of great literature and the knowledge and appreciation of literature; and should indicate the types of literature which all pupils should cover in the course of their studies.

THE TASK

4. The Government has made it clear that it expects most curricular time at primary level to be taken up by the core subjects of English, maths and science. But it is important that in the primary phases attainment and study in the core subjects in particular are looked at ~~as a whole~~ together as well as individually. The working groups on mathematics and science are well-advanced towards their final reports. The English working group is therefore asked to give immediate attention to recommendations on attainment targets for ages 7 and 11 and the associated programmes of study and to submit a report on these to the Secretary of State by 30 September 1988.

5. By the same date, the working group is asked to submit a progress letter to the Secretary of State on its provisional thinking about the knowledge, skills and understanding which pupils of different abilities and maturities should be expected to have attained and be able to demonstrate around the end of the academic year in which they reach the ages of 14 and 16.

6. By 30 April 1989 the working group is to submit a final report to the Secretary of State, setting out and justifying its

final recommendations on attainment targets for the key ages of 14 and 16 and the associated programmes of study.

APPROACH

7. The working group should consult informally with relevant interests and have regard to the work of the other subject working groups, in particular that on Welsh. Additionally it should take account of:

a. the broad framework proposed by the Task Group on Assessment and Testing for assessment and testing;

b. the need for attainment targets which reflect the fact that in the primary stage, particularly for 7 year olds, English will support learning in all other subjects, and will be developed by how those are taught;

c. the contribution which, more generally, English can make to learning about other subjects and the contributions which these subjects can make to learning about English, including the promotion of development of good written and spoken English in all subjects;

d. the recommendations of the Kingman Committee on attainment targets for children's explicit and implicit knowledge about language at ages 7, 11 and 16;

e. best practice and the results of relevant research and curriculum developments;

and the issues covered in the supplementary guidance to the Group's Chairman.

SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE TO CHAIRMAN OF ENGLISH WORKING GROUP

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: ENGLISH WORKING GROUP

This note offers more detailed guidance about your task than is contained within your terms of reference.

Attainment Targets

2. By "attainment targets" I have in mind clearly specified objectives for what pupils should know, understand and be able to do, which can be related to what might be expected of pupils of different abilities and maturities at or around the end of the academic year in which they reach the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16. It is essential that attainment targets provide specific enough objectives for pupils, teachers, parents and others to have a clear idea of what is expected and to provide a sound basis for assessment and testing. They should reflect current best practice and achievements.

Programmes of Study

3. I am expecting the programmes of study to provide a detailed description of the content, skills and processes which all pupils should be taught so that they can develop the knowledge and understanding they will need to progress through school and eventually to adult life and employment. This detailed description needs to be set within an outline or overall map of the English curriculum which takes account of what may be expected of pupils of different abilities. For English, which is a core subject, I expect close definition of the requirements. The programmes of study should certainly be detailed enough to ensure a proper balance between learning about the grammatical structure of the English language and about its use, and the study of English literature including poetry and drama. In particular they should ensure that pupils have proper exposure to the great works of our literary heritage and are able to draw upon such works in learning about language. They should also pay due regard to the importance of the spoken word, of good writing and of reading.

4. However, within the overall programme of study there must be space to accommodate the enterprise of teachers, offering them sufficient flexibility in the choice of content to adapt what they teach to the needs of the individual pupil, and scope for different teaching approaches.

5. I expect that the development of attainment targets and programmes of study will be an iterative process. In the case of knowledge about language you are able to draw on the Kingman Committee's recommendations both for attainment targets - which

B.G. connect [illegible] attempt to judge the issues [illegible]

need to be related to targets for other aspects of English - and for a model of language and its application, which is relevant to programmes of study. But before you are able to define the other attainment targets with the degree of specificity required, you will probably wish to stand back and consider objectives and the contribution of English to the overall school curriculum in more general terms. The precise way in which you arrive at your conclusions is for you to determine, but I would stress again the importance of specificity in the definition of attainment targets.

Differentiation

6. Attainment targets should allow scope for the very able, those of average ability, and the less able to show what they can do. In general I seek targets which may be attempted and assessed at a range of levels, as a child progresses and according to his or her ability. The targets should challenge each child to do the best that he or she can. The broad framework recommended in the Report of the Task Group on Assessment and Testing illustrates how this task may be tackled. I hope that you will give particular thought to the application of attainment targets to lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs.

Assessment and Examinations

7. Attainment targets will provide objectives against which pupils' progress and performance can be assessed and tested. The main purpose of such assessment will be to show what a pupil has learnt and mastered, so as to enable teachers and parents to ensure that he or she is making adequate progress and to inform decisions about the next steps.

8. At present I envisage that ~~much~~ some of the assessment at ages 7, 11 and 14 will be school-based. It will be done by teachers as an integral part of normal classroom work. But ~~in addition~~, there will be nationally prescribed tests done by all pupils to supplement the individual teachers' assessments. Teachers will administer and mark these, but their marking - and their assessments overall - will be externally moderated. I may offer you further guidance later in the light of consideration of TGAT's recommendations. However, in the meantime you should be prepared to offer advice in broad terms about assessment, having regard to the TGAT report, in relation to the attainment targets recommended, particularly what might appropriately be measured by nationally prescribed tests.

GCSE

9. In defining attainment targets and the programme of study for 16 year olds, I suggest that you take as your starting point the GCSE National Criteria. You should not regard yourself as bound by these, however: in particular, they may not be

sufficiently specific for your purposes as regards objectives and/or content. You will want to consider the results of the trial use in 1988 of common papers in GCSE English and advise on the most effective way to achieve differentiation between candidates. You also will want to take note of the SEC's recent work to establish a more objective approach to measuring attainment through the GCSE; the report of the English grade criteria working party may be a source of ideas, and the SEC's further development work with respect to individual GCSE English syllabuses should make a useful contribution to the group's deliberations.

10. The Government expects that all pupils will take GCSE examinations in English or equivalent examinations approved against GCSE criteria. It does not, therefore, anticipate the need for alternative assessment arrangements at age 16 in English. We will look, in due course, to the newly formed School Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC) to advise on whether, and if so how, the GCSE criteria need to be revised to reflect the national curriculum attainment targets and programmes of study for ages 14-16, and to approve syllabuses accordingly.

Special needs

11. The Government proposes that where a pupil has a statement of special needs under the 1981 Education Act, the statement should specify any national curriculum requirements which should not apply or should be modified for that individual pupil. In addition, orders may define circumstances in which the application of the national curriculum provisions to individual pupils might be modified or lifted for any foundation subject. For example, the modern languages orders might indicate that pupils with severe difficulties in English should be introduced to a foreign language later than or on a different basis from most children. I should be grateful if you would consider whether exceptions of this kind for categories of pupils can be justified in the case of English.

TVEI

12. The TVEI pilot projects are providing valuable experience in identifying the most effective ways in which the education of 14-18 year olds can be made more relevant to the demands of employment and adult life. From September 1987, authorities are progressively involved in extending the TVEI pilots into a national scheme. The objective will be to give young people aged 14-18 in all maintained schools and colleges access to a wider and richer curriculum based on the lessons emerging from the pilot TVEI projects. In drawing up their plans, LEAs are required to reflect the Government's policy for the school curriculum in England and Wales as summarised in the curricular criteria based on "Better Schools", and issued by the DES in July 1986.

13. Authorities will want to use TVEI to build on the framework offered by the national curriculum and to take forward its objectives. The Government intends that the legislation should leave full scope for schools to determine how teaching is organised and the teaching approaches used so that the curriculum is delivered in the best way suited to their pupils. This flexibility should enable schools to accommodate any special emphasis within their TVEI plans, while still meeting the requirements of the national curriculum. The group will wish to consider developments so far under TVEI so that they inform its deliberations.

General Principles

14. Generally in framing your recommendations, I expect you to consider the need for

- continuity and progression throughout the period of compulsory schooling and beyond

- breadth and balance

- relevance: the content and teaching of the various elements of the national curriculum should bring out their relevance to and links with pupils' own experience and background and their practical application and continuing value to adult and working life. This is of course especially true of core subjects such as English

- all elements of the curriculum to contribute to the development of general personal qualities and competences in young people which will be of value to them in adult and working life - for example, self-reliance and self-discipline, a spirit of enterprise, a sense of social responsibility, the ability to work harmoniously with others, an ability to apply knowledge and use it to solve practical real life problems.

15. It will also be important to bear in mind that the curriculum should provide equal opportunities for boys and girls. The group should also take account of the ethnic diversity of the school population and society at large, bearing in mind the cardinal point that English should be the first language and medium of instruction for all pupils in England.

Wales

16. You will need to bear in mind that your recommendations will relate to the whole of England and Wales and should allow enough flexibility for schools to give weight, where appropriate, to local circumstances. There will be arrangements in Wales for separate consideration of, and consultations about, the group's report. These will take account of any particular Welsh needs.

Ages and Stages; Time Allocations

17. You should assume that all pupils other than those with statements of special need under the Education Act 1981 which specify otherwise will study English throughout their compulsory schooling and take a GCSE examination in English or equivalent examination approved against relevant GCSE criteria.

18. In framing your recommendations, you should assume that on average 8 periods a week are available for English in the primary phase, 6 periods a week in years 1-3 of secondary school and 5 periods in years 4 and 5.

Links with other subjects

19. There are a number of important subjects, themes and skills which can be taught and developed through the foundation subjects. You are expected to consider the place of these aspects within the English curriculum and to cover them within your consideration of attainment targets and programmes of study. English will provide one appropriate context for the development of drama across the curriculum, for an introduction to the classical world through its literature, for developing information handling skills such as the use of libraries and reference books, and for media studies. Time for covering such aspects within English will need to be found within the overall time available for English as indicated above. The links between English literature and drama and the other expressive arts subjects are particularly important. The practical use of word processors in developing writing provides an introduction to information technology. You may have further suggestions for links with other subjects, and about the contributions which these subjects can make to learning English.

Implementation

20. The Government aims to make the Orders relating to attainment targets and programmes of study for English for the primary stages early in the first half of 1989, and for the secondary stages towards the end of 1989, following wide consultation through the proposed National Curriculum Council. On this timetable, schools may expect to begin implementing the primary Orders at the start of the academic year 1989-90 and the secondary Orders at the start of the academic year 1990-91.

Conclusion

21. As a starting point you will have the report of the Kingman Committee, HM Inspectorate's discussion paper "English from 5 to 16" and the responses to that paper, and the series of publications on language by the Assessment of Performance Unit. Additionally you may find it useful to take account of good practice in those LEAs that have developed effective and well-founded policies for English. I hope that you will draw on the collective wisdom and experience of the appropriate professional bodies.

ANNEX B

STATEMENT ON PUBLICATION OF KINGMAN AND SETTING UP THE WORKING GROUP

To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Science, if he has received the report of the Committee established to advise on what children should know about language; and if he will make a statement.

DRAFT REPLY

I am publishing today the report of the Committee chaired by Sir John Kingman. I asked the Committee to advise what, in general terms, children need to know about the English language, and in consequence what they should have been taught and be expected to understand on this score at ages 7, 11 and 16. I am grateful to the Committee for its hard work. It has produced an interesting report which will contribute to discussion about the teaching of the English language and about the importance of the grammatical structure of the language and of the correct use of the spoken word.

English is one of the core subjects in the National Curriculum as proposed in the Education Reform Bill now before Parliament. I am now appointing a working group on English to make recommendations for attainment targets and programmes of study for English as a whole. The working group's terms of reference are below. I am specifically asking the English working group to take account of the relevant recommendations of the Kingman Committee in its work on attainment targets and programmes of study.

The working group will be chaired by Professor Brian Cox, John Edward Taylor Professor of English Literature at Manchester University. Its membership will be : [to be added]. I expect the Group to begin work in early May.

I shall be considering the Kingman Committee's other detailed recommendations in due course in the light of public comment on its report and of the English working group's recommendations.

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TEMPORARILY RETAINED
J. Gray
12/3/2016

ANNEX C

ENGLISH WORKING GROUP: MEMBERS

CHAIRMAN

Professor Brian Cox: Age late 50s. John Edward Taylor Professor of English Literature, University of Manchester. Previously Professor of English Literature, University of Manchester and lecturer, University of Hull. President, National Council for Educational Standards, 1984. Publications mainly literary criticism. Member of Kingman Committee.

MEMBERS

Professor Michael Stubbs: Age 37. Professor of English and Media Studies, University of London Institute of Education. Distinguished career in the field of linguistics; much of research of relevance to schools (eg spelling).

Professor David Skilton: Head of English at merged institution of University College/UWIST, Cardiff. Previously at Lampeter College. Victorian specialist - has written extensively on nineteenth-century fiction. Has an interest in advancing the application of modern technology to study and research in English and in teaching English as a foreign language.

