Part 26

Confidential Filing

General Policy on Education

In attached folder: Nat. Curr. Foreign Languages Working Gp Final Report

EDUCATION

Part 1: May 1979

Part 26: June 1990

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
~~4.6.90~~							
~~11.6.90~~							
~~15.6.90~~							
~~20.7.90~~							
~~27.7.90~~							
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~~17.9.90~~							
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~~2.10.90~~							
~~15.10.90~~							
17.10.90							

PT 26 ENDS

PREM 19/2957

HMSO Dd8953031 6/88 C60 GP2265 CCN13412 (3932)

PART 26 ends:-

SS/SCOT to SS/DGS 23.10

PART 27 begins:-

~~DGS to CAS~~ 16/~~14~~.11.90

COM
FROM PT 27

file JD
cc DES
PC

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 November 1990

Your Eminence,

Thank you for your letter of 19 October about your Diocese's recent request to the Secretary of State for Education and Science to intervene over Hertfordshire's decision to change its policy on school transport for children attending denominational schools.

I know that Kenneth Clarke is considering that request very carefully and I understand that he hopes to reach a final decision very shortly. He tells me that he will be in touch with you to fix a meeting at which he will be able to tell you personally of the outcome.

I can certainly reassure you of the continued importance which we as a government attach to the dual system established in 1944, and to the role which denominational schools continue to play in the state system of education. Church schools are now firmly embedded in the mainstream of education provision, and within it offer a distinctive set of values which we welcome and which have proved very popular with parents. I am sure that they will be able to capitalise on the measures we have taken to remove artificial barriers to parental choice and to reward successful and popular schools.

I know you have already spoken to John MacGregor about some specific concerns; and Kenneth Clarke will be happy to discuss them further when you meet. But on the general thrust of our policies and aspirations for the education system, I would like to stress how much we welcome partnership with the Churches and

the special contribution they can make. I know you share our concern for increasing standards and I am confident that this aim will be best served by the continuing existence of a range of types of school, among which denominational schools will continue to have a leading role to play.

His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER 3

FREE TRANSPORT TO DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS: REPLY TO CARDINAL HUME

Cardinal Hume has written to you about his appeal to the Secretary of State for Education and Science to overturn the decision by Hertfordshire County Council to stop giving free transport to pupils attending denominational schools. A draft reply is attached which has been approved by Mr Clarke.

At the moment, free school transport is available for pupils attending church schools where there is no alternative church school of the appropriate denomination within walking distance. Hertfordshire are now proposing to ask parents to make a contribution of £50 a term towards the cost except where the pupil qualifies for free transport because the denominational school is the nearest school beyond the statutory walking distance or on grounds of poverty.

The churches are concerned that the change will spread to other local authorities and will restrict parental choice. Cardinal Hume argues that in many cases the Church authorities agreed to the siting of schools on the basis of existing arrangements for free travel.

This issue was considered by "H" last month. It thought that the Secretary of State should take further legal advice and recognised that non-intervention might lead to judicial review and certainly to strong protests from the Churches that choice was being eroded. But it thought that the Secretary of State should not be pushed against his own inclination to intervene. Further legal advice confirms that the Secretary of State has the right (but not the duty) to overturn the decision. However, both Mr Macgregor and Mr Clarke have decided not to intervene. The main arguments for this are:

- Hertfordshire is not acting illegally and is clearly within its responsibility as a local authority. The powers of intervention available to the Secretary of State have not been used in any substantial way since the 1940s and there ought to be compelling reasons for using them now;

- intervention by central Government would inevitably lead to much closer Government involvement in the policy and the funding of school transport with the risk of much controversy and expense;

- this would go against the thrust of Government policy to increase LEA discretion;

- a significant subsidy will still remain and DES do not accept that the change will have the detrimental effect on choice that the churches claim;

- the change has been made to meet Hertfordshire's legitimate demands for economy in educational priorities. Hertfordshire has a particularly expensive education system which the local authority is making determined efforts to control.

A letter from Mr Macgregor setting out the detailed background is attached, together with a more recent letter summarising Mr Clarke's response.

Mr Clarke suggests that you should give Cardinal Hume some general reassurances but leave it to Mr Clarke to meet him and tell him his decision. This is a highly sensitive issue and Mr Clarke's decision will clearly be very unpopular with the churches, although it can certainly be defended robustly. It may be best for you - at least at this stage - to keep a back seat.

Content to sign the attached?

CS

Caroline Slocock
15 November 1990

KW

bc PU

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

15 November 1990

Thank you for your letter of 13 November indicating that your Secretary of State is likely to accept the application for grant maintained status from Cwmcarn Comprehensive School.

The Prime Minister is pleased that a school in Wales has now successfully applied for grant maintained status: she hopes other applicants will also soon come forward and prove acceptable.

BARRY H. POTTER

Ms. Anna Coleman,
Welsh Office

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

Caroline Slocock
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1A 2AA

14 NOV 1990

Dear Caroline

Thank you for your letter of ~~20~~ 31st October enclosing a copy of the Archbishop of Westminster's letter to the Prime Minister about Hertfordshire's current plan to change their arrangements for subsidising transport to aided schools.

As the Prime Minister will recall from the former Secretary of State's letter to the Lord President of 12 October (further copy attached for reference) this is a difficult issue; the strong arguments against the Government taking a direct role in school transport issues by intervening in Hertfordshire's decision need to be balanced by wider political considerations - in particular the current concern apparently felt within the Catholic church about the Government's commitment to the 1944 settlement, as spelt out in the Cardinal's letter.

The current Secretary of State took part in a discussion on the subject in H Committee on 22 October. He has received the additional legal advice which his predecessor was asked to obtain, and intends not to direct Hertfordshire. Their decision was not unlawful and is clearly within their responsibility as local authority. They are answerable to their local electorate. Intervention by central Government would inevitably lead to much

closer Government involvement in policy and funding of school transport with the risk of much controversy and expense.

It will be important to ensure that the Cardinal understands the reasons for this decision, and can be reassured that it does not reflect any general lack of support for aided schools within the maintained system of education. Mr Clarke therefore plans to invite the Cardinal to a meeting, in order to tell him personally of his decision and discuss denominational school questions more generally.

The attached draft letter for the Prime Minister reinforces the message of general support for aided schools, but says nothing on the Hertfordshire case beyond noting that the Secretary of State plans to offer the Cardinal a meeting very shortly.

JOHN RATCLIFF
Private Secretary

SCANNED

DRAFT LETTER FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO CARDINAL HUME

Thank you for your letter of 19 October about your Diocese's recent request to ~~John MacGregor~~ the Secretary of State for Education and Science to intervene over Hertfordshire's decision to change its policy on home to school transport for children attending denominational schools. ~~I am aware of the request to John MacGregor and Kenneth Clarke~~ Kenneth Clarke

~~I am aware of that request, and~~ I know that ~~the Secretary of State~~ he is considering it very carefully, and I understand that he hopes to reach a final decision very shortly, and will be in touch to fix a meeting at which he will be able to tell you personally of the outcome.

I can certainly reassure you

~~I should like to take this opportunity to offer you my own~~ reassurance of the continued importance which we as a government attach to the dual system established in 1944, and the role which denominational schools continue to play in the state system of education. Church schools are now firmly embedded in the mainstream of education provision, and within it offer a distinctive set of values which we welcome, and which have proved very popular with parents. I am sure that ~~As a result,~~ they will be able to capitalise on the measures we have taken to remove artificial barriers to parental choice, and reward successful and popular schools.

I know you have already spoken to John MacGregor about some specific concerns, and Kenneth Clarke will be happy to discuss them further when you meet. But on the general thrust of our policies and aspirations for the education system, I ~~can assure~~ am sure you that we welcome the partnership with the Churches and the special contribution they can make. I know you share our concern for increasing standards, and I am confident that this aim will be best served by the continuing existence of a range of types of school, among which denominational schools will continue to have a leading role to play.

I would like to stress

010

Prime Minister
The first GM school in Wales.
BHP
14/4
(P.S. This is in Mr Kinnock's constituency).

cc PH (2)

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FROM THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR WALES

13 November 1990

Dear Barry.

You will know that my Secretary of State has been considering applications from two Gwent schools seeking grant maintained status - the first in Wales to apply.

He has decided to reject the application in respect of Queens School in Newport. However, in the case of Cwmcarn Comprehensive, he is minded to approve the application subject to the deferral to 1 September 1991 of the start date.

The decision letters will be issued on Wednesday 14 November and the Press Notice will follow.

Yours sincerely

Anna.

ANNA E COLEMAN

Barry Potter Esq
PS/The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON

cc PM
n.b. P.M.
BHP
24/10

SCOTTISH OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AU

The Rt Hon John MacGregor OBE MP
Secretary of State for Education and Science
Elizabeth House
York Road
LONDON
SE1 7PH

23 October 1990

Dear John,

file with BP.

TESTING IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Thank you for sending to me a copy of your minute to the Prime Minister about your proposals for testing in primary schools. You and other education colleagues may wish to know how I am proceeding in Scotland on testing.

I have been considering how to take forward my plans for introducing primary testing within my programme for reviewing and reforming curriculum and assessment for the 5-14 group of pupils. You will recall that in Scotland we are to test in language and in mathematics at primary 4 and primary 7 (ie 8 year olds and 12 year olds). We are now at a stage in this programme where we have issued guidance for schools on attainment levels and targets in English and mathematics and also guidance on the conduct of pupil assessment; this is to be followed by a first round of tests in 1991. Although the attainment targets have been well received, testing continues to be a focus for opposition by the teaching unions and a number of politically unsympathetic education authorities. In the circumstances I have concluded that it would be right for testing to be done within the discipline of a regulatory framework to ensure that it is comprehensive and successful. Accordingly I propose to lay regulations this week to this end; a copy is attached.

It is important that these regulations be laid before the end of this week so that they come into operation on or about 15 November, and thus allow a full month for the completion by authorities of the first part of the procedure leading to tests in the spring of next year. Between 1 March and the end of April authorities will carry out tests on pupils in primary years 4 and 7 in reading, writing, basic arithmetic and other aspects of mathematics. Testing will be mandatory for all pupils except those with recorded special educational needs, where it will be a matter for decision with the parents. Pupils in schools where instruction is in the medium of Gaelic, will have to take a test in English at P7. In the later rounds my intention is to provide in addition the option of papers written in Gaelic for the other tests, but these will not be available in time for the 1991 round.

I am sending a copy of this letter to the Prime Minister, as well as to David Hunt and Peter Brooke.

MALCOLM RIFKIND

3S1(S7)14t
18.10.90

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1990 No. (S.)

EDUCATION, SCOTLAND

The Testing in Primary Schools (Scotland) Regulations 1990

Made	1990
Laid before Parliament	1990
Coming into force for the purposes of regulations 3(6) and 5(2)	1st August 1991
For all other purposes	17th November 1990

The Secretary of State, in exercise of the powers conferred on him by section 2 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980(**a**), and of all other powers enabling him in that behalf, hereby makes the following Regulations:

Citation and commencement

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Testing in Primary Schools (Scotland) Regulations 1990 and shall come into force for the purposes of regulations 3(6) and 5(2) on 1st August 1991 and for all other purposes on 17th November 1990.

(**a**) 1980 c.44; section 2 was amended by the Self-Governing Schools etc. (Scotland) Act 1989 (c.39), section 69.

Interpretation

2.--(1) In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires -

"attainment test" means a test which an education authority are required to hold by virtue of regulation 3(1);

"class" means a group of pupils for the time being under the immediate charge of a teacher;

"language" means the English or Gaelic language;

"primary school" includes any primary department in a school;

"school year" means the period of 12 months commencing on 1st August in any calendar year;

"Scottish Examination Board" means the Board established under section 129 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980(**a**) and any reference to "the Board" shall be construed accordingly;

"the 1975 Regulations" means the Schools General (Scotland) Regulations 1975(**b**).

(2) Yearly stages of primary education are designated by letters and numbers such that "P1" and "P7" represent respectively the first and final stages of primary school education; and any other yearly stage of primary education so designated shall be construed accordingly.

(3) In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires, any reference to a numbered regulation is a reference to the regulation bearing that number in these Regulations and any reference in a regulation to a numbered paragraph is to the paragraph of that regulation bearing that number.

Attainment tests

3.--(1) Subject to the provisions of this regulation, every education authority shall test the level of educational attainment of every pupil in stages P4 and P7 in attendance at primary schools under their management -

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(**a**) 1980 c.44; section 129 was amended by the Education (Scotland) Act 1981 (c.58), section 13, Schedule 8, paragraph 6, and Schedule 9; and by the Self-Governing Schools etc. (Scotland) Act 1989 (c.39), section 69(3).
(**b**) S.I. 1975/1135, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.

(a) in respect of language, which shall not include the Gaelic language where Gaelic is not a language of instruction at the school attended by the pupil, and mathematics, where the pupil is in stage P4; and

(b) in respect of the English language and mathematics, where the pupil is in stage P7.

(2) Paragraph (1) shall not apply in respect of any pupil for whom a Record of Needs is kept; but the education authority may test the level of educational attainment of any such pupil in accordance with this regulation where they consider it appropriate to do so, having first consulted a parent of the pupil.

(3) Where a pupil is in attendance at a school where Gaelic is a language of instruction, paragraph (1) shall apply, in the school year in which these Regulations come into force, only where that pupil is in stage P7 and in respect of the testing of the educational attainment of that pupil in the English language.

(4) For the purpose of holding any attainment tests, an education authority shall select, by no later than 17th December 1990 in respect of the school year in which these Regulations come into force and by no later than 15th November in respect of each subsequent school year, from the range of materials prepared by the Scottish Examination Board for that purpose and in accordance with the arrangements for such selection as may be specified from time to time by the Board, such materials as appear to them appropriate to the level of education and circumstances of the pupils whose level of educational attainment is to be tested; and shall use the materials so selected when holding such tests and may use different such materials in respect of different pupils or groups of pupils.

(5) An education authority shall hold attainment tests at each primary school under their management within the period from 1st March to 30th April in each school year and may hold such tests at different times within that period in respect of each such school, different classes at any such school, or a pupil, or group of pupils, in any such class.

(6) Without prejudice to paragraph (1), where an education authority hold attainment tests at a school under their management, and where Gaelic is a language of instruction at that school, they may select, in accordance with paragraph (4), materials prepared in Gaelic and may use such materials, whether in respect of the testing of the level of educational attainment of any pupil in language or mathematics and whether, in holding such tests in respect of that pupil, they also use materials prepared in English which they have so selected.