Mrs Diane Billups: Age late 30s/early 40s. Head of Broughton Junior School, South Humberside. Previously with West Riding. School. Exceptional in most areas, including language. Used much by LEA on in-service and curriculum development work.

Mr Brian Slough: Age 40s. Head of English, Kettering Boys' School. Previously worked in independent sector.

Mr Roger Samways: Secondary English adviser, Dorset LEA. Previously Head of English in Dorset comprehensive school.

Ms Linda Cookson: Senior Tutor, Central School of Speech and Drama. Previously English teacher and A level Chief Examiner.

Dr Charles Suckling: Age 67. FRS and FRCS. Non-executive director of Albright & Wilson, Chairman of his own company, ex-Chairman of ICI Paints Division, Ex-General manager of research, ICI; member of Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution. (Semi-retired). Served on Kingman Committee, where made very positive contribution, especially in chairing the Committee in Sir John Kingman's absences.

Mr Roald Dahl: Age 71. Writer. Publications: short stories, novels, autobiography, children's books, screen plays. Recreation: picking wild mushrooms.

ANNEX D

NATIONAL CURRICULUM DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY WORKING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

1. The Education Reform Bill currently before Parliament provides for the establishment of a National Curriculum of core and other foundation subjects for pupils of compulsory school age in England and Wales. For most subjects, including technology, the Government wishes to establish clear objectives - attainment targets - for the knowledge, skills, and understanding which pupils of different abilities and maturities should be expected to have acquired by the end of the academic year in which they reach the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16; and to promote them, programmes of study describing the content, skills and processes which need to be covered during each key stage of compulsory education. Taken together, the attainment targets and programmes of study will provide the basis for assessing a pupil's performance, in relation both to expected attainment and to the next steps needed for the pupil's development.

2. The Government wants attainment targets and programmes of study to reflect current good practice and achievement. Both the objectives (attainment targets) and means of achieving them (programmes of study) should leave scope for teachers to use their professional talents and skills to develop their own schemes of work, within a set framework which is known to all. It is the task of the Working Group on Design and Technology to advise on that framework for design and technology.

The Task

3. The science working group is already looking at attainment targets and programmes of study for primary technology. The

Design and Technology group should focus on the final two key stages, as defined in the Education Reform Bill - ie the secondary phase - building on the work of the science group for the primary phase.

4. The Working Group is asked to submit an interim report to the Secretaries of State by 31 October 1988 outlining:

i) the contribution which design and technology should make to the overall school curriculum and how that will inform the Group's thinking about attainment targets and programmes of study;

ii) its provisional thinking about the knowledge, skills and understanding which pupils of different abilities and maturities should be expected to have attained and be able to demonstrate at key ages;

iii) its thinking about the programmes of study which would be consistent with the attainment targets provisionally identified.

5. By 30 April 1989 the working group is to submit a final report to the Secretaries of State setting out and justifying its final recommendations on attainment targets and the programmes of study for design and technology. In addition, the Working Group should recommend attainment targets and programmes of study for design and for information technology in the first two key stages, for primary pupils, to supplement the recommendations of the science working group.

Approach

6. In approaching its task the working group is to view technology as that area of the curriculum in which pupils design and make useful objects or systems, thus developing their ability

to solve practical problems. The working group should assume that pupils will draw on knowledge and skills from a range of subject areas, but always involving science or mathematics. They should be taught the principles and practice of good design, the application of theoretical knowledge, and within that context the practical craft skills needed for realising their designs in wood, metal, plastics, textiles and other materials. They should also learn about the variety of modern materials and technologies in use in the industrial and commercial world. Pupils should prepare for the world of work by learning how to work in teams as well as by themselves; by understanding the importance of functional efficiency, quality, appearance and marketability; and about the importance of working within financial and technical constraints. Modern business practice increasingly involves the use of IT. Technological education should equip pupils with basic IT skills and develop an awareness of the potential use of IT and computer technology whether in the business office, or manufacturing or commerce.

7. Technology as described above is an activity which goes "across the curriculum", drawing on and linking in with a wide range of subjects. The group should start from the basis that technology is an area of study in its own right, with its own distinctive objectives and content. This does not necessarily mean that technology must be a separately timetabled subject: schools will be free to teach technology how they choose, provided that the activity is coordinated as a clear programme and directed towards the distinctive objectives of technology. By the end of the third key stage of their compulsory education pupils should have acquired a firm basis of skills, knowledge and understanding in technology. This will provide a broad foundation on which pupils can build in undertaking technological work as defined in paragraph 6 in more specialised contexts, including other subject areas during the fourth key stage, whether for GCSE or otherwise.

8. Design will be an essential part of technology as defined above, but will also draw on and contribute to other areas of the curriculum. The Working Group is asked to consider design in all its aspects throughout the period of compulsory education, identifying and recommending attainment targets for those of particular importance in technology and recommending a framework within which other aspects will need to be developed in other subjects. The group should work on the basis that the distinctive objectives of design and technology are that a pupil at the end of his or her compulsory education, should:

i) be able to design and make artefacts and systems, applying scientific or mathematical and other knowledge and skills;

ii) be familiar with designing processes and have had experience of applying them to real life tasks within typical constraints (time, money etc) with due regard to cost, marketability, social, environmental and other relevant factors;

iii) appreciate the importance of design and technology in society, historically and present day, particularly as it affects the economy.

9. The use of computer and information technology and other advance technologies in control, simulation and data storage and retrieval is becoming increasingly important in our society. This fact should be reflected in the use of computer and information technology across the school curriculum. Each subject group as it is set up is being asked to consider the scope for using computer and information technology in its subject and to frame appropriate attainment targets. However, the design and technology group is asked to provide within the national curriculum a focus for the development of computer and

IT awareness, and skills such as keyboard skills and basic programming, by recommending appropriate attainment targets at the four key stages together with a supporting programme of study related to IT and basic computer skills and to awareness of the uses of advanced technology.

10. In carrying out its work the group should consult informally and selectively with relevant interests including industry and have regard to the work of other subject groups, particularly the work of the science group on primary technology. Additionally the group should take account of

i) the broad framework proposed by TGAT for assessment and testing;

ii) the contributions which design and technology can make to learning about other subjects, and other subjects can make to learning about design and technology.

iii) best practice and the results of any relevant research and development, and in particular developments under TVEI.

and the issues covered in the supplementary guidance to the Group's Chairman.

SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY WORKING GROUP

1. This note amplifies some of the points outlined in your terms of reference.

Attainment Targets and differentiation

2. The attainment targets are expected to provide specific enough objectives for pupils, teachers, parents and others to have a clear idea of what is expected and to provide a sound basis for assessment and testing. They should allow scope for the very able, those of average ability, and the less able to show what they know and can do. It should not be necessary to have different attainment targets for children of different abilities. The targets should be capable of assessment at a range of levels and challenge each child to do the best that he or she can. Attainment targets should be sufficiently challenging at all levels to raise expectations, particularly of pupils of middling achievement, as well as stretching and stimulating the most able. The working group should give particular thought to the application of attainment targets to lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. In advising on attainment targets in design and technology, the working group should attempt to cover all areas of the subject and justify fully any recommendation that specific targets are not appropriate for particular aspects.

Programmes of Study

3. The programmes of study should provide a detailed description of the content, skills and processes which all pupils need to be taught so that they can develop the knowledge and understanding they will need to progress through school and eventually to adult life and employment. This detailed description needs to be set within an outline or overall map of

the design and technology curriculum which takes account of what may be expected of pupils of different abilities.

4. Within the overall programme of study, however, there should be space to accommodate the enterprise of teachers, offering them sufficient flexibility in the choice of content to adapt what they teach to the needs of the individual pupil.

5. The development of attainment targets and programmes of study is likely to be an iterative process. Some consideration of content will probably come into the working group's thinking about attainment targets. It will also be necessary to take into account the general objectives and the contribution of design and technology to the overall curriculum.

Special Needs

6. The Government proposes that where a pupil has a statement of special needs under the 1981 Education Act, the statement should specify any national curriculum requirements which should not apply or should be modified for that individual pupil. In addition, orders will define the circumstances in which the application of the national curriculum provisions to individual pupils might be modified or disapplied for any foundation subject. For example, the modern language orders might indicate that pupils with severe difficulties in English should be introduced to a foreign language later than or on a different basis for most children. Any comparable adaptations which could be justified in the case of design and technology should be considered by the working group.

Links with other subjects

7. By its nature technology has links with subjects across the curriculum. Science and technology are intimately linked at secondary as well as primary level and their teaching needs to be

properly coordinated. Scientific concepts and knowledge relating to materials, energy and power are particularly relevant to technology. The working group should where appropriate link its recommendations with those of the science working group so that they complement rather than duplicate one another.

8. The working group should also take account of the possibilities of links with other relevant subjects such as art, home economics and business studies. It should consider how and to what extent the design and technology programmes of study should draw on these subject areas. For the fourth key stage the working group should advise on central design and technology attainment targets which might be pursued either on a single subject basis or through other subjects, and which could form the basis of more developed technological work in those subject areas.

9. There are a number of important subjects, themes and skills which can be taught and developed through foundation subjects. The working group has a specific remit in relation to design. It should also consider the contribution of technology to other themes such as economic awareness and environmental awareness. The working group should also cover the technological aspects of health and safety education both in the workshop and outside the school. All subjects should promote the development of good written English and numeracy.

Ages and Stages; Time Allocations

10. The working group should assume that all pupils, other than those with statements of special need under the Education Act 1981 which specify otherwise, will study technology throughout their compulsory schooling and the majority are likely to take a GCSE in technology or a subject which will involve a substantial element of technology approved against relevant GCSE criteria.

BG
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11. In framing its recommendations the working group should assume that on average the equivalent of some 2-4 periods of a 40 period timetable is available for technology for years 1-3 of secondary school. Beyond that stage the amount of time required will depend upon the extent to which the attainment targets and programmes of study are pursued through other subjects. The group should assume that, for a pupil in years 4 and 5 of secondary school, the technology core element, and any technological component developed in other subject areas, would each take up on average 2 timetable periods.

Assessment and Examinations

12. Attainment targets will provide objectives against which pupils' progress and performance can be assessed. The main purpose of such assessment will be to show what a pupil has learnt and mastered, so as to enable teachers and parents to ensure that he or she is making adequate progress and to inform decisions about the next step.

13. The main focus of the group's work will be on attainment targets and programmes of study. However, it should take account of the broad framework of the Report of the Task Group on Assessment and Testing which included recommendations for the work of subject groups, and in particular should offer advice in broad terms about assessment and testing in relation to the attainment targets recommended, and what might appropriately be measured by nationally prescribed tests.

GCSE

14. Not all pupils will take GCSE examinations in technology as such. However, in defining attainment targets and programmes of study the working group should take account of the GCSE National Criteria for CDT and other subjects with a technological

element so far as these are consistent with the approach in the terms of reference. It will want also to take note of the Secondary Examination Council's work on making GCSE grades more objective: the report of the grade criteria working parties may be a source of ideas as may the individual GCSE syllabuses developed under the CDT, General or other Subject Criteria where there is a technological element. The School Examinations and Assessment Council will be asked to advise on revised GCSE criteria to reflect the national curriculum attainment targets and programmes of study for ages 14-16 and to approve syllabuses accordingly.

General Principles

15. Generally in framing recommendations, the Group should consider the need for

- continuity and progression throughout the period of compulsory schooling and beyond

- breadth and balance

- relevance: the content and teaching of the various elements of the national curriculum should bring out their relevance to and links with pupils' own experience and background and their practical application and continuing value to adult and working life

- all elements of the curriculum to contribute to the development of general personal qualities and competences in young people which will be of value to them in adult and working life - for example, self-reliance, self-discipline, a spirit of enterprise, a sense of social responsibility, the ability to work harmoniously with others, an ability to apply knowledge and use it to solve practical real life problems.

16. It will also be important to bear in mind that the curriculum should provide equal opportunities for boys and girls; and to consider, in this context, the expectations and attitudes of girls to design and technology. The Group should also take account of the ethnic and cultural diversity of the school population and society at large.

Implementation

17. The Government intends to make an Order relating to attainment targets and programmes of study in design and technology for secondary pupils by the end of 1989 following wide consultation through the proposed National Curriculum Council. On this timetable, schools may expect to begin implementing this Order at the start of the academic year 1990-91. The working group should advise whether the Order should be brought in on a phased basis rather than for all children at once.

18. In carrying forward its work the group may find it useful to take account of good practice in technological education as defined in the terms of reference and developed in individual schools and by LEAs. It may also wish to draw on the collective wisdom of the professional bodies and those organisations outside the world of education who have an interest in design and technology in schools.