Marking of tests

4. Where attainment tests have been held by an education authority, they shall ensure that the tests are marked, in respect of each pupil whose level of educational attainment has been tested, by no later than the end of the school year in which those tests were held.

Provision of information on the results of tests

5.--(1) An education authority shall provide to the Scottish Examination Board, on request being made and in accordance with such request -

(a) information in respect of the results of any attainment tests held by them;

(b) samples of attainment test papers which have been completed and marked at schools under their management.

(2) An education authority shall ensure that, subsequent to the holding of attainment tests in any school year at a school under their management, and by no later than the end of that school year -

(a) the results of those tests in respect of each pupil are supplied to a parent of that pupil; and

(b) a summary of the results of those tests, so far as possible without identifying the results of any individual pupil, is provided to the school board of that school.

Amendment of regulation 10 of the 1975 Regulations

6. In paragraph (1)(d) of regulation 10 of the 1975 Regulations, after the word "tests" there shall be inserted the words:-

", including any attainment tests within the meaning of regulation 2(1) of the Testing in Primary Schools (Scotland) Regulations 1990,".

Minister of State,
Scottish Office

St. Andrew's House
Edinburgh

1990

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations require education authorities to test the level of certain aspects of the educational attainment of primary school pupils, who are attending schools under their management and who are at certain stages in their primary education.

Regulation 3(1) provides the general rule that every education authority shall test the level of educational attainment of all primary school pupils who are in their fourth and seventh years of primary education ("P4" and "P7", respectively) in schools under their management: in respect of language (which in schools where Gaelic is a language of instruction may be in respect of the English or Gaelic language and in other cases must be in respect of the English language) and mathematics, where the pupil is in P4; and, in respect of the English language and mathematics, where the pupil is in P7. Regulation 3(2) makes an exception to that general rule in respect of pupils with special educational needs who have a Record of Needs: attainment testing of such pupils is to be carried out only where the education authority consider that appropriate, following consultation with a parent of the pupil. Regulation 3(3) also qualifies regulation 3(1) in that it provides that where a pupil is in attendance at a school where Gaelic is a language of instruction, the duty of the education authority under regulation 3(1) to hold attainment tests applies, for the purposes of the school year in which these Regulations come into force, only in respect of pupils in P7 and insofar as the tests relate to those pupils' level of educational attainment in the English language. Regulation 3(4) provides that, for the purpose of holding attainment tests, an education authority shall select from the range of materials prepared by the Scottish Examination Board for that purpose, and in accordance with the arrangements for such selection as the Board may specify, such materials as appear to the authority appropriate to the level of education and circumstances of the pupils whose level of educational attainment is to be tested. The authority are required to do so by 17th December in the first school year in which the Regulations come into force and by 15th November in all subsequent such years. An education authority are also required, when holding attainment tests, to use such materials as they have selected in accordance with regulation 3(4) and different such materials may be used by the authority for testing the educational attainment of different pupils or groups of pupils. Regulation 3(5) requires an education authority to hold attainment tests at each of their primary schools, within the period from 1st March to 30th April in each school year, and gives the authority discretion to hold such tests at different times within that period in

respect of: a particular school; a class at a school; or, a pupil or group of pupils in any such class. Regulation 3(6) provides that, without prejudice to regulation 3(1) (and, therefore, without prejudice to the requirement that every education authority shall test the level of educational attainment in the English language of every pupil in P7), where an education authority hold attainment tests at one of their schools, where Gaelic is a language of instruction at that school, they may select, in accordance with paragraph (4), test materials prepared by the Scottish Examination Board which are in Gaelic, and may use such materials, whether for testing the level of educational attainment of a pupil in language or mathematics and whether, in holding such attainment tests in respect of that pupil, they also use test materials, so prepared, which are in English.

Regulation 4 provides that an education authority shall ensure that attainment tests held at one of their schools are marked, in respect of each pupil whose level of educational attainment has been tested, by no later than the end of the school year in which those tests were held.

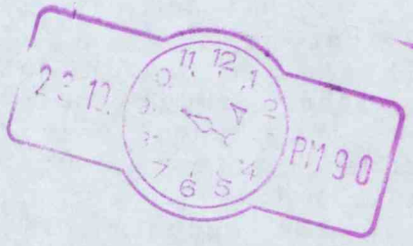
Regulation 5(1) requires an education authority to provide the Scottish Examination Board with such information as the Board may request in respect of the results of attainment tests held at their schools and with samples of completed and marked attainment test papers. Regulation 5(2) requires an education authority, after holding attainment tests in any school year at a school under their management, to ensure that, by the end of that school year: a parent of each pupil who has undertaken such a test is supplied with that pupil's results; and, that the school board of the school is provided with a summary of the results of the tests, so far as possible without identifying the results of any individual pupil.

Regulation 6 amends regulation 10(1)(d) of the Schools General (Scotland) Regulations 1975, so as to require an education authority to record in a pupil's progress record (which record the authority are obliged to keep by virtue of that provision) the results of any attainment tests administered to that pupil.

"Primary school" is defined for the purposes of these Regulations so as to include a primary department in a school which provides both primary and secondary education (regulation 2(1)).

Regulations 3(6) and 5(2) come into force on 1st August 1991, whereas all other provisions of these Regulations come into force on 15th November 1990.

EDUCATION: Policy A 26



dti

the department for Enterprise

cc PS

The Rt. Hon. Peter Lilley MP
Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

The Rt Hon John MacGregor MP
The Secretary of State for
Education and Science
Department of Education and Science
Elizabeth House
York Road
London
SE1 7PH

Department of
Trade and Industry

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London SW1H 0ET

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Direct line 071 215 5622
Our ref NP1112
Your ref
Date 22 October 1990

Dear Secretary of State

file with BP.

SCHOOL TRANSPORT AND PARENTAL CHOICE

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of ~~12 October~~ to Geoffrey Howe.

I have no departmental interest but as a Hertfordshire MP I do see it from a constituency perspective. The Roman Catholic, and to a lesser extent other denominational, lobbies have been impressively mobilised. And their feeling that the County Council's proposals upset the established settlement between Church and Sate on education evokes wider sympathy not least from most MPs.

If the proposed change could be restricted to Hertfordshire (where the Government's underlying support is strong) it would not matter politically. But colleagues should think twice about the likely consequences of such changes spreading to the North West where there are many marginal seats and an influential Catholic educational lobby.

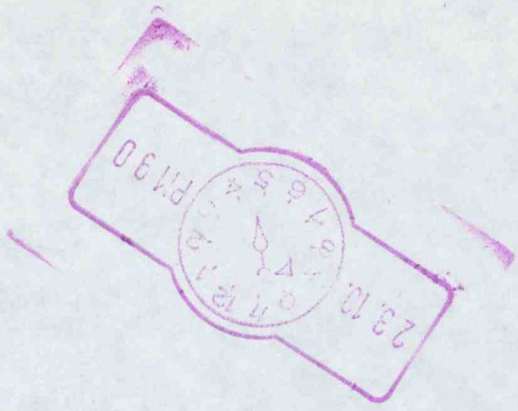
I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, members of 'H' Committee and Sir Robin Butler.

Yours sincerely
Ian Bishop

(Approved by the Secretary of State
and signed in his absence)

Recycled Paper

EDUCATION : POLICE PTZ.



CONFIDENTIAL

cc PM.

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
071-276 3000

My ref

Your ref

The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe QC MP
Lord President of the Council
Privy Council Office
68 Whitehall
LONDON
SW1

22 October 1990

Dear Geoffrey,

SCHOOL TRANSPORT AND PARENTAL CHOICE

I have seen John MacGregor's letter to you of 12 October on this subject. file with CAS

From a departmental point of view, I can sympathise with his arguments and his conclusion.

I am concerned, however, by the political dimensions. Failure to prevent Hertfordshire from taking this proposed step will, I am sure, be deeply troubling to the denominational schools. They will inevitably see it as undermining the 1944 settlement. We can expect the stiffest possible resistance from both Roman Catholics and Church of England.

I see that this matter is to be discussed at H Committee on Monday afternoon. I hope we shall have the opportunity then to look at the wider political implications which John draws attention to.

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

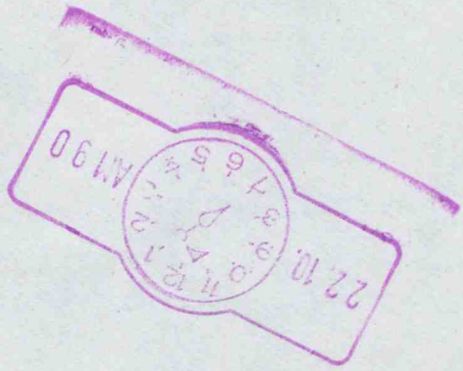
Yours,

CHRIS PATTEN

recycled paper

CONFIDENTIAL

EDUCATION: Bldg Pt 26



WESTMINSTER, Archbishop of FILE KK

5/11

1) 6/11
2) 13/11

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

ACK 20 October 1990

I attach a copy of a letter the Prime Minister has received from the Archbishop of Westminster.

I should be grateful if you could provide a draft reply for the Prime Minister's signature, to reach me by Monday 5 November please.

(CAROLINE SLOCOCK)

John Ratcliff, Esq.,
Department of Education and Science.

EA

R 19/10.

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE,

WESTMINSTER, LONDON, SW1P 1QJ

cc Robin Catford

19 October, 1990

Dear Prime Minister,

As you may know the Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster made a formal request to the Secretary of State for Education and Science on the 1st August this year for his intervention over Hertfordshire County Council's decision on the 17th July to change its policy on home to school transport for children attending denominational schools. The Diocese has not as yet received a decision on this matter.

I appreciate that you regularly discuss education policy with the Secretary of State and in view of the fact that this is an urgent issue to which the Catholic community attaches great importance I am taking the liberty of writing to you directly about it.

Our concern, which is shared by the Anglican Church, is that a policy of charging the parents of children who attend Church schools beyond the agreed statutory limits will severely undermine the right of many parents to choose a Church school for their children. The effect will be to restrict parental choice. It is this point of principle which is at stake, and there are clearly national implications if Hertfordshire County Council is to be allowed to levy such charges. Other local authorities will doubtless follow suit.

In recent years Church authorities have co-operated with the Department of Education and Science and with local education authorities in many areas over the reorganisation of primary and secondary school provision. In many cases, the agreement of the Church authorities to the siting of voluntary schools was made on the basis that existing arrangements for free school transport would continue to be honoured. It seems wrong, therefore, for local authorities to be able simply to revoke such arrangements at will. It can only have a highly damaging effect on school rolls, particularly in rural areas.

As you will know the Catholic community has in the past contributed greatly to the development of education in our country, and continues to play a significant role in

Cont./.

partnership with the State through the voluntary aided sector. This contribution has included a substantial financial commitment on the part of the Catholic community, and this, of course, continues to be made. That parents should be free and realistically able to send their children to denominational schools within the State system was the clear intention of the 1944 Education Act. Indeed, if I may quote what Mr. Butler said on 9th May 1944 during the Committee stage of that Bill on the clause (now section 55) dealing with school transport: "How can I make it any clearer that it is our desire that children belonging to a particular denomination should go to a school of that denomination" (Hansard, Col.1752).

I believe that the Catholic community attaches great importance to this issue and will be profoundly disturbed if the Government were to allow Hertfordshire County Council to proceed with this policy. It would restrict parental choice, create considerable problems for the voluntary aided sector, and erode the well-established basis of co-operation between the Catholic Church and public authority on education provision which has worked well for many years. There are those who say to me from time to time that the longer term aims of present education policy give minimal importance to the partnership of Church and State embodied in the 1944 Act, and to the particular values brought to education by that partnership. I would like to think that this is not so. Perhaps on some occasion you would be kind enough to give me some reassurance on this point.

I very much hope that you will give this matter your serious attention in your discussions with the Secretary of State, and that the Government will ensure that the existing well-established arrangements are preserved.

Yours sincerely

Basil Hume

Archbishop of Westminster

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,
10, Downing Street,
London SW1.

Prime Minister
Cleared overt.
BHP 18/10

(2)

PARLIAMENTARY STATEMENT BY THE RT HON JOHN MACGREGOR, OBE, MP, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

1. Following discussions with and advice from the School Examinations and Assessment Council, the Secretary of State for Wales and I have today decided on the scope of the tests to be used in the first national assessments of all 7 year olds in 1991. I am arranging for copies of the specification for drawing up the actual tests themselves to be placed in the Library of the House.

2. The national tests will concentrate on what is of key concern to parents - reading, writing, arithmetic and basic scientific skills. Because the ability to read is vital to pupils' future development, all 7 year olds will be tested separately on their ability to read. To help ensure consistency of standards, that test will be based on a range of common texts.

3. I believe that it is important that at this age the tests do concentrate on the basics. That is not only right in itself, but it also means tests that will be manageable in the classrooms. The tests will take up the equivalent of about a week and a half of classroom time in the first half of the Summer term. The message from this summer's pilot tests was that they overloaded the schools. I have decided that next year's tests will be simpler and will concentrate on what really matters. In addition to the external tests, teachers will also carry out their own tests of all 7 year olds across all aspects of English, maths and science in the National Curriculum.

4. For the first time, we shall have a national system in all schools which will enable parents and teachers to know how their children are progressing in the basics of education. All parents will be able to get clear and objective results and to talk to teachers about their children's progress. For each child, teachers will be able to build upon strengths and tackle weaknesses.

5. The National Curriculum sets clear and demanding national targets for pupils of all ages and abilities in English, mathematics and science. The tests will show how pupils - individually and collectively - are measuring up to those targets. For the first time we shall have clear, national information about what is happening to standards. Mr Speaker, the arrangements that I am announcing today for testing 7 year olds are the key to raising those standards.

MEETING RECORD
Subject cc MASTER

CONFIDENTIAL

bc: PJ (BG)
+ Peter Morrison

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE EDUCATION SECRETARY: TESTING OF 7 YEAR OLDS

The Prime Minister met the Education Secretary today to discuss the proposed tests for 7 year olds under the National Curriculum. The meeting was also attended by Professor Griffiths and the Prime Minister's Parliamentary Private Secretary.

The Education Secretary said that the pilot projects to design tests for seven year olds organised by the Schools Education and Assessment Council (SEAC) had heavily overloaded the schools involved. The scope of the pilot projects had been too ambitious; and the reports on the projects had never been published. Nonetheless some of the individual tests developed did offer a basis on which revised arrangements could be built. It was important to match the tests to the National Curriculum requirements. That was why existing tests used in such education authorities as Surrey and Cambridgeshire were not applicable.