ANNEX E

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY WORKING GROUP : MEMBERSHIP

CHAIRMAN

LADY MARGARET PARKES JP

AGE 62
EDUCATION Perse School for Girls, Cambridge
Leicester University (at age 40)
Homerton College M Ed

POSITIONS HELD

Governor, BBC since 1984
Member, Secondary Education Council since 1983 where she chairs CDT 16+ and 18+ committees
Member, Voluntary Sector Consultative Council since 1984
Chairman, London and Southwark Board of Education Committee for Personal Relationships (1976-81)
Member, London Diocesan Board of Education (1976-80)
Member, London Diocesan Family Education Committee (1981-83)
Member, Colleges Advisory Committee, General Synod Board of Education (1982-)
Member, Radio London Advisory Council (1879-83)
Member, Press Council (1978-84)
Chairman of Governors, Whitelands College (part of Roehampton Institute) (1981-)

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Use black or blue pen to complete form.

Use the card for one piece or for each extract removed from a different place within a piece.

Enter the department and series,
eg. HO 405, J 82.

Enter the piece and item references, .
eg. 28, 1079, 84/1, 107/3

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This should be an indication of what the extract is,
eg. Folio 28, Indictment 840079, E107, Letter dated 22/11/1995.
Do not enter details of why the extract is sensitive.

If closed under the FOI Act, enter the FOI exemption numbers applying to the closure, eg. 27(1), 40(2).

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ELIZABETH HOUSE
YORK ROAD
LONDON SE1 7PH
01-934 9000

N L Wicks Esq
Principal Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
SW1A 2AA

Dear Nigel

You have written on a number of occasions recently requesting draft replies to letters concerning the Christian content of religious education and collective worship. Given the understanding reached between Lady Cox and the Bishop of London on how this will be handled in the Lords, we are now able to provide draft replies. I therefore attach suggested replies, all for the Prime Minister's signature, to the following letters.

James Pawsey MP	:	Letter of 17 March
Mr Michael Hastings (Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance)	:	Letter of 31 March
The Rt Revd George Carey: (The Bishop of Bath and Wells)		Letter of 7 April
Michael Allison MP	:	Letter of 14 April
Revd Tony Higton	:	Letter of 14 April

As you will of course realise, all the letters need to be despatched before the Lords' Committee stage debate on 3 May.

Yours,

Tom.

T B JEFFERY
Private Secretary

To: Rt. Hon
Michael Allison MP
House of Commons
LONDON
SW1A OAA

DS2A90

Thank you for your letter of 13 April about the Christian content of religious education. You will by now be aware that Caroline Cox has had discussions with the Bishop of London on this matter. As a result, I understand that Caroline has now tabled amendments for discussion at Lords' Committee stage, on the understanding that these will be withdrawn following discussion, and that the Bishop of London will introduce his own amendments at Report stage. The question of a free vote does not therefore arise.

We do seem to be making progress on all of this and I look forward to seeing the outcome when it is discussed in the Lords.

I am copying this letter to Caroline Cox, Jim Pawsey and Anthony Coombs.

CcBG.

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FROM THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR WALES

21 April 1988

APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

NBPM
PRCG
21/4

Dear Paul

NATIONAL CURRICULUM WELSH SUBJECT WORKING GROUP

Thank you for your letter of 15 April. — at Hay

You will wish to know that the Secretary of State is proposing to announce today by means of a Written Parliamentary Answer (copy attached) the appointment of Professor Gwyn Thomas as Chairman of the Welsh Working Group for the National Curriculum. The Group's terms of reference (also attached) have been amended to take account of the comments of the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Education.

I am copying this to the private secretaries of the other members of E(EP).

Yours sincerely
John Shortridge

J D SHORTRIDGE

Paul Gray Esq
Private Secretary to
The Prime Minister

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: WELSH WORKING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. **PREAMBLE**

1.1 The Government has introduced a Bill in Parliament to establish a National Curriculum for pupils of compulsory school age in England and Wales. The aim is to equip every pupil with the knowledge, skills and understanding to meet the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Within the National Curriculum, the Education Reform Bill establishes foundation subjects - maths, English, science, Welsh, modern foreign languages (from 11-16), history, geography, technology, music, art and physical education. The degree of definition and the requirements to be set for each of these subjects will vary but maths, science, English and, in Welsh-speaking schools (as defined statutorily), Welsh, are core subjects and working groups are therefore being established first in these subjects. The Secretary of State for Wales will also be considering, in consultation with the Curriculum Council for Wales and others, what particular provision will be needed to accommodate the other distinctive needs of the curriculum in Wales.

1.2 For the core and other foundation subjects, the Government wishes to establish clear objectives - attainment targets - for the knowledge, skills and understanding which pupils of different abilities and maturities should be expected to have acquired at or near the key ages of around 7, and of 11, 14 and 16. The level of detail of attainment targets and the associated programmes of study will vary between subjects with some (such as music, art and PE) being more in the form of guidelines and those for the core subjects containing most detail. Taken together, the attainment targets and programmes of study will provide the basis for assessing pupils' performance - in relation both to expected attainment, and to the next steps needed for the pupils' development.

1.3 The Government wants attainment targets and the content of what is taught to reflect current best practice and achievement. Both the objectives (attainment targets) and means of achieving them (programmes of study) should

leave scope for teachers to use their professional talents and skills to develop their own schemes of work, within a set framework which is known to all. It is the task of the subject working groups to advise on that framework. The assessment instruments used, including tests, will be developed separately in the light of the working group's recommendations and those of the Task Group on Assessment and Testing (TGAT; see 3b below). The Government have welcomed the broad framework proposed by TGAT for national assessment and testing. The group is invited to take account of this broad framework in its work on attainment targets and the related assessment arrangements at ages 7, 11, 14 and 16.

2. THE TASK

2.1 Against this background, the Welsh working group is asked to submit an interim report to the Secretary of State for Wales by 30 September 1988 outlining:-

a. their provisional thinking about the knowledge, skills, understanding and aptitudes which pupils of different abilities and maturities should be expected to have attained and be able to demonstrate by the end of each key stage ie around the end of the academic year in which they reach the ages of 7, 11, 14, and 16. These should relate both to pupils who are taught Welsh as a first language and those who are taught Welsh as a second language;

b. provisional thinking about the programmes of study through from 5 to 16 which would be consistent with the attainment targets provisionally identified. The Government envisages that programmes of study should cover the full range of linguisitic circumstances and be applicable in all parts of Wales.

2.2 In the light of this thinking, the working group should also make recommendations about assessment of performance related to the attainment targets, and in particular what might appropriately be measured by externally set tests rather than by other techniques of assessment.

2.3 By 30 April 1989, the working group is to submit a **final report** to the Secretary of State for Wales, setting out and justifying its final recommendations on attainment targets and the programme of study for Welsh (language and literature).

3. APPROACH

3.1 The working group will be given an indication of approximately how much time they should assume to be available within the curriculum for Welsh. This time will also be intended to cover the teaching of cross-curricular themes to which Welsh can contribute. The working group should consult informally with relevant interests and have regard to the work of the other subject working groups in particular those set up for English and modern foreign languages. Additionally it should take account of:-

a. the Secretary of State's policy as set out in 'The National Curriculum in Wales';

b. the broad framework proposed by TGAT for assessment and testing;

c. the need for attainment targets and programmes of study to reflect cross-curricular themes and subjects;

d. best practice and the results of relevant research and curriculum developments;

e. the national and subject criteria for GCSE, taken together with recent work to establish a more objective approach to measuring attainment through the GCSE, which should provide the starting point for recommendations relating to attainment at age 16 and programmes of study for ages 14-16;

f. the need for continuity and progression throughout compulsory schooling;

g. the contribution which other subjects taught through the medium of Welsh can made to the learning of Welsh and in particular to the promotion of good standards of written and spoken Welsh;

h. the need to devise attainment targets and programmes of study appropriate for pupils of different abilities. The working group should give particular thought to the application of attainment targets in Welsh to lower attaining pupils; and

i. the need to establish attainment targets which take account of different language backgrounds and levels of provision in schools.

Welsh Office

April 1988

PQ NO 1399/87/88

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION FOR ANSWER ON
THURSDAY 21 APRIL 1988

WELSH WORKING GROUP ON NATIONAL CURRICULUM

259 **MR NICHOLAS BENNETT** (Pembroke): To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, if he will make a statement about the Welsh Working Group for the national curriculum.

MR WYN ROBERTS: I am pleased to announce that the professor of Welsh at the University College of North Wales, Professor Gwyn Thomas, has accepted the Chairmanship of the group. Full membership will be announced shortly. A copy of the group's terms of reference has been placed in the Library of the House.

WRITTEN ANSWER

EDUCATION – POLICY ON EDUCATION POLICY

PT 18

SUBJECT
ccmaster.

CONFIDENTIAL

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Principal Private Secretary

20 April 1988

Dear David,

OPTING OUT IN SCOTLAND

Your Secretary of State came to see the Prime Minister this afternoon to discuss opting out in Scotland.

After your Secretary of State had described the position, the Prime Minister and he agreed that he should report to her further on opting out in Scotland after he had carried out his consultations and before final decisions were made on the contents of next session's Scottish Education Bill. It was also agreed that your Secretary of State should keep the position open for the future when the Government Minister responded to Mr. Allan Stewart's amendment.

I suggest that you should confine sight of this letter to your Secretary of State and named members of your Department on a strict need to know basis.

Yours ever,
Nigel Wicks

(N.L. WICKS)

David Crawley, Esq.,
Scottish Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

OPTING OUT IN SCOTLAND

This note amplifies the conclusions set out in my letter of today's date to David Crawley recording Mr. Rifkind's meeting today about opting out in Scotland.

The Prime Minister said that she could not see why the people of Scotland should not have the same advantage as the people of England and Wales in being able to choose whether to opt schools out from the local authority system. There was no compulsion to do this and it would have been worthwhile even if only half a dozen schools chose this route. Mr. Rifkind said that he agreed. It was a question of timing. He had had considerable difficulty persuading certain back-bench colleagues in supporting the limited proposals in this session's Bill. His problem was that there was not a significant body of opinion in Scotland in favour of opting out. He hoped that the Catholic hierarchy could be persuaded to support opting out as a way of retaining control over their schools. But the leak of letters had made that more difficult. Since the Prime Minister and he had both stressed publicly that opting out would not be introduced until there was a demand for it, it was important to be able to point to such demand before permitting schools to opt out. The Prime Minister drew attention to the advantages of the Order-making power described in my letter of 21 March to David Crawley. This would enable the legislation to be passed, but not activated until there was evidence of a desire to take advantage of it.

It was agreed to proceed as described in my letter to David Crawley.

N-L W

N.L. WICKS
20 April 1988

ELIZABETH HOUSE
YORK ROAD
LONDON SE1 7PH
01-934 9000

The Rt Hon Nicholas Ridley MP
Secretary of State for the Environment
2 Marsham St
London SW1

19 April 1988

Dear Nick,

EDUCATION REFORM BILL: ADVANCED FURTHER EDUCATION POOLING

I am writing to let you know of a small addition I am intending to make to the Education Reform Bill to validate determinations I have made of contributions to the AFE pools for 1987-88.

Pooling is a means of sharing the cost of AFE between local education authorities, and is given effect by your Department through adjustments to authorities' block grant entitlements. My Department calculates the contribution of each authority to the pools using a formula based on student numbers laid down in regulations. The method of counting students for this purpose was agreed with the local authority associations some time ago, but it has now come to light that in one minor respect - the treatment of students on short part-time courses - it is not fully consistent with the regulations. For 1988-89 I propose to amend the regulations to allow me to adopt the agreed method. The same method was, however, used in 1987-88, for which adjustments have already been made and it is not possible to amend the regulations retrospectively.

No authority has challenged my determinations for 1987-88, and I see no reason to expect a challenge, or to amend the determinations already made. Nevertheless I am advised that it would be prudent to include a short validating provision in the Education Reform Bill. I therefore propose a small addition to the Bill for this purpose.

I am copying this letter to members of E(EP).

Yours ever,

Kenneth

cc B/Up

1/1/2 (10 and NC1)

GRANT MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

SCHOOL BOARDS (SCOTLAND) BILL

HOUSE OF COMMONS - FIRST SCOTTISH STANDING COMMITTEE

NOTE ON AMENDMENT

Mr Allan Stewart 10

Clause 1, page 1, line 2, at end insert -

'(c) Any functions delegated to them by the Secretary of State in exercising his powers under sections 73 to 75 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 and under this Act.'.

Mr Allan Stewart NC1

To move the following Clause:-

'(1) The Secretary of State may provide for the establishment of grant-maintained schools, subject to the provisions of this section, and financed under section 73 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

(2) The Secretary of State shall arrange for a secret postal ballot to be held on the question of whether grant-maintained status should be sought where he receives a written request for such a ballot from a number of parents of registered pupils at the school equal to at least 20 per cent of the number of registered pupils at the school on the date on which the request is received.

(3) The Secretary of State may ask the School Board to conduct the ballot, or make such other arrangements as he considers appropriate.