The blueprint which SEAC had been drawing up was overelaborate and unworkable. It was necessary to get back to basics in testing. For 7 year olds, there would be tests for a number of profile components - a term of art more usually identified as subjects like reading and writing. The new proposals would reduce the total workload involved by somewhere between two-thirds and three-quarters. The next step would be to ask the National Foundation for Education Research (NFER) to develop a suitable and simple set of tests. He proposed to check the tests personally; and they would also be sent to the Prime Minister and Professor Griffiths when they were ready. It was vital that the Government did not retreat on the commitment to introduce pilot testing next year. But teachers would need a little more time to prepare for the tests. Accordingly, he proposed to allocate an extra day next term for training purposes.

The Prime Minister said that she agreed with the need to get back to basics on the testing of 7 year olds. The wide use of academic educationalist jargon in the SEAC papers was most unhelpful: the essential point was the need to test 7 year olds in the three Rs plus very basic science. The Prime Minister also saw attractions in not just putting tests in place, but in ensuring that the test completed by individual pupils were subject to random external inspection. The Education Secretary had explained that this would be done in the first instance by local education authority inspectors. The Prime Minister hoped it might be possible to improve upon this once the tests were formally introduced in 1992.

Concluding the discussion, the Prime Minister asked that sample tests be sent to No.10 once they were ready; that the Education Secretary keep a close watch himself on the development of the tests; and that arrangements were put in place to ensure teachers were suitably prepared to make the tests a success next year.

BHP

Barry H Potter
17 October 1990

c: education (MJ)

cst.ps/let/13nl16.10

cc BPL

UNCLASSIFIED

n.b. P.M.
BHP
18/10

Treasury Chambers. Parliament Street SW1P 3AG

The Rt Hon John MacGregor MP
Secretary of State for Education and Science
Department of Education and Science
Elizabeth House
York Road
London
SE1 7PH

17 October 1990

Dear John

SCHOOL TRANSPORT AND PARENTAL CHOICE

with BP?

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of 12 October to Geoffrey Howe.

2. I am content for you to proceed as you propose. As you say, the decision is essentially a local one which remains a matter for the local authority to justify to its own community charge payers.

3. A copy of this letter goes to the Prime Minister, members of H Committee and Sir Robin Butler.

Yours

NORMAN LAMONT

PRIME MINISTER

TESTING FOR SEVEN YEAR OLDS UNDER THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

Yesterday evening, you saw Mr. MacGregor's undated minute on his proposals for testing seven year olds under the National Curriculum - and Brian Griffiths' note commenting on the proposals.

Your manuscript note indicated a preference for a meeting with Mr. MacGregor to discuss the proposals. This has been set for tomorrow at 1700. Brian Griffiths will also attend.

Background

Testing of seven year olds is due to start next March/April. After three years' work SEAC has not produced satisfactory tests. DES believe the original remit for SEAC was too ambitious; but that some of the individual tests developed, suitably modified, are usable. However the public perception may be influenced by the assessment of the teachers involved in the SEAC pilot projects that the proposals were unworkable.

SEAC are now, therefore, asking a third party to devise simple tests by no later than early December. But no suitable tests exist at present.

Once appropriate tests are developed, Mr. MacGregor proposes a complex series of local and national conferences to demonstrate to teachers how the new tests should be set and applied.

The meeting

The overriding aim must be to ensure that progress on the National Curriculum is not held back; and that testing of seven year olds can begin next April.

To achieve this, Mr. MacGregor must:

A. Define specimen tests as soon as possible.

B. Establish simpler arrangements for ensuring that all teachers are in a position to set the tests next April.

On A, defining suitable tests need not be difficult. There are plenty of such tests already available, e.g. in Surrey or Cambridgeshire schools; or in private schools where there is an entry test for seven year olds (which would need to be modified).

You might reasonably ask Mr. MacGregor to produce sample tests for seven year olds in all nine SATs (i.e. four in English, three in Maths, two in Science) by the beginning of December. Whether to give this role to SEAC, an outside body or DES Civil Servants is up to Mr. MacGregor. But you should ask for the tests to be cleared with you (and perhaps checked by other external experts).

On B, again the responsibility must lie with Mr. MacGregor. But it must be doubtful whether conferences which open up further scope for "well-informed" debate and questioning are right at this late stage. Three years of consultation on policy produced little; three months of debate could quickly destroy the new tests.

Instead the focus should be on practical arrangements which ensure:

- that sample tests are made available to teachers early;

- that clear and simple instruction on how the tests are to be organised are circulated; and

- that firm arrangements are made for external checking of individual schools practice in setting and marking the tests.

BHP

BARRY H POTTER
16 October 1990
tmw a:\testing

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

16 October 1990

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

The Prime Minister was grateful for your Secretary of State's minute of 19 September covering proposals, agreed with the Welsh Secretary, for the attainment targets and programme of study for modern foreign languages in the National Curriculum.

The Prime Minister is content for Mr. MacGregor and Mr. Hunt to publish these proposals later this month.

I am copying this letter to Stephen Wall (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Judith Simpson (Welsh Office), Martin Stanley (Department of Trade and Industry), Jim Gallagher (Scottish Office), Tony Pawson (Northern Ireland Office), Martyn Waring (Department of Employment) and Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

BARRY H POTTER

Stephen Crowne, Esq.,
Department of Education and Science.

PRIME MINISTER

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

I attach a minute from the Education Secretary seeking approval to publication of joint proposals (with Mr. Hunt) for the teaching of modern foreign languages in the National Curriculum.

The main proposals reflect the reports of a working group, chaired by Professor Harris of Essex University. They build on the group's earlier advice, published in March, which you approved then.

The proposals are straightforward, setting attainment targets for oral and written skills designed to test comprehension. They are pragmatic and flexible - allowing pupils to switch to a different language after an interim period. And the working group has backed the Government's line that all schools should be required to offer one of the working languages of the EC.

I have delayed submitting advice on this until Brian Griffiths had an opportunity to look at the full report. (I have not attached the report - it is over 300 pages long.) But Brian has been able to consider the report and is content to proceed as proposed by Mr. MacGregor and Mr. Hunt.

Content for Mr. MacGregor/Mr. Hunt to publish their proposals on teaching modern foreign languages in the National Curriculum?

BHP

BARRY H. POTTER

15 October 1990

C:\wpdocs\economic\languages (pmm)

PRIME MINISTER

TESTING FOR SEVEN YEAR OLDS IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

At Flag A is a note from the Education Secretary setting out proposals for testing seven year olds under the National Curriculum. At Flag B is a thorough note from Brian Griffiths.

John MacGregor's minute sets out in simple (but perhaps too simple) terms what is proposed. He describes the nature of the nine attainment targets for seven year olds (four in English, three in maths, and two in science). These are called Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs). In paragraph 5 of the minute he explains (in vague terms) how the tests for each of these SATs will be constructed. In short, specimen tests have not yet been developed.

To appreciate what underlies these broadbrush remarks about "... putting work in hand ...to ensure that assessments are equally rigorous and consistent" you need to read Brian Griffiths' note. This tells a sorry tale.

(i) Responsibility for designing the SAT tests lies with the School Examination Assessment Council (SEAC).