(4) Where the result of a ballot held in accordance with subsection (2) above shows a simple majority in favour of seeking grant-maintained status for the school, the Secretary of State shall publish a draft instrument in accordance with which the school is to be governed (to be known as the articles of government).

(5) After consultation with the education authority, the articles of government of the school shall be made by order of the Secretary of State. The articles will provide for the constitution of a board of management for the grant-maintained school.

(6) On an incorporation date determined by the Secretary of State in relation to a grant-maintained school, the property rights and liabilities of the education authority formerly responsible for the school shall be transferred to, and by virtue of this Act next in, the board of management of the grant-maintained school.'.

cc B/Cp

PRIME MINISTER

OPTING OUT IN SCOTLAND

Mr. Rifkind is coming to see you tomorrow, at your request, about opting out schools in Scotland.

The background to the discussion is my minute at Flag A, which describes Mr. Rifkind's position on this matter. I subsequently sent to his office the letter at Flag B (which, together with an earlier letter, was leaked).

The position on opting out in Scotland is as follows:

(i) it is agreed that opting out will not be included in this session's Bill;

(ii) you have suggested that the Secretary of State should consider what would be involved in terms of legislation for introducing opting out in Scotland, including the use of an order making powers which would bring the legislation into effect some time after it had reached the statute book;

(iii) Mr. Rifkind has not yet accepted that next session's Scottish education legislation should include such a power. He will shortly be having consultations with the Catholic hierarchy since he believes their attitude to be crucial;

(iv) Mr. Allan Stewart has tabled a clause (Flag C) to this session's Bill which provides for a scheme for opting out. While it is accepted that the Government will not support this clause, we need to agree Scottish Office Ministers's line on what to say in the debate on the clause about including provisions for opting out in next session's legislation.

When I spoke to Mr. Rifkind, he told me that he wished to see opting out introduced in Scotland. But he did not say when, and he clearly is bent on proceeding cautiously. I suggest that at this meeting you:

- discover his intentions for opting out;
- ask what he intends to say in response to Mr. Stewart's amendment;
- press him to include opting out legislation in next session's Bill; and
- ask him to circulate proposals to E(EP).

N.L.W.

N. L. WICKS

19 April 1988

SL2APD

PMMAUE

cc Professor Griffiths

PRIME MINISTER

OPTING-OUT IN SCOTLAND

Following your talk with Brian Griffiths this morning, I am minuting about how we should proceed with opting-out in Scotland.

Mr. Rifkind told me earlier in the week that he had been surprised by my letter (at Flag A) about opting-out in Scotland. His reaction is not unexpected since the purpose of my letter was in fact to discover his intentions.

Mr. Rifkind said that my letter read too much into his intentions. As yet there had been no policy discussion, let alone approval, of opting-out in Scotland. He personally favoured opting-out, in due course. But he believed, strongly, that too early introduction would cause grave political difficulty in Scotland. He then went on to elaborate his views as follows:

(i) The Scottish Manifesto had set out the Government's plans for education in Scotland (Flag B) and had not referred to opting-out. Indeed, he had the impression that following agreement in Lord Whitelaw's Election Committee on Questions of Policy, Conservative spokesmen at the General Election had explicity excluded opting-out in Scotland for this Parliament (though we have not yet traced any references to this). The slower approach in Scotland compared to England reflected the lack of any constituency in Scotland pressing for opting-out. Until school boards were created, such a constituency was unlikely to form.

(ii) He had experienced great difficulty in securing a political consensus among Scottish Conservatives for this Session's Bill establishing school boards. Alick Buchanan-Smith and Hector Monro, as well as some leading Conservatives in local authorities, had initially been reluctant to back the bill. But a

constituency had now been formed in favour of the change. Mr. Rifkind feared that an early announcement (eg when Allan Stewart tabled his amendment for opting-out to this Session's Bill) that the Government were intending to introduce opting-out legislation next session could strain the political consensus he had created in the Scottish Conservative Party and cause difficulty for this Session's Bill.

(iii) If opting-out was to be introduced in Scotland, and Mr. Rifkind assured me that this was his ultimate intention, he needed to demonstrate that there was public pressure for the change. Otherwise he could not explain why the Government had now decided to introduce opting-out when it had ruled it out in the Election campaign. There had been some straws in the wind that the Catholic hierarchy, whose opinions were crucial here, were not necessarily opposed to opting-out - they might see it as a way of buttressing their authority against unreasonable demands of some Labour authorities. He was therefore going to explore with the Scottish Catholic Archbishops in April their attitude to opting-out. This discussion would take place well before the House debated Allan Stewart's clause.

(iv) Summing up his views Mr. Rifkind said that his priority was to secure a smooth enactment of this Session's School Boards Bill. The political reality in Scotland was that early announcement of the Government's intention to legislate next Session for opting-out would be counterproductive. He therefore wanted to retain an open mind about next Session for the time being.

I made the following points to Mr. Rifkind. First, you were extremely keen that parents and children in Scotland should have the benefits of opting-out which would soon be available to parents and children south of the border. Second, you had suggested an approach to him which ought to help him with his political difficulties. This was that the next Session's

legislation providing for opting-out should not take immediate effect, but would only be triggered when the Secretary of State laid the appropriate order before Parliament. This would give parents an incentive to plan for opting-out yet enable the Secretary of State to meet any criticism of undue rush; and when he laid the order triggering the operation of the opting-out legislation, he could say that he was acting in response to parents' requests. But the important first point was to get the legislation on the statute book.

Mr. Rifkind asked whether he might report to you with a view to a discussion, after he had discussed the issue with the Catholic Archbishops in April; and that meanwhile no decision should be taken on what would be said in reply to Allan Stewart's amendment or on the contents of the Scottish education legislation next Session.

Mr. Rifkind is clearly reluctant to make quick progress on opting-out. Before too long this issue will need to be discussed by Ministers collectively. But first I think you need to talk the matter through in more detail with Mr. Rifkind. The meeting need not take place until after Easter. Meanwhile Brian Griffiths intends to see whether he can find out more about the political background to this issue in Scotland. So if you agree I would propose to tell Mr. Rifkind:

- You would like to talk to him after Easter. You think that there will need to be a discussion in E(EP) before too long (probably after his talk with the Catholic hierarchy) if only to settle the government's line on Allan Stewart's amendment. Meanwhile Mr. Rifkind should consider what would be involved for opting-out in Scotland, including the use of the order-making power described above which would trigger the operation of the legislation.

Agree to proceed in this way? Yes

N.L.W.

N. L. Wicks

18 March 1988

CONFIDENTIAL

PM

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

18 April 1988

Dear Tom,

NATIONAL UNION OF STUDENTS

The Prime Minister was grateful for your Secretary of State's minute of 15 April. As I told you when we spoke, she was content for your Secretary of State to answer Mr. Janman's Parliamentary Question in the terms proposed. The Prime Minister would, however, be grateful if your Secretary of State could prepare a further paper for E(EP) on his proposals for changes to the present arrangements as soon as the further information has been assembled.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the members of E(EP) and to Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

Yours,
Paul

Paul Gray

Tom Jeffery, Esq.,
Department of Education and Science.

CONFIDENTIAL

T.E.S 15/4/88

PA – Education Testing Cttee.

Marching out of step

Professor Black's Task Group holds quite a different view of attainment from the Government, argues Donald Naismith

Whatever the Prime Minister's reported disagreements with her Chancellor of the Exchequer over the exchange rate, her alleged differences of opinion with her Secretary of State for Education and Science over standards and how they are to be measured are more important. We cannot do much about international markets. We can, however, decide what kind of education system we want at home.

At the heart of the Government's educational reforms is the re-establishment of the idea that standards of attainment can be identified which pupils of differing ability around the ages of seven, 11, 14 and 16 can aim at with a good chance of success. In the words of the terms of reference of the Subject Working Groups set up by the Government to establish those standards in science, mathematics and English, "for most foundation subjects the Government wishes to establish clear objectives – attainment targets – for the knowledge, skills, understanding and aptitudes which pupils of different abilities and maturity should be expected to have acquired at or near certain ages".

This is what we were promised. But this is not what we are going to get, because the methods of assessing those targets recommended by the Task Group set up by the Government under the chairmanship of Professor Black proceed from a different concept of attainment, and indeed education, from those who wrote the terms of reference of the Subject Working Groups. As Professor Black rightly points out, assessment is inseparable from good teaching, although if this is so, one might wonder why the job of assessing the attainment targets was not given to the people who were called upon to set them up in the first place – the Subject Working Groups.

The danger is that the system of assessment recommended will become, as most systems of assessment do, the determining feature of the education system itself, particularly in the present case because Professor Black's team has produced not so much a system of *measurement* as a system of *teaching*.

This is not surprising as what is proposed is based on the imaginative approaches to learning and teaching pioneered by Professor Black through his introduction of graded assessment of mathematics, techniques which have been successfully extended to other subjects, notably foreign languages and science. Within this approach, pupils are introduced to pre-determined attainment targets through exercises of graduated difficulty when they have demonstrated that they are ready to proceed to the next stage. There is no doubt that these methods have led to better pupil motivation and to higher levels of attainment, but they suffer, in my view, from two fatal weaknesses as methods of assessment if they are to be in harmony with the Government's mainstream policies.

First, the targets are not identified by reference to what most pupils of differing abilities may be expected to achieve around certain ages: and ability is taken as what pupils show they can do rather than what potential they may have for better performance. A pupil works at his own speed, and although there will, naturally, be encouragement on the part of the teacher and resulting progression over time – indeed it would be surprising if there were not – the way it is intended such progress should be measured will not give answers to the two questions parents ask, namely: how well is my child doing in relation to his or her peers and how well is he or she doing in relation to his or her abilities?

Progress will be seen in terms of value added to stages already reached by the individual rather than in relation to externally established standards expected of most comparable pupils.

Second, the way progress is measured will depend to a large measure on the judgement of the teacher. For most of the purposes of assessment this must be right, as we have already observed. But society does not trust subjective opinion, however it is moderated and from whichever direction it comes. It seeks objective fact as far as possible. And there is the additional danger that the workload of the teacher, in many ways already unrealistically heavy, will be increased unnecessarily by the complexity of the highly individual system of assessment and recording proposed.

The recommendations of Professor Black's Task Force are, therefore, out of step with their marching orders and are inoperable. They fail to distinguish sufficiently between ability and attainment and teachers will not be able to cope.

From the Government's point of view the proposals are little short of disastrous. Without a sense of objective standards parents and others will not have access to the kind of standardized information enabling comparisons to be made, which they need if they are to make an informed choice between the wider range of schools and colleges the Government plans. Without a sense of objective standards schools and colleges will not have the means of establishing the direct managerial link between expenditure and performance which local education authorities failed to achieve and which led to spiralling costs and falling standards.

Above all the Government will not be able to put into circulation a currency of values which can be shared between the education services and society at large, the hallmark of other education systems, particularly those of our economic competitors, and which is necessary to renew confidence in our own.

Whatever the worth of the institutional changes being introduced by the Baker Reform Act they will be useless unless they are underpinned by a clear philosophical understanding of the nature of education and its place in our society. At the moment this is conspicuously missing. The people who wrote the terms and reference of the Subject Working Groups believe there are external standards which should be related to age and ability and which can be universally applied. The people who wrote the Black Report do not, and no amount of wallpapering at the DES can conceal the fact.

It is obviously important that we decide in education whether we should have a fixed or floating exchange rate. Perhaps the Chancellor of the Exchequer shoud be asking to help.

Donald Naismith is director of education, Croydon

SP4-91

PRIME MINISTER

NATIONAL UNION OF STUDENTS

Following our discussion at E(EP) on 17 March 1988 I have been considering how best to carry forward the remit then given to me. I have concluded that, given the complexity of the issues and the need to ensure a secure basis on which we can consider specific proposals for change, I should first seek up-to-date information about a range of issues affecting local unions and their relationship with the NUS.

Tim Janman has been pressing me for some time and has now tabled a Parliamentary Question. I have spoken to Tim and he is very happy that we should proceed in the way I have outlined. I attach a draft text of my proposed Answer.

I should like to answer on Monday since the issue may well be raised on Monday or Tuesday in the debate in the House of Lords: Gloria Hooper could then refer to my Answer during the debate. You may also find it helpful to be able to refer to what I will have said when you see the Conservative Collegiate Forum next Thursday.

I am sorry if this gives you little time to consider the matter but I should be very grateful if you could let me know by Monday whether I may proceed as I propose.

I am sending copies of this to other members of E(EP) and to Sir Robin Butler.

KB

15 April 1988

Department of Education and Science

SP4-92

DRAFT

Q. To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Science, if he proposes to make any changes in the arrangements by which student unions affiliate to, and fund, the National Union of Students.

MR KENNETH BAKER

The Government recognises that many individual students do not wish to be represented by the National Union of Students; it is also concerned that tax-payers' money made available to student representative bodies should be used to provide services to students and not used for political campaigning. However, to limit freedom of association, by restricting the right of local student unions to affiliate to a national body, would raise complex legal issues. I conclude that it is first necessary to look at the arrangements for student union membership and the provision of services to individual students at both local and national levels.

To this end, I intend to gather on a sample basis up-to-date information on the organisation and cost of student services within institutions, on the legal status of local unions, and on the organisational and financial links between such unions and the NUS. I am confident that institutions and others will wish to co-operate with this survey; and I shall be glad to receive any information or suggestions which interested parties may wish to put forward. On the basis of the information I obtain, I will reach conclusions on the best action to take and will then consult all concerned about these conclusions.

NATIONAL UNION OF STUDENTS

The Sub-Committee considered the arrangements for the financing and membership of the National Union of Students (NUS). They had before them a Minute from the Secretary of State for Education and Science to the Prime Minister dated 15 March 1988.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE said that Conservative backbenchers had tabled an amendment to the Education Reform Bill which would prevent the NUS from continuing as a confederation of local student unions, and require it to become a direct membership union. Individual students would then have a free choice over whether to join. Some change of this sort was desirable in principle. However the amendment itself raised substantial difficulties. It would remove the right of free association for local student unions, and might breach European Law. He therefore sought agreement to consult on a different proposition. This would provide a conscience clause under which individual students would be able to prevent their local union from paying affiliation fee to the NUS on their behalf. Their share of the money would then be diverted to another purpose, such as a welfare or scholarship trust.

THE PRIME MINISTER, summing up a brief discussion, said that the present arrangement under which local student unions received money as a block grant from the governing bodies of their institutions, and then used part to pay affiliation fees to the NUS was clearly unsatisfactory. However the Sub-Committee was not convinced that the answer lay in a conscience clause of the sort proposed by the Education Secretary. More fundamental consideration was needed of the present arrangements, including in particular the financing and functions of the local unions. It could be argued that the provision of sports and entertainment facilities was the responsibility of the University or other institution itself, and that membership of the union should be entirely voluntary. Nevertheless the Sub-Committee recognised that this was a difficult area in which further work was needed. The Education Secretary should therefore bring forward a

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further paper considering all the issues raised by the present arrangements for funding local student unions and the NUS. In the meantime he should say in response to pressure from backbenchers that the Government was considering this issue, and was willing to look at any proposals to change the present arrangements provided they dealt adequately with the substantial legal and practical difficulties.

The Sub-Committee -

1. Took note, with approval, of the Prime Minister's summing up of their discussion.

2. Invited the Education Secretary to bring forward a paper on the arrangements for funding local student unions and the National Union of Students, on the lines set out in the Prime Minister's summing up.

Cabinet Office

18 March 1988

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APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

Cite SH
CCBG
SL2AON

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

15 April 1988

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: WELSH SUBJECT WORKING GROUP

The Prime Minister was grateful for your Secretary of State's minute of 29 March and the attached draft terms of reference. She has also seen the letter of 13 April from the Secretary of State for Education and Science.

The Prime Minister is content for your Secretary of State to set up the Welsh subject working group along the lines proposed. On the detailed terms of reference, in addition to the comments of the Secretary of State for Education and Science, the Prime Minister has the following comments:

- she wonders whether the second sentence of paragraph 1.2 makes rather too much of the programmes of study and the processes; could this be stated so that it seems less prescriptive on the part of the Government?

- she was not clear of the meaning of paragraph 2.1a, and wonders whether this might best be deleted;

- paragraph 3.1c seems an unnecessary elaboration of 3.1b and might be deleted;

- paragraph 3.1h is subsumed in the basic idea of a working party on the Welsh language, and it might be better to delete it, and to avoid the risk of the group considering their terms of reference to be very large.

The Prime Minister is content with your Secretary of State's proposal to appoint Professor Gwyn Thomas as Chairman of the Working Group.

PAUL GRAY

Jon Shortridge, Esq.,
Welsh Office

APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

PORTSMOUTH POLYTECHNIC

The Office of the President
H D Law, BA, PhD, FRSC
Ravelin House, Museum Road, Portsmouth PO1 2QQ
Telephone Portsmouth (0705) 827681

HDL/VW

15 April 1988

Sir Kenneth Green MA
Director
Manchester Polytechnic
All Saints
Manchester M15 6BH

18. 04. 88

Dear Ken

Thank you for your letter dated 30 March and for the paper you have sent to the Secretary of State.

Prior to the arrival of the model articles, I had written to Mr Baker setting out my own concerns which are: that the Director should be clearly seen as the Chief Executive - in company terms - operating through an Executive Board; that the Governors should be the senior body, responsible for establishing the mission of the institution and overseeing the work of the Executive; and that the terms of reference of Academic Board should be carefully phrased so as not to cut across this pattern of responsibility and authority.

Whilst I see you have a somewhat greater concern about the composition of the Governing Body, which I could not have anticipated at that time and which I now share, our views seem to coincide pretty well.

Yours sincerely

H D Law
President

EDUCATION

POLICY ?

Kenneth Barker MA

Director

LEICESTER POLYTECHNIC · PO BOX 143 · LEICESTER LE1 9BH
TELEPHONE: 0533 551551 Ext. 2200

KB/YPL.3144

14 April 1988

Dear Ken,

I am sorry that I have not responded to your letter of 30 March 1988 and the substance of your paper to the Secretary of State before. Unfortunately, for personal reasons, I did not get back to my office immediately after Easter. That said, however, I do want you to know that I support your line on Schedule 5 of the Bill wholeheartedly. There is a real doubt in my mind that we will be able to deliver what is expected of us in the 'nineties' if we cannot hold onto a clear structure of management in which our roles are clearly defined - as Managing Directors/Chief Executives in the business sense of these terms.

I think you have put into a very clear form the essential issues that have still to be addressed. If I can be of any help in pressing your points further, particularly during the time of the Lords' debate please let me know.

With very best wishes.

Ken

20. 04. 88

Sir Kenneth Green MA
Director
Manchester Polytechnic
All Saints
Manchester
M15 6BH

Michael ALISON MP file

21/4

EL3CQT

(1) 26/4

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

14 April 1988

I attach a further letter about the Christian content of religious education from Michael Alison MP and other members of the delegation that saw the Prime Minister on Tuesday. My letter of 12 April reported the outcome of that meeting.

In his latest letter Michael Alison asks for assurance that the Government will not whip its supporters in the Lords when Lady Cox's amendment is debated. I should be grateful for your advice on how the Prime Minister might respond to this latest letter. Since it concerns whipping in the Lords, it may be more appropriate for the draft reply to be prepared in the office of the Chief Whip in the Lords rather than by your Department. In any event, please could I have a draft reply by Thursday 21 April.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Lord Privy Seal, and together with a copy of my letter of 12 April to the Private Secretaries to the Chief Whip in the Lords and the Commons.

(N.L. WICKS)

Tom Jeffery, Esq.,
Department of Education and Science.

8p

R13/4

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

13th April 1988

Prime Minister

Unless you think otherwise, I do not believe this calls for a reply other than a simple ack. Agree? N.L.W. 13.4.

The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1

Dear Margaret,

We write to say how grateful we are to you for giving so much of your time yesterday to listening, and responding so constructively, to our representations about the Christian content of religious education.

We were all struck by your own idea that "predominantly biblical" might be a more acceptable phrase than "predominantly Christian" as a possible governing definition of what schools should try to teach in compulsory RE. Indeed Caroline Cox proposes to use this phrase in moving amendments to the Education Reform Bill in the House of Lords when the time comes. (We need hardly say that she will not seek to embarrass you by attribution, since we regard our meeting with you as having been private).

You mooted the possibility that the Government might allow a free vote on the issue, both in the House of Lords and the House of Commons, with no pressure on the "pay roll" to vote other than according to personal conviction. We could hardly ask you to do more for us than that, particularly in the light of the Bishop of London's reported reservations. But we do now urge you to go at least that far with us, believing as we do that you are not unsympathetic to our aims and anxieties about the future of compulsory RE.

We believe that we can win the argument for amending the Bill, as desired, on its merits; and you will recall the evidence we gave you that many Bishops in the Church of England are in sympathy with our approach. But if the Government set their face against us, then we fear that the Bishops (if not others) will falter. What we believe would be unacceptable, indeed a travesty, would be for the Government to argue that they **must** officially oppose any amendment by Caroline Cox of the sort we discussed, **because the Bishops are opposed to it.** Some might be; others would not. On a **free** vote, we believe the majority would support Caroline Cox.

/2 ...

It would be a parody for Her Majesty's Government (the Queen is after all Defender of the Faith!) to whip the Conservative party to oppose Caroline Cox's amendment, simply to help the Bishop of London in the whipping of his fellow Bishops! Let them be honourably divided. They are usually united against us!

Caroline Cox

James Pawsey

Michael Alison

Anthony Coombs

PRIME MINISTER

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: WELSH SUBJECT WORKING GROUP

Mr Walker's minute of 29 March provides proposed terms of reference for the Working Group on Welsh. He also proposes appointing Professor Gwyn Thomas as its Chairman.

There is a read across to the E(EP) discussion tomorrow which will be considering the groups on English and Technology to which Peter Walker refers. But the objection Brian Griffiths has raised in the E(EP) context to appointing a technology group now does not apply in the case of Welsh - which, in Welsh speaking schools, will be a core subject rather than simply a non-core foundation subject.

Brian Griffiths' two notes attached support the appointment of Professor Thomas and gives some minor comments on the terms of reference. Kenneth Baker's letter of 13 April also gives a few minor comments.

Content to agree to Peter Walker's proposals subject to the detailed comments from Kenneth Baker and Brian Griffiths and to any major developments at E(EP) tomorrow?

Paul Gray
13 April 1988

MJ2CFN

EA

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Principal Private Secretary

13 April 1988

I am writing to acknowledge your letter of 13 April which I am drawing to the Prime Minister's attention.

(N.L. WICKS)

The Rt. Hon. Michael Alison, M.P.

APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

PRIME MINISTER

13 April 1988

National Curriculum: Welsh Subject Working Group

Professor Gwyn Thomas is one of the most respected figures in Welsh literary circles as well as one of the most well-known and able academics in Wales today. He would be a first-class appointment as chairman of the National Curriculum Working Group.

Brian Griffiths

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

PRIME MINISTER

13 April 1988

National Curriculum: Welsh Subject Working Group

Terms of Reference

The only comments I have on the paper are all minor:

1.2 The second sentence under 1.2 while strictly accurate tends to make rather too much of the programmes of study and the processes. Is there any way this could be stated so that it seems less prescriptive on the part of government?

2.1a I do not understand what this means - I think it would be best deleted.

3.1c This is subsumed under b. and does not need elaboration in this way.

3.1h This surely is subsumed in the whole idea of having a working party on the Welsh language. To elaborate it in this way invites the group to consider their terms of reference to be very large indeed. I think this would be best deleted.

Brian Griffiths

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

D10

cc PG

ELIZABETH HOUSE
YORK ROAD
LONDON SE1 7PH
01-934 9000

The Rt Hon Peter Walker MP
Secretary of State for Wales
Welsh Office
Gwydyr House
Whitehall
London SW1A 2ER

13 April 1988

Dear Peter,

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: WELSH SUBJECT WORKING GROUP

I support the establishment of a Welsh Subject Working Group (WITH PG ?), as proposed in your minute of 29 March to the Prime Minister. It is important that a Welsh Group should be operating at the same time as our proposed English Working Group so that the two can exchange ideas as appropriate. We shall need to ensure good working links between the two Groups.

I am content with the terms of reference you propose, except that I believe they should make clear that a modern foreign language is a foundation subject only for secondary pupils (para 1.1); the reference to "aptitudes" in para 1.2 should be deleted as it is not consonant with the definition of attainment targets in the Bill; the reference to TGAT at the end of para 1.3 is now out of date and inappropriate; and your proposed date for final report in para 2.3 - 31 January 1989 - may allow insufficient time for the Group to do its job. As you know, we are proposing end-April 1989 for the English Working Group, which will have rather more of a start than the Welsh Group because of the work done by the Kingman Committee. You may also want to consider whether your Group should be asked for final recommendations relating to the primary phase on an accelerated timescale, as we are doing in the case of the English working Group.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, other members of E(EP) and to Sir Robin Butler.

Yours ever,
Kenneth

PRIME MINISTER

13 April 1988

The National Curriculum: Design and Technology

This paper raises a basic question.

Do we wish to set up yet another subject working party at this stage?

The Secretary of State has already:

- set up a working party on science;
- set up a working party on mathematics which produced a minority report and the resignation of the initial chairman;
- set up a working party on testing (TGAT) which has produced a controversial recommendation on which there is still a great deal of discussion, not least within the profession;
- set up the Kingman Committee;
- and is now about to set up an English working party.