(ii) So far SEAC has spent £6 million on developing tests. It designed three pilot tests; it concluded that they were unworkable; so it has no sample tests to offer.

(iii) SEAC now propose to give some external body responsibility for setting the tests.

(iv) As Brian's note makes clear, there is then a complex timetable proposed involving teaching the teachers through local and national conferences to get the new simpler tests in place.

Time is very short. Seven year olds are supposed to undergo these tests in April.

Conclusion

Like Brian I have had the opportunity to read the original SEAC document. Frankly it is very difficult to understand, extremely bureaucratic and unpersuasive given SEAC's past record.

Brian's proposal is that all tests used this year should be "off the shelf" i.e. already in use. One can see the attractions. There must be a danger that SEAC's proposals will not be ready in time next April: and the Government might then be forced to postpone the introduction of testing for seven year olds.

(i) Do you want me to minute out, putting forward the recommendations set out in Brian Griffiths' note?

or

(ii) Is there advantage in bringing Mr. MacGregor in for a more frank discussion about the difficulties in putting in place tests for seven year olds next April?

Yes - what has happened is a disgrace

BHP

B. H. POTTER

15 October 1990

c:\economic\seac (kk)

B

PRIME MINISTER

12 October 1990

TESTING FOR 7 YEAR OLDS IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

The Secretary of State has sent you a minute outlining proposals of how 7 year olds should be tested. He has not annexed the basic document from SEAC on which his note is based.

This is a very important issue, as the SEAC proposal is the first practical proposal on how children of any age should be tested and embodies principles which will be used in testing later age groups.

Background

In 1987 Kenneth Baker set up the Task Group on Assessment and Testing (TGAT) which recommended an enormously complicated system of testing through "a wide range of modes, operations and responses", called Standard Assessment Tasks (SAT's).

At this time you expressed great reservations about the complexity and workability of the proposals. Your letter was duly leaked.

SEAC then awarded contracts worth £6m to three educational bodies to design and pilot SAT's for testing children at age 7 across England and Wales.

These bodies reported after one year but the reports have not been published.

What happened however before the reports were even written is that the teachers in those schools in which the tests were piloted revolted against using them, claiming they were simply unworkable.

The Present Proposals

John MacGregor's memo is based on a SEAC document full of educational jargon and impenetrable to any lay person. Its proposals relate to three areas:

a) **Nature of the tests**

- all 7 year olds in England and Wales (except Welsh medium schools) will be assessed next April on 9 attainment targets, 7 of which are compulsory and 2 of which are optional;

- of the 9 attainment targets, 4 will be in English, 3 in Maths and 2 in Science and will cover basic literacy (reading, handwriting, spelling and writing), basic numeracy (addition, subtraction etc) and an exploration of Science;

- unlike traditional pencil and paper tests, the SATs will have a variety of forms:

"teacher presentation	oral, written, pictorial, practical demonstration;
pupil operation	mental only, oral, written, practical
pupil response	open-ended writing, short written responses in prescribed form, other prescribed responses, oral, practical procedure observed,

practical outcome or product"

- each SAT will be constructed so that the attainment target can be graded at levels 1, 2 or 3 or fail (described as "Working towards level 1");

- for each individual pupil 9 attainment targets will mean in excess of 80 statements of attainment, and involve just under 50 assessments;

- reading will be tested separately by pupils reading aloud to the teachers.

(b) **National Training Conferences**

Local Education Authorities are being given a major part in carrying out the testing. LEA's will train teachers on how to test and LEAs may produce documentation to support the tests.

In January, 9 major conferences will be held across England and Wales for "LEA assessment co-ordinators".

(c) **Timetable for a new Contract**

SEAC having failed to produce SATs from the three contracts entered into in 1989 - because they were unworkable - now propose to invite some outside body to devise simpler tests over a period of 2 months - November to December 1990.

These will form the basis of the National Conference in January and will be handed out to schools in March.

Comments

1. While written tests are widespread in many countries, no other country to my knowledge has ever adopted anything as complex as SATS. Meanwhile there are hundreds of excellent written tests in existence in Britain and other countries which might be used.

2. SEAC has so far failed to produce workable tests despite spending £6m. The Secretary of State is now proposing to SEAC inviting an outside body to produce tests in 2 months- November, December 1990 - and then sending them out nationwide **without** any pilot to test their reliability.

   The timetable he has set is very important.

   These tests must be in the schools by mid March if pupils are to be tested this academic year. This is very important given that it was a commitment in the last Manifesto.

   From the government's point of view it would be disastrous if these tests were perceived as a failure. It would undermine our educational reforms. But their timing is sensitive. The testing will be carried out in April, the month before the local elections and with possible talk of a general election.

   I would strongly recommend that John MacGregor require SEAC to use existing and well tried tests as SATS in the schools next Spring. The last thing we want is a repeat of this year's fiasco.

3. The only test in which you can have confidence is one which is designed and marked by an external body. In the present proposals a small proportion of the tests are externally designed but not externally marked. Perhaps this is not of

great importance at age 7. But it is as children get older.

John MacGregor proposes that the tests of core subjects for 11 year olds should include a greater external element. It is important that this point is clarified: with external referring to their marking as well as to their design.

4. SEAC must not experiment with the children of the nation, when its only experiment so far has been a failure.

It is important that no new SATS are introduced to children of 11 and 14 without there having been proper pilots. As with the earlier age there are plenty of good tests around for these ages too.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Welcome John MacGregor's emphasis on rigorous external tests of the basics in literacy, numeracy and science at age 7.

2. Require that <u>all</u> tests used this academic year should be "off the shelf" - with a good track record, so that there is no possibility of failure.

3. Insist that future tests include a high proportion which is designed and marked externally.

4. All future SATS should be piloted successfully (for say at least 3 years) before they are introduced to all schools: till then existing tests can be used.

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

(057)

010

cc PM

A

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

PRIME MINISTER

TESTS FOR 7 YEAR OLDS IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

1. To enable essential work to start, I shall be announcing on Wednesday next my decisions on the tests to be used to assess 7 year-olds in the core subjects of English, maths and science next summer. David Hunt will be making a parallel announcement in Wales. Our objective, as I set out in my minute to you of 20 April, is to make assessment an integral and essential part of the national curriculum with tests that are both rigorous and manageable for teachers. They must also provide an essential cross-check against teachers' own assessment in those areas of the curriculum of most concern to parents.

2. My announcement meets those objectives. I was concerned about the overloading in the pilots conducted in 2% of primary schools this summer and was keen that the tests should be simple and should concentrate on the essentials of reading, writing, arithmetic and basic science. I have discussed both points thoroughly with the School Examinations and Assessment Council and impressed upon them that the arrangements for next year must meet both these key concerns. The detailed specification for the tests has been drawn up in the light of that. There will be separate tests for each of the basic aspects of the core curriculum within the Standard Assessment Task (SAT), testing both knowledge and skills, which will be common nationwide. In addition, teachers will also be required to test further aspects of maths and science from within a limited choice of attainment targets. I attach copies of a draft Parliamentary statement and my press statement.

3. Concentrating the tests on the basics ensures that they will be manageable for teachers. The specification reflects fully the lessons which were learned from the pilot exercise carried out this summer. The main lesson was that the pilot tests tried to cover too much ground and were too detailed so that teachers could not manage them in the time available. Next year, the SAT will be designed to take up no more than the equivalent of one and a half weeks of teaching time in the first half of the Summer term. Teachers will be free to incorporate the tests into their teaching programmes for the first half of the term as they see fit. The specification also stipulates that as many of the tests as possible within the SAT should be through written work.