These all relate to the core subjects of the National Curriculum and it is vital that we get the attainment targets and the testing of these targets absolutely right.

To introduce more working parties at this stage would be to create potential confusion among the teaching profession and to arm our critics who feel that we are preceding with too much haste in any case.

Recommendation

My personal feeling is that it would be far better not to set up another working party until we have come to firm conclusions on some of the earlier reports which we have initiated.

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

PRIME MINISTER

13 April 1988

English in the National Curriculum

The Secretary of State proposes that you and colleagues agree to:

(a) the publication of the Kingman Report and the establishment of a Working Group on English;

(b) welcome the Kingman Report subject to the remarks made in para 5 of the Secretary of State's note;

(c) agree to the terms of reference and supplementary guidance contained in a letter from the Secretary of State which are given in annexes D and E to the paper.

The Kingman Report

The Report is something of a curate's egg. (I enclose a highlighted version). The good parts are:

- the importance of testing children about the language environment (1.12);
- the duty of schools to enable children to acquire Standard English (2.31);
- the model of the English language which is set out in Chapter 3 (and especially on page 31) contains many good features;

- the need for clear aims in the teaching of English (5.2 and 5.10);

- the attainment targets which are set out for all 16, 11 and 7 year olds (pages 92-97).

If these targets were met there would be little doubt that standards of literacy would be raised significantly in our country.

Against this however there is a lack of any real backbone to the Report; a nervousness about stating unequivocally that Standard English should be taught and examined throughout the country:

- Kingman's letter to the Secretary of State is very instructive: it is all about the description of language but not the prescription of Standard English for all schools;

- because of this teachers will then use their professional judgement about "the extent to which that description should be made explicit to their pupils": this puts the emphasis not on objective standards but subjective judgements by teachers;

- the Report strongly rejects the teaching of "old-fashioned grammar ... and learning by rote" (poetry? parts of Shakespeare?) 2.27; memory knowledge.

- the section on teaching is quite vague: "testing needs to be defined as broadly as possible" 5.12.

The Report is likely to draw criticism both from progressives (the English teaching profession) and traditionalists (John Marenbon) - as it really satisfies no one.

In discussion of the Report the critical question which needs to be settled is how the Model which is developed in Chapter 3 relates to Kingman's letter to the Secretary of State. If the Model of Standard English were to be made prescriptive that would be fine: one's fear from the letter however is that the Model as it stands is simply a description of good English, and will only become prescriptive at the discretion of individual teachers. This would be nothing short of disastrous.

Secretary of State's requests:

(a) **Publication of the Report and establishment of a Working Group on English**

This is fine subject to your agreeing to the names of the Working Group.

(b) **Welcome of the Committee's Report**

In view of the undesirable features of the Report, the Secretary of State's welcome needs to be very guarded. Otherwise the Report will be taken hook, line and sinker as the basis of the Working Party's terms of reference.

The ideal response would be for the Secretary of State to endorse Standard English, the Model outlined in Chapter 3 and the tests (Chapter 5) as prescriptive for all children in all schools.

(c) **Terms of Reference and Supplementary Guidance**

These need substantial editing e.g. in the letter which he proposes sending to the Chairman of the Committee he suggests

(a) in defining attainment targets for 16 year olds the starting point should be GCSE National Criteria! (para 10)

(b) as a basis for their work the Committee might use the HMI paper 'English from 5-16': yet this was the reason for Marenbon writing the Centre for Policy Studies monograph 'English our English' (see pages 13-14) - which I enclose: his comments on HMI etc are devastating.

All in all you need to be far more cautious than the Secretary of State suggests.

Brian Griffiths

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

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PRIME MINISTER

MEETING ~~WITH~~ OF E(EP): 14 APRIL

E(EP) meets after Cabinet.

The papers, Cabinet Office briefs and Brian Griffiths' comments are in the dividers for the two items.

On the first item, English in the National Curriculum, both the Cabinet Office brief and, more particularly, Brian's note, raise some fundamental queries about Mr Baker's proposals. I imagine you will want to spend a greater part of the meeting on this item, although I suggest you avoid taking time up with discussion of appointments to the proposed Working Group on English.

On item 2, Design and Technology, the Cabinet Office note raises a number of points you will want to pursue. Brian goes further and questions whether attention should at the moment be focussed on the core subjects before we get into the business of setting up a Working Party on any other foundation subjects. You will want to consider what the implications of that more radical approach would be.

I am putting separately in the box a proposal from Peter Walker to press ahead with setting up a Working Group on Welsh. This is not on tomorrow's E(EP) agenda, which I suspect already has more than enough to cope with, but you may wish to glance at the papers on Welsh before the meeting.

PRCG.

Paul Gray
13 April 1988

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MJ2CFM

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P 03066

PRIME MINISTER

The National Curriculum: Design and Technology
E(EP)(88)7

DECISIONS

The Secretary of State for Education and Science wants to announce the establishment of a National Curriculum working group on design and technology in the last week of April, at the same time as he publishes the Kingman report. This working group would be responsible for recommending detailed programmes of study and attainment targets for the foundation subject of design and technology.

2. Mr Baker's proposals raised difficult questions about the definition and status of technology, and the need for attainments targets for technology and the other non-core foundation subjects. When E(EP) last discussed the matter they were not convinced of the need for attainment targets in any subjects other than the core subjects of English, Maths and Science. Mr Baker expressed concern about this conclusion in subsequent private correspondence with you and it was left that the question of attainment targets for technology should be considered further in the context of his proposals for this working group.

BACKGROUND

3. The consultation document on the national curriculum issued last July explained that technology would be a foundation subject and that a technology working group would be set up as soon as possible. Mr Baker now proposes that a design and technology working group should be set up very shortly and asked to produce an interim report by 31 October and a final report by April 1989. He would then make an order by the end of 1989 specifying attainment targets and progammes of study, for schools to apply from 1990.

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4. At the Sub-Committee meeting on 28 October (E(EP)(87)8th Meeting) Mr Baker returned to his proposal that attainment targets should be set for all ten foundation subjects. The minutes record you as saying, in your summing-up, that the Sub-Committee acknowledged the case for setting attainment targets in the three core subjects of English, Maths and Science but remained unconvinced of the need to set attainment targets in other subjects such as technology, history and geography. Mr Baker expressed concern about this conclusion in a private minute to you afterwards. On technology, he argued that in order to respond to clear demands from industry and commerce, the Government needed to push up standards in pupils' understanding of design and technology. Your private secretary's reply of 6 November said:

> "The Prime Minister understands that Mr Baker will be writing to her shortly about a working group on technology. She suggests that attainment targets in this area can be considered in that context."

Mr Baker's reply of 11 November said:

> "I confirm that the Bill as drafted gives total discretion to the holder of my office on whether or not to specify attainment targets, programmes of study and assessment arrangements for each of the foundation subjects. As you suggest, I will bring forward proposals about attainment targets for technology when I am ready to propose the creation of a Technology Working Group. My purpose will be to consolidate and entrench the very substantial benefits that the TVEI has brought to the curriculum of our secondary schools."

ISSUES

Definition of design and technology

5. Mr Baker acknowledges that no consensus has yet been reached on what knowledge and skills should be included in technology courses. He sees the risk that it will become a soft option, and proposes to guard against that by giving it a mathematical or

scientific basis. But you may want to question how far the study of technology provides a proper intellectual discipline. Mr Baker says that it covers craft studies and would indeed recognise their importance by naming the working group the design and technology working group. Will technology in practice consist mainly of subjects like woodwork and metal work?

6. You may wish to endorse the proposed links between the teaching of technology and the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI), and the working up of curricula in parallel. Mr Baker is planning to have representatives of TVEI and the City Technology Colleges on this working group to ensure consistency of approach. The emphasis on technology preparing pupils for the world of work, through having to work in teams, understand financial and technical constraints etc, is in the right direction.

Need for attainment targets

7. You will want first to consider whether attainment targets are suitable at all for technology. E(EP) when it last discussed the subject was not convinced.

See Annex A, para. 1.

8. The terms of reference for the technology working party, like those for the English working party, would appear to commit the Government to attainment targets for all foundation subjects: see the brief on the first item.

Age to which technology should be studied

9. The detailed terms of reference for the working party (Appendix to Annex A of Mr Baker's paper) require them to assume that technology will be studied throughout the period of compulsory schooling, that is up to age 16. Are you content with that?

10. The terms of reference also set the proportion of time to be spent on technology at 5-10% in years 1-3 secondary school, and 5% in years 4-5. Are you content with that given the need to prevent the foundation subjects taking up too high a proportion of the timetable? E(EP) decided to reduce this proportion to 70%.

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Resources

11. There are likely to be resource implications for local education authorities of expanding the teaching of technology. You may wish to ask Mr Baker whether he plans to give the working group any guidelines on resources (none appear in the terms of reference). The recommendations of the working groups will of course be examined carefully by the Government before the national curriculum Orders are made, so resource implications will have to be considered at that stage. The Chief Secretary may wish to comment on this. Mr Baker may suggest phasing in the curriculum requirements on technology over a period, particularly if there continues to be a shortage of appropriately qualified teachers in technology.

Composition of the Working Group

12. Mr Baker wishes to clear the appointment of a chairman and members of the working group with you outside the meeting. He proposes Lady Parkes as chairman. She is a member of the Secondary Examinations Council and chairman of the Craft, Design and Technology Committee of that Council. Her husband is Vice-Chancellor of Leeds University and was formerly chairman of the UGC. Around a dozen members of the working group are envisaged, from a range of backgrounds including industry, TVEI, secondary school staff, local education authorities and City Technology College. Mr Baker intends to minute you on appointments if the Sub-Committee approves his proposals.

as for Item 1 / I suggest you handle all this outside the meeting. PRCG.

HANDLING

13. You will wish to ask the Secretary of State for Education and Science to introduce his paper. The Secretary of State for Wales is a joint author although there are no specifically Welsh points. The Chief Secretary, Treasury, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and other Ministers may wish to comment. The Lord President of the Council may wish to advise on the timing of an announcement.

RTJW.

R T J WILSON, Cabinet Office
12 April 1988

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P 03065

PRIME MINISTER

ENGLISH IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

E(EP)(88)6

DECISIONS

The Secretary of State for Education and Science wishes to publish the report of the Kingman Committee on English language, and to announce the establishment of a national curriculum working group on English, in the last week of April.

2. The main issue is how far children should be taught the structure of the language. Mr Baker says that Kingman recommends that they should be, but you may want to question him further about their views. You may also want to question his belief that it is tactically better not to refer to the teaching of structure in the working group's terms of reference. And you may want to ensure that the Government's reaction to the Kingman proposals on teacher training is suitably cautious until more is known about their cost.

3. More generally, the terms of reference which Mr Baker proposes would appear to commit the Government to attainment targets for all foundation subjects. You may wish this to be modified.

see Annex D, para. 1.

BACKGROUND

4. The Kingman Committee was established early last year to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Science on methods of teaching the English language and on attainment targets on knowledge of language. The consultation document on the national curriculum issued last July, and endorsed by the Sub-Committee (E(EP)(87)3rd Meeting), explained that the Government intended to establish, after Kingman had reported, an English working group to advise on attainment targets at ages 7, 11, 14 and 16 and programmes of study. The working group needs to have a wider remit than Kingman to cover the teaching of English literature, poetry and drama as well as language.

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5. Mr Baker proposes that the working group should be asked for its recommendations on attainment targets and programmes of study for ages 7 and 11 by 30 September. An interim report on the secondary age group is also requested by that date, with final recommendations due by 30 April 1989. This would enable the Government to make an Order specifying attainment targets and programmes of study in English for the primary stage in the first half of 1989 and for secondary by the end of 1989. Primary schools could then implement the national curriculum for English, alongside mathematics and science, in September 1989, with secondary schools starting one year later.

ISSUES

Recommendations of the Kingman Committee

6. You may wish to discuss Kingman's recommendations on:

a. teaching the structure of language;

b. teacher training; and

c. attainment targets.

Teaching the structure of language

7. Kingman suggests that children will be seriously disadvantaged if they are not taught anything about the structure of language. His report also stresses the importance of all children becoming familiar with standard English, as opposed solely to their own regional dialects and accents. However, a return to the formal teaching of grammar, which was normal practice until the 1960s and still continues in some schools today, is not advocated. Rather, the teaching of language structure as the need arises in the context of other language work, such as composition , is recommended. You may wish to ask Mr Baker about the terms in which he wishes to welcome Kingman's recommendations on the teaching of language structure.

8. The terms of reference for the national curriculum working party do not indicate the importance of knowledge of the structure of the language (although the supplementary guidance for the working group refers to such things as 'relevance' and 'the development of personal qualities' - paragraph 14 of Annex E). Mr Baker thinks it better not to stir up argument about this, and just to insert a general reference to Kingman. You may want to consider whether it would be better to make explicit the Government's belief in the importance of the teaching of structure.

9. Mr Baker also proposes to include in the working group's remit subjects such as theatre studies and media studies (paragraphs 7 and 8 of his paper). You may want to ask about these.

Teacher training

10. Kingman has made a series of recommendations on teacher training (Annex B). These cover both initial and in-service training. The recommendations have not been costed, and you may wish to ensure that Mr Baker's reaction to this aspect of the Kingman report is suitably cautious. Mr Baker also says that he will propose more specific grants to support teacher training. He has in fact put proposals to E(LA), and you may wish to ensure that E(LA) are left to deal with them.

Attainment targets

11. Kingman's recommendations on attainment targets are set out in Annex C. At each age, these targets have been formulated in two sections: what the pupil should be able to do (eg: read, spell etc) and what the pupil should be able to do understand (eg: forms of punctuation and syntax). This model may be useful in other subjects. Although these targets are an interesting start, since they only cover language they will need to be widened considerably by the English working group. We understand that the Kingman Committee spent most of its time developing its model for language teaching, and only tackled the remit on attainment targets relatively recently. You may wish to ask Mr Baker if he believes these targets are sufficiently specific to be useful in assessment, and how he intends to comment on Kingman's suggested targets.

He is very keen - probably rightly - to avoid time in this meeting being taken up with personalities. But I have stressed to his office that he should write to you with his proposals - and if necessary we can then arrange a separate talk. PRCG.

Composition of the Working Group

12. We understand Mr Baker is meeting a potential chairman for the English working group in the next couple of days, and that he hopes to put his recommendation to you very shortly thereafter. He envisages a working group of 12-15 members, from a range of backgrounds. Mr Baker would like to handle these appointments outside the Sub-Committee. If you wish to be consulted about the full membership, you may wish to ask for this at the meeting.

Announcement

13. Mr Baker proposes to publish the Kingman report, and announce the establishment of the English working group, by written answer in the week beginning 25 April. This timetable depends on his being able to identify an acceptable chairman for the group.

Terms of Reference

14. Mr Baker proposes to publish the working Group's terms of reference (Annex D) and the supplementary guidance (Annex E) when he makes his announcement. These are similar in form to the remits given to the mathematics and science working groups last July, which were also published. You may wish to discuss:

a. the percentage of the total curriculum time which it is suggested an average pupil should spend on English. Mr Baker proposes the working group assumes 20% for primary children, 15% in years 1-3 of secondary schooling and 12.5% in years 4 and 5. It is difficult to comment on whether these percentages are appropriate, or consistent with the figure of 70% for all core and foundation subjects combined (fixed by the Sub-Committee last October - E(EP)(87)8th Meeting), without knowing Mr Baker's proposals for the percentages on all 10 subjects. You may wish to ask him about this.

b. the drafting of the first paragraph of the terms of reference (Annex D). The second sentence appears to imply that attainment targets will be set for all core and foundation subjects, but this is inconsistent with the

consultation document last July which said that there would be guidelines, rather than targets, for music, art and physical education. The Sub-Committee endorsed this decision last October. You may wish to ask Mr Baker to amend this paragraph. The same point arises on the technology working party.

HANDLING

15. You will wish to ask the Secretary of State for Education and Science to introduce his paper. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Chief Secretary, Treasury, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and other Ministers may wish to comment. The Lord President of the Council may wish to advise on the timing of an announcement.

RJW.

R T J WILSON
Cabinet Office
12 April 1988

CONFIDENTIAL

DA

Alie

bc BG

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

13 April 1988

Dear Tom,

ADMISSION OF PUPILS TO MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

The Prime Minister was grateful for your Secretary of State's minute of 8 April.

She is not, however, persuaded that implementation of the more open enrolment provisions should be deferred from September 1989 to September 1990. She has noted that, although many applications for revised standard numbers may be for a lower admissions limit, there will presumably be a significant proportion where parents wish to see the admissions limit raised. Accommodating such wishes would not significantly affect other schools and such applications could therefore be allowed to go forward.

The Prime Minister has also noted that, although parents would obviously welcome certainty, those who wish their children to attend certain schools might well value the possibility of getting their children into them greater than the uncertainty of not knowing until the summer term the school to which they have been assigned. The difficulty could be eased by asking LEAs to inform parents at the beginning of the 1988/89 school year that for certain schools the final allocation for all pupils would not be made until the summer term. The process could also be speeded up by the appointment of part-time help to ensure that cases were decided by Easter 1989.

The Prime Minister would therefore be grateful if your Secretary of State could reconsider the position and draw up a timetable of arrangements which would make it possible still to implement the proposals from September 1989.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of E(EP) and to Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

Yours,

Paul

(PAUL GRAY)

Tom Jeffery, Esq.,
Department of Education and Science.

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PRIME MINISTER

MEETING WITH E(EP): 14 APRIL

E(EP) meets after Cabinet.

The papers, Cabinet Office briefs and Brian Griffiths' comments are in the dividers for the two items.

On the first item, English in the National Curriculum, both the Cabinet Office brief and, more particularly, Brian's note, raise some fundamental queries about Mr Baker's proposals. I imagine you will want to spend a greater part of the meeting on this item, although I suggest you avoid taking time up with discussion of appointments to the proposed Working Group on English.

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I am putting separately in the box a proposal from Peter Walker to press ahead with setting up a Working Group on Welsh. This is not on tomorrow's E(EP) agenda, which I suspect already has more than enough to cope with, but you may wish to glance at the papers on Welsh before the meeting.

Paul Gray
13 April 1988

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MJ2CFM

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Prime Minister

You asked for Brian's views on this.
Do you want to question the proposal on the basis he suggests?

PRIME MINISTER

12 April 1988

PRC6 12/4

Yes - I suggest we write in accordance with Brian's comments for the reasons he sets out

Admission of Pupils to Maintained Schools

The proposal from Kenneth Baker to delay introducing open enrolment until 1990 is based on some questionable arguments.

My suspicion is that he has accepted, rather uncritically, the arguments of officials, who while concerned to achieve a neat administrative solution, fail to appreciate the significant benefits of greater choice and therefore the urgency of getting something started immediately.

The problems with the proposal are set out as follows:

1. Even if 20-25% of schools question their standard number of pupils, this leaves 75-80% of schools who will not. A significant proportion of these will be schools for which parents wish to see the admissions limit raised. Accommodating these parental wishes will not significantly affect other schools. Surely applications to these schools should be allowed to go forward.

2. For the other schools, it is claimed that parents will not thank us if they do not know until late in the summer term the schools to which their children will go. Against this however:

   - parents who wish their children to attend certain schools will almost certainly value the possibility of getting their children into them greater than the uncertainty of not knowing until the summer term the school to which they have been assigned.

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- in any case we could ask LEAs to inform parents at the beginning of the school year 1988-9 that for certain schools in the Authority (which they would list) final allocation for all pupils will not be made until the summer term (although of course most can be made well before that time).

3. The proposed solution is distinctly unimaginative. The DES claim that applications will start arriving by the autumn. If the DES were to hire on a temporary basis 10-15 recently retired civil servants or heads and some secretarial help for six months or so, they could ensure that the matter would be decided by Easter 1989 at the latest.

Conclusion and Recommendation

At the time when the new Education Act comes into force it is far more important that the government is seen to be helping parents than supporting creaking bureaucracies.

Our approach therefore should be to:

1. Insist on implementing the proposals from September 1989 not September 1990.

2. Get the Secretary of State to ask officials to draw up a timetable which makes this possible.

3. Agree to the appointment of part-time help as a way of speeding up the process within the Department.

Brian Griffiths

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

SUBJECT & MASTER

RESTRICTED file

DAS

bc BG

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Principal Private Secretary

12 April 1988

Dear Tom,

CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

The Prime Minister held a meeting today to discuss with Lady Cox, Michael Alison MP, James Pawsey MP and Anthony Coombs MP Christian religious education in schools. Your Secretary of State and Professor Brian Griffiths were also present. The meeting had before it Michael Alison's letters of 23 March and 8 April.

Lady Cox said that she was pleased with the Secretary of State's announcement in the Commons regarding religious education (RE), but she wished to go further still. Her concern related to the present trends in RE in many parts of the country. The emphasis on multi-faith studies led to nihilist thinking and the politicisation of some religious teaching led to secularisation. Lady Cox then handed to the Prime Minister some books used in schools, including some produced by the Christian Education Movement and CND, in support of her case. She believed that the only way to stop these undesirable trends was to insert in the Education Reform Bill a requirement that RE should be predominantly Christian-based. The locally agreed syllabuses did not meet the objective; and she cited an example from the Dudley's syllabus in support of her point. In some places, it was possible to take a GCSE RE examination without reference to Christianity. Mr. Alison thought that many Bishops, including those on the attached list, supported the amendment to the legislation proposed by Lady Cox. He accepted that some Bishops, including the Bishop of London, were reluctant to say so in public, fearing that if they supported such an amendment and it was lost, the position of Christian education would be in a worse position than under the proposed legislation.

The delegation then went on to make the following additional points. The legislation should obviously allow parents to withdraw their children from the predominantly Christian-based RE if they so chose. But it should not be assumed that all non-Christian faiths would take advantage of this facility. Some Muslims, for example, would want their children to attend Christian-based lessons in acknowledgement of their religion's belief that Christ was a Prophet. Christian-based education would not be safeguarded if syllabuses were left to local negotiations; Christians locally

ECL

would not fight for their form of education unless they were given some sense of direction. The Bill lacked teeth in enforcing the practical implementation of sound Christian education in the schools. The Secretary of State should establish a National Advisory Commission to advise how religious education should be taught in schools. He should be given statutory powers so that he could give effect to the Commission's findings. Mr. Pawsey referred to his letter of 17 March to the Prime Minister in which he advocated an amendment to clause 89 of the Education Reform Bill requiring collective worship to be Christian. It seemed from the reaction of the other members of the delegation that while they had sympathy with Mr. Pawsey's objective, they were not themselves pressing for his particular amendment.

The Secretary of State said that his understanding of the Bishop of London's position was different from Lady Cox's. He understood from a recent conversation with the Bishop that he was strongly opposed to the insertion of the words 'predominantly Christian-based' into the Bill and believed that such an amendment would be highly damaging to the cause of Christian education in schools. Cardinal Hume and the Catholic Bishop of Leeds, Bishop Konstant, were also opposed to such an amendment. He would shortly discuss the matter with the Chief Rabbi and the Leader of the Methodists. He expected them to express a similar view. He thought too that he would need to speak to the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Secretary of State believed that such an amendment would be divisive and would lead to more children being withdrawn from RE. The Government was not finally committed to any particular course and he was going to discuss the issue further with religious leaders.

There was some discussion about whether any amendment should refer to RE which was 'predominantly Christian-based', 'predominantly Biblical', 'predominantly Scriptural', or 'predominantly Judaeo-Christian'. Some preference was expressed for a formulation which referred to RE which was "predominantly but not exclusively Biblically-based" since this was thought least likely to offend other religions.

The Prime Minister told the MPs that the Secretary of State and herself fully supported their objective - a thorough teaching of Christian education within the schools so that the nation's children were aware both of the religious significance of Christian education and its contribution to the culture, history and way of life of the country. But the Secretary of State was clearly in real difficulty in negotiating such a clause on the lines sought by the delegation in view of the apparent opposition by church leaders. There was an established Church in England and it was difficult for a government to take an initiative regarding RE which did not have the open support of leaders of the Church of England. She wondered whether one possibility would be for Lady Cox to seek to have the arguments aired in a debate on the amendment and then to withdraw it. The advantage of this course was that it would enable the Bishops to say during the debate that RE should, of course, be

predominantly Christian and this would send a good signal to the local negotiations. Lady Cox's reaction to this proposal suggested that she was unwilling to do this since she asked whether the Government would undertake not to oppose such an amendment if it was pushed to a vote.

The Prime Minister then said that in his further discussions with Church leaders, the Secretary of State would ask how they intended to ensure that the locally-negotiated syllabuses made provision for religious education which was predominantly Christian-based. The Secretary of State should ensure that the Church leaders gave careful and thorough thought to this aspect and were not allowed to opt out of their responsibilities locally.

Concluding the discussion, the Prime Minister said that the delegation had heard that the Secretary of State was still exploring the issue and the Government was not finally committed to any particular course. It was clear that they shared a common objective. The Secretary of State and herself would need to consider further how that might be met.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Private Secretary to the Lord Privy Seal.

Nigel Wicks

N. L. WICKS

Tom Jeffery, Esq.,
Department of Education and Science

THE RT. HON. MICHAEL ALISON, M.P.