4. Because of its importance, I have given the arrangements for the testing of reading in England particular prominence. The specification provides that there will be a separate test of reading which will not be subject to the overall time limit governing the rest of the SAT. This is to give teachers time to test all pupils' ability to read aloud. In order to ensure consistency of standards, this will be done on the basis of common set texts appropriate to each level of attainment.

5. The pilot this summer demonstrated that the tests were unworkable in the time available for teachers to carry them out. What I now propose ensures that the basic requirements of reading, writing and arithmetic together with basic science are covered by rigorous external tests. I am taking steps to ensure that I am kept fully informed throughout the process of developing the tests so that there is no repeat next year of the overprescription and overloading which occurred this summer and so that the tests really do concentrate on the basics with which we are concerned. The remainder of the attainment targets will be assessed by teachers. I have put work in hand to ensure that those assessments are equally rigorous and as consistent as possible. All teachers will be given material that explains clearly what a pupil should know, understand and be able to do in order to be assessed at a given level. I am establishing arrangements for quality control locally, reinforced by specific

grant, and under the national oversight of SEAC. I shall be keeping these arrangements under close scrutiny.

6. My announcement is confined to the arrangements for testing 7 year-olds. I believe that it will be right, when we come to specifying the tests for 11 year-olds in 1993, to extend the range of external tests to be carried out within the core subjects.

7. All that I have set out applies also in Wales, except in Welsh medium schools where the assessment of Welsh is not statutorily required until 1992.

8. I am sending copies of this minute and enclosures to David Hunt, Peter Brooke, Malcolm Rifkind and Sir Robin Butler.

ppJM

(Approved by the Secretary of State
and signed in his absence)

DRAFT PARLIAMENTARY STATEMENT

[ ]: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Science, if he will make a statement about the Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs) to be used to assess 7 year olds in English, mathematics and science in 1991.

JOHN MacGREGOR

Following advice from the School Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC), the Secretary of State for Wales and I have today agreed a specification for the tests - or Standard Assessment Tasks (SATS) - to be used in the first national assessments of 7 year olds in 1991.

The SATs will test the attainments of all 7 year olds in the fundamentals of reading, writing and arithmetic; and basic scientific skills. In addition to these common and compulsory elements, teachers will use the SATs to test one further aspect of mathematics and one further aspect of scientific knowledge of their choice from a specified selection; and they will have a duty separately to carry out their own tests for all pupils across all aspects of English, mathematics and science in the National Curriculum.

Because of its crucial importance to pupils' future development, the SAT specification provides that there will be a separate test of reading for all 7 year olds. To help ensure consistency of standards, that test will include common set texts which pupils will read aloud.

Focussing the SATs on the fundamentals of the curriculum will ensure that they are manageable for teachers. The specification stipulates that, the testing of reading aside, the SATs should be

designed to take up no more than the equivalent of about a week and a half in the first half of the Summer term.

The specification also takes on board many other practical lessons of last Summer's pilot assessments which will help to ensure that the 1991 SATs fit smoothly into the classroom and are appropriate for all pupils.

I am placing copies of the specification itself, SEAC's advice and my reply in the libraries of both Houses.

DRAFT
PRESS NOTICE

SEVEN-YEAR-OLDS TO BE TESTED IN THE `THREE Rs' AND SCIENCE

School tests for 7 year olds next summer will concentrate on reading, writing and arithmetic - and basic science, Education Secretary John MacGregor announced today.

It means that for the first time parents and teachers throughout the country will know how children are progressing in the basics of education.

Mr MacGregor's announcement follows earlier meetings with the School Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC), at which the Secretary of State and his ministerial colleagues made clear that they wanted testing to concentrate on the basics and on clear standards, and to be manageable for schools. SEAC has put forward new recommendations as to what the tests should cover. Mr MacGregor is satisfied that the advice, which is also based on the evaluation of pilot tests over the summer, has taken into account his concern, and he is therefore broadly accepting that advice.

"Assessment is the key to levering up standards," he said. "These tests will give us clear national information for the first time about what is happening to standards. For the first time, parents and teachers of all 7 year olds will know exactly how their children are progressing in the basics of education. Parents will be able to talk to teachers about that progress. Teachers will be able to develop it to the full.

"It is important that the tests do concentrate on the basics. That is not only right in itself, but it also means a package that is easily manageable in the classrooms.

"The message from this summer's pilot tests was that they were simply too much. Next year's tests will be simpler and will concentrate on what really matters."

SEAC now have until the spring to get the tests produced in final form and delivered to all 20,000 primary schools. Pupils will sit them in the first half of the summer term.

NOTES

1. The National Curriculum, as defined by the Education Reform Act, is made up of statutory attainment targets and programmes of study specified for each subject and: "the arrangements for assessing pupils at or near the end of each key stage for the purpose of ascertaining what they have achieved in relation to the attainment atrgets for the stage".

2. Under Section 4(2)(c) of the Act the Secretary of State must specify for each subject the assessment arrangements he considers appropriate. The Secretary of State made an Order (SI No 1543) under this provision on 25 July specifying the arrangements for assessing 7 year olds in English, mathematics and science in 1991. That Order prescribes that all 7 year old pupils shall be assessed by means of a Standard Assessment Task (SAT) during the first half of the Summer term.

3. The specification approved by the Secretary of State will now be used as the basis for awarding a contract for the writing of SATs for 1991.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

CCPU

Withdrawn by S/State Office 16/10.

PRIME MINISTER

Tests for 7 year olds in the National Curriculum

1. To enable essential work to start, I shall be announcing on Wednesday next my decisions on the tests to be used to assess 7 year-olds in the core subjects of English, maths and science next summer. David Hunt will be making a parallel announcement in Wales. Our objective, as I set out in my minute to you of 20 April, is to make assessment an integral and essential part of the national curriculum with tests that are both rigorous and manageable for teachers. They must also provide an essential cross-check against teachers' own assessment in those areas of the curriculum of most concern to parents.

2. My announcement meets those objectives. The specification for the tests has been prepared by the School Examinations and Assessment Council in close consultation with me. The tests will be simple and will focus on the essentials of reading, writing, arithmetic and basic science. There will be separate tests for each of these basic aspects of the curriculum within the Standard Assessment Task (SAT), testing both knowledge and skills, which will be common nationwide. In addition, teachers will also be required to test further aspects of maths and science from within a limited choice of attainment targets. I attach a copy of the specification at Annex A and at Annex B the latest draft of a Parliamentary statement which I shall be working on further.

3. Concentrating the tests on the basics ensures that they will be manageable for teachers. The specification reflects fully the lessons which were learned from the pilot exercise carried out this summer. The main lesson was that the pilot tests tried to cover too much ground and were too detailed so that teachers could not manage them in the time available. Next year, the SAT will be designed to take up the equivalent of one and a half weeks of teaching time in the first half of the Summer term. Teachers will be free to incorporate the tests into their teaching programmes for the first half of the term as they see fit. The specification also stipulates that as many of the tests as possible within the SAT should be through written work.