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The following Bishops in the Church of England have told me explicitly that they favour defining RE in the Bill as predominantly Christian.^

1 Bath & Wells
2 Bradford
3 Chelmsford (in Lords)
4 Chester (in Lords)
5 Coventry
6 Ely (in Lords)
7 Lincoln
8 Oxford
9 Peterborough
10 St. Albans (in Lords)
11 Salisbury (in Lords)
12 Selby (Suffragan)
13 London. (in Lords)

CF

Cile

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

11 April 1988

Your Secretary of State will wish to see a further letter from Michael Alison MP about Christian religious education in schools, which is relevant to his meeting with the Prime Minister tomorrow, 12 April. Mr. Baker and the Minister of State (Mrs. Rumbold) have been invited to the meeting.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Johnstone (Minister of State, Department of Education and Science).

N. L. WICKS

Tom Jeffery, Esq.,
Department of Education and Science

10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER

There is a further letter in the folder from Michael Alison which you have not yet seen.

N.L.W.

NLW

11.4.88

THE RT. HON. MICHAEL ALISON, M.P.

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

9/4

Dear Shana,

Could you kindly use your good offices to get the attached letter before the PM's eyes, in time for her to read it (if possible!) before [illegible] other colleagues meet her on Tuesday?

Yours ever
Michael
A

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CC BG

Prime Minister

RACG

8/4

Advice from Brian Griffiths please - urgently.

PRIME MINISTER

ADMISSION OF PUPILS TO MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

I sent you a minute on 20 October to report on the outcome of the consultation exercise on the more open enrolment proposals. One of the points I made was that, although the target date for implementation in respect of secondary schools was September 1989, it might be necessary to review the position at a later date in the light of the timing of Royal Assent, and on the evidence of the likely volume of applications for the revision of schools' standard numbers.

I am writing now to report that achievement of the target date of September 1989 looks to be increasingly impracticable, if we are to avoid disruption to local admissions arrangements and considerable irritation to parents. The evidence we have received to date suggests that the Department may receive applications for revised standard numbers in respect of about 20% to 25% of all maintained secondary schools in England - that is about 800 to 1,000 institutions. Nearly all these applications will be for a reduction in the standard number, and thus a lower admissions limit. Such proposals will require the publication of statutory notices followed by a two month period in which local people may submit objections. We thought this procedure essential, in order to ensure that applications would only succeed where they had a totally convincing case on accommodation grounds. But the requirement means that applications will not begin to arrive in the Department until the autumn of 1988, and we could not expect to process such a large number of cases until the admissions procedures for 1989 were well under way at local level. Parents will be antagonised if they do not know until the last minute what the admissions limit for their preferred school is to be. We have also to bear in mind the new possibility that I shall have to decide the terms of

disputed admissions arrangements between LEAs and the governors of aided schools, in accordance with the undertaking I have given to the Churches.

I therefore intend to let it be known during the passage of the legislation through the Lords that implementation of the more open enrolment provisions of the Bill will begin in September 1990. I believe such an announcement will be welcomed by the peers and in particular by the Bishops.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State for Wales, to other members of E(EP), and to Sir Robin Butler.

K.B.

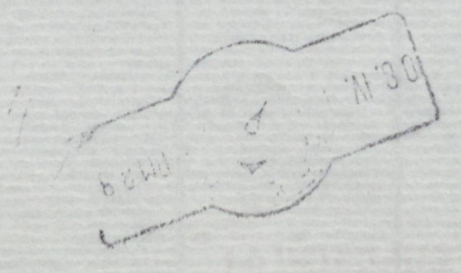
KB

8 April 1988

Department of Education and Science

CONFIDENTIAL

EDUCATION: Policy Pt 17.



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THE RT. HON. MICHAEL ALISON, M.P.

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

8 April 1988

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher, MP
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

Dear Margaret,

Christian religious education in schools

Caroline Cox and I, together with James Pawsey and Anthony Coombs, are looking forward to meeting you on April 12, to discuss some amendments to the Education Reform Bill which Caroline would like to move in the House of Lords. We are very grateful to you for being prepared to give us the necessary time.

I sent you a memorandum before Easter, to outline our areas of concern, and to prepare the ground for the (earlier) meeting with you which was, in the event, post-poned. I hope you will allow me now briefly to supplement that memorandum with some further points which we would like to discuss with you on Tuesday.

(1) Kenneth Baker's useful changes to the Education Reform Bill on Report undoubtedly safeguard and strengthen the place of religious education in the school curriculum. But we still believe that the deal struck with the Bishops could actually be counter-productive if it merely entrenches the wrong kind of R E. And so far, the Bill has failed to tackle the issue of how the existing local methods for determining religious syllabuses have manifestly led to the almost scandalous situation prevailing today. Why should the Department of Education be so blithely willing to trust LEAs to produce satisfactory locally agreed RE syllabuses, when the whole thrust of the Bill is that such local authorities, in other vital areas, are simply not to be trusted, and must have statutory guidelines imposed on them ?

(2) One reason why the present range of locally- agreed RE syllabuses is so un-satisfactory is precisely the absence of any specific reference to the Christian religion in the 1944 Act's religious provisions. It could then be taken for granted; now it cannot. For example, the local Agreed Syllabus Conference (as

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THE RT. HON. MICHAEL ALISON, M.P.

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

you will recall), consists of four committees - one representing the LEA, one representing the teachers, one representing the Church of England, and one representing denominations other than the C of E. In a number of instances, this latter committee has been re-interpreted to mean, not other Christian denominations (the original intention) but other faiths.

The Brent syllabus vividly illustrates how this misinterpretation of the 1944 Act has been abused. Its preamble states that:-

> "In the syllabus the word faith is understood to mean any consistent, coherent and ethical religion or life stance whether theistic or non-theistic."

This definition clearly leaves the way open for the teaching of atheistic ideologies and world-views such as Marxism. And the Brent Committee representing "denominations other than the Church of England," which helped to draw up the syllabus, had 23 members, 15 of whom were from non-Christian faiths - 2 Bahai, 1 Buddhist, 2 Hindu, 1 Humanist, 2 Muslim, 2 Janist, 3 Jew, 1 Sikh, and 1 Zoroastrian. The parallel Manchester LEA committee had 45 members, the majority of whom were non-Christian. The same is true for Bradford LEA.

(3) In the light of what I have written above, our contention is that it is naive - and worse - to consider that the Bill as amended at Report has done all that needs to be for RE, so that the rest can cheerfully be left for local application. If nothing more is done to specify and entrench in the statute that the Christian religion should be the predominant component of RE, then the reverse is likely to occur, and in many parts of the Country the Christian religion will become a minority, even a marginal feature of RE syllabuses. We are not advocating an exclusively Christian definition for RE. We believe that some exposure to other faiths is desirable. But we believe that these "other faiths" altogether should never exceed, say 25 per cent of an RE syllabus, and considerably less in Primary Schools.

(4) One of your own most striking initiatives has been your open advocacy for a moral and spiritual revival in Britain to complement the industrial and economic

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THE RT. HON. MICHAEL ALISON, M.P.

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

regeneration which your policies have so manifestly put in hand. We believe that you share our conviction that the moral and spiritual revival our nation - above all our children - so desperately need must be based on our historic Christian faith, rather than on Buddhism, or Zoroastrianism, or a pot pourri of other faiths. Kenneth Baker clearly shares our views, too. In Crawley, last December, he said -

> "What the vast majority of children have been utterly starved of are the riches of the spirit. Their ignorance of the historic religious faith of this country, a faith which has inspired and guided so many of its greatest men and women, is a national disgrace."

But we suspect that his robust views are not wholly shared in the Department of Education. Your DES Minister in the House of Lords, for example, recently said that "We are no longer a predominantly Christian nation and our schools reflect the multi-faith nature of Britain in 1988." (OR 26. 2. 88). With respect, we believe that view to be nonsense and worse - almost subversive. If such a view prevails, there is little hope of a revival of faith and morals based upon Christianity. "If the trumpet sounds an uncertain note, who will prepare himself for battle?"

We are convinced that the Education Reform Bill must sound an unmistakable note, the specification of "predominantly Christian" as the statutory definition of religious instruction.

Yours ever
Michael.

MICHAEL ALISON

North East London Polytechnic

Romford Road, London E15 4LZ

From the Office of the Rector
G T Fowler MA FRSA FBIM FABAC HonFABE

Telephone:
01-590 7722

Sir Kenneth Green
Director
Manchester Polytechnic
All Saints
Manchester M15 6BH

6th April, 1988

GTF/TB

Dear Ken,

ARTICLES OF GOVERNMENT ETC.

I agree wholeheartedly with your central principle. The Secretary of State cannot choose managerialism and representationalism simultaneously. DES is always doing that, and in consequence always making a botch of it. At institutional level representationalism is demonstrably a brake on efficiency, when not worse. It follows that a clean-cut managerial structure must be adopted. You may quote me to Baker etc. as saying that, although if I say it myself it may not help, for historic reasons.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

P.P. L. Bamm

PROFESSOR G.T. FOWLER

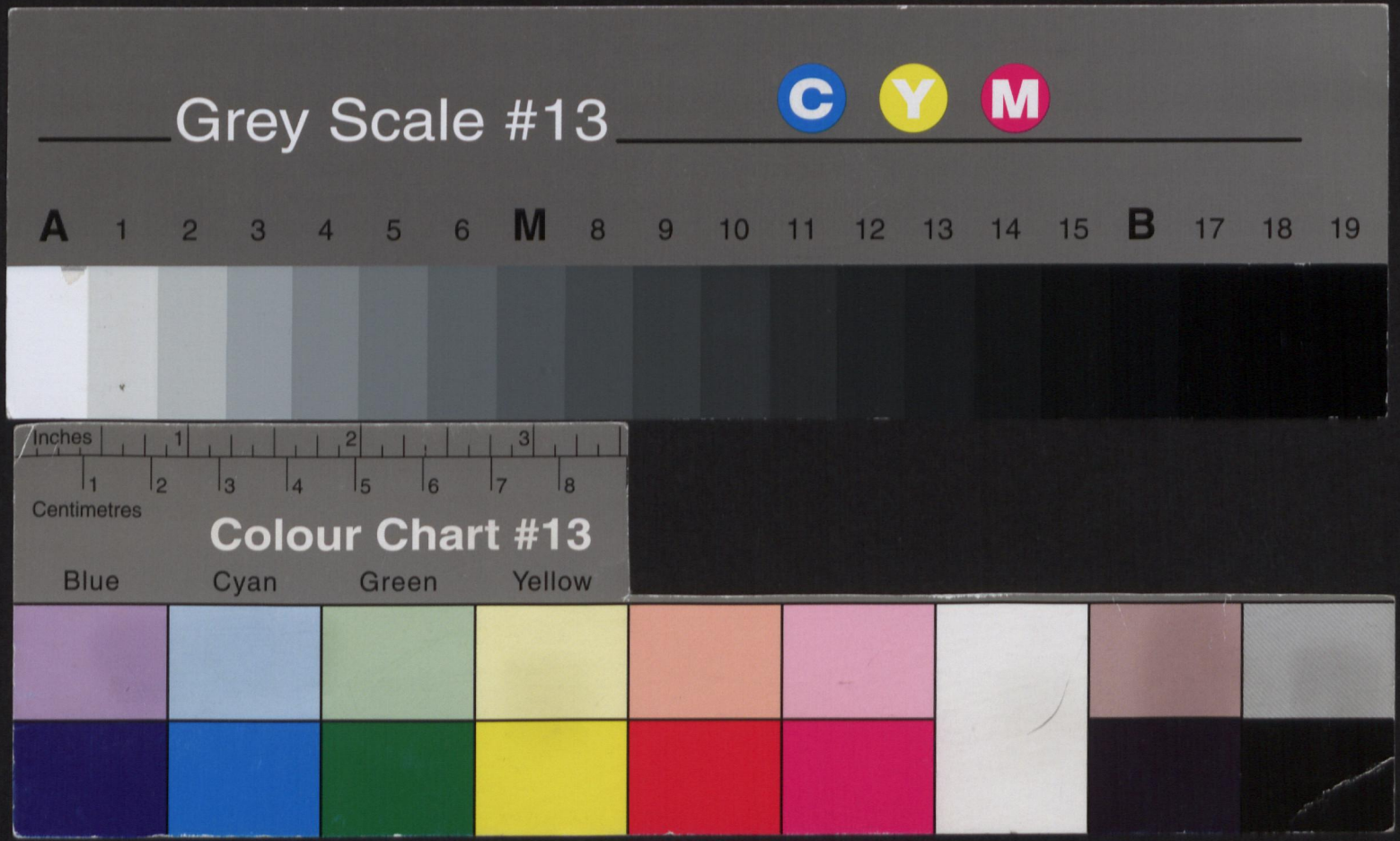
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE
07. 04. 88
Refer to:

PART 17 ends:-

N Ireland Office P.N. 30.3.88

PART 18 begins:-

SS/DES to PM 8.4.88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Centimetres
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