4. Because of its importance, I have given the arrangements for the testing of reading in England particular prominence. The specification provides that there will be a separate test of reading which will not be subject to the overall time limit governing the rest of the SAT. This is to give teachers time to test all pupils' ability to read aloud. In order to ensure consistency of standards, this will be done on the basis of common set texts appropriate to each level of attainment.

5. The pilot this summer demonstrated that the tests were unworkable in the time available for teachers to carry them out. What I now propose ensures that the basic requirements of reading, writing and arithmetic together with basic science are covered by rigorous external tests. The remainder of the attainment targets will be assessed by teachers. I am taking steps to ensure that those assessments are equally rigorous and as consistent as possible. All teachers will be given material that explains clearly what a pupil should know, understand and be able to do in order to be assessed at a given level. I am establishing arrangements for quality control locally, reinforced by specific grant, and under the national oversight of SEAC. I shall be keeping these arrangements under close scrutiny.

6. My announcement is confined to the arrangements for testing 7 year-olds. I believe that it will be right, when we come to

specifying the tests for 11 year-olds in 1993, to extend the range of external tests to be carried out within the core subjects.

7. All that I have set out applies also in Wales, except in Welsh medium schools where the assessment of Welsh is not statutorily required until 1992.

8. I am sending copies of this minute and enclosures to David Hunt, Peter Brooke, Malcolm Rifkind and Sir Robin Butler.

S.A. Crowe

ppJM

(Approved by the Secretary of State
and signed in his absence)

12 OCT 1990

ANNEX A

Specification for the

Development of

STANDARD ASSESSMENT TASKS

In the Core Subjects

for pupils at the end of the

FIRST KEY STAGE

of the

National Curriculum

October 1990

CONTENTS

Part I: Description of SATs * See also Schedule at Part V

This will form part of the SEAC's School Assessment Folder issued to Key Stage One teachers in November 1990.

Part II: Technical details for the development agencies

The three agencies that have been under contract to SEAC since January 1989 will be invited to make proposals to carry out the origination of the 1991 and 1992 SATs and other related work.

Part III: Information for LEAs

This highlights some issues that LEA staff may wish to consider in supporting the 1991 statutory assessment.

Part IV: Reference documents

Part V: Schedule

PART I

Description of SATs

Standard assessment tasks are intended to support high quality teaching and learning by providing good classroom activities for the assessment of pupils' attainments.

A SAT will be provided for each of two groups of schools and pupils in 1991:

- For schools in England and for English-speaking schools and classes in Wales, an English-medium SAT to assess mathematics, science and English.

- For Welsh-speaking schools and classes, a Welsh-medium SAT to assess mathematics, science and Welsh. If you use this SAT you will only be required to report to parents the results of the assessment of mathematics and science. The assessment of Welsh will serve as a pilot for the first statutory assessment of Welsh in 1992.

What are the SATs like?

The English-medium SAT

You will assess each child on nine attainment targets - some attainment targets will be compulsory while you will have a constrained choice amongst some others.

COMPULSORY					CONSTRAINED CHOICE		
[En2]	& [En3, 4, 5]	& [Ma1, 3]	& [Sc1]	&	[Ma5 or Ma8 or Ma10 or Ma13]	&	[Sc 3 or Sc 5 or Sc 6]

The Welsh-medium SAT

You will assess each child on eight attainment targets - some attainment targets will be compulsory while you will have a constrained choice amongst some others.

COMPULSORY					CONSTRAINED CHOICE		
[W1]	& [W3, 4]	& [Ma1, 3]	& [Sc1]	&	[Ma5 or Ma8 or Ma10 or Ma13]	&	[Sc 3 or Sc 5 or Sc 6]

Each SAT will be written so that levels 1-3 of the attainment targets can be assessed. Children who have not yet attained the criteria for level 1 in a particular attainment target will be described as 'working towards level 1' for that attainment target. Pupils who attain the criteria for level 3 in a particular attainment target will be described as 'level 3 or above' for that attainment target.

The compulsory attainment targets cover literacy, some aspects of numeracy and exploration of science. The constrained choice will give you an opportunity to choose which additional attainment targets in mathematics and science to use with your children.

The tasks and activities in the SAT will allow you to incorporate a reasonable proportion of them into a theme or topic to give coherence to the activities. Some activities will be free standing and related to one or two attainment targets drawn from one of the core subjects. A theme will be suggested at National Training Conferences for LEA staff in January but that theme will not be a significant element in the structure of the SAT. You will have the freedom to fit the materials into any theme or topic that you had already planned to use in the summer term of 1991.

The assessment materials will have a variety of forms.

- teacher presentation
  oral, written, pictorial, practical demonstration;
- pupil operation
  mental only, oral, written, practical;
- pupil response
  open-ended writing, short written responses in prescribed form, other prescribed responses, oral, practical procedure observed, practical outcome or product.

Any activities crossing subject boundaries will reflect the programmes of study of those subjects.

Who are they for?

Each SAT will be designed for use with the maximum range of pupils, including those with special educational needs of all kinds, unless they are subject to disapplication. In 1991 however, you will not be required statutorily to assess pupils with statements of special educational needs. You can of course do so if you wish.

The SAT materials will be as free as possible from overt and covert gender bias. Every effort will be made to ensure that the materials avoid ethnic and cultural bias and do not disadvantage children from the ethnic minorities.

How will I know what to do?

Guidance on the ways you can use the SAT will be identified in a 'Handbook of Guidance for the SAT' that will form part 7 of SEAC's School Assessment Folder. The Handbook will accompany the SAT and will give you instructions on what to do. It will also show you how the assessment issues outlined in part 5 of the Folder apply in particular ways to the SAT supplied.

When can I start?

You and your colleagues will have access to the SAT materials a number of weeks before you need to use them with your pupils.

A SAT box with enough material for each teacher who needs to use them will be delivered to schools by 11 March 1991. Material for pupil use will be in a state ready for use when received by the school.

Advance copies of the materials will be made available to LEA staff at the January Conferences so that they can use them with you in training sessions.

This early access will give you the opportunity to plan the sequence of activities, the pace of the work and the grouping of pupils, so that you can reflect your normal teaching style during the period of the conduct of the SAT and use the materials in ways that suit you and your class.

Schools will be able to use the SAT materials with their children during the first half of the Summer term.

For the English-medium SAT, the SAT writers will produce materials to assess En2 (Reading). Some of this will involve each child reading aloud to a teacher on a one-to-one basis. Apart from this, the other materials should occupy about one half of the classroom time of a three week period, that is, about 30 hours.

For the Welsh-medium SAT, including the assessment of W1 (Oral: Listening, Viewing and Speaking) the writers will produce materials which should occupy no more than the classroom time taken by the English-medium SAT, including the assessment of En2 (Reading).

All the assessment and recording necessary for the conduct of the SAT will need to be completed not later than the end of the first half of the Summer term.

PART II: TECHNICAL DETAILS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

1. The technical details of the core subjects standard assessment tasks to be provided for pupils reaching the end of the first key stage of the national curriculum in 1991 are given below and should be read together with the reference documents listed in part IV. Any agency appointed to carry out this work (hereafter called 'the agency') will be required to write the SATs described in part I of the specification and explained in more detail below. Part I will be included in SEAC's School Assessment Folder so that teachers are fully informed of progress to date.

2. The contract will run from 1 November 1990 to 31 March 1992 and will consist of five phases (paragraphs 60-65).

A: SAT BOX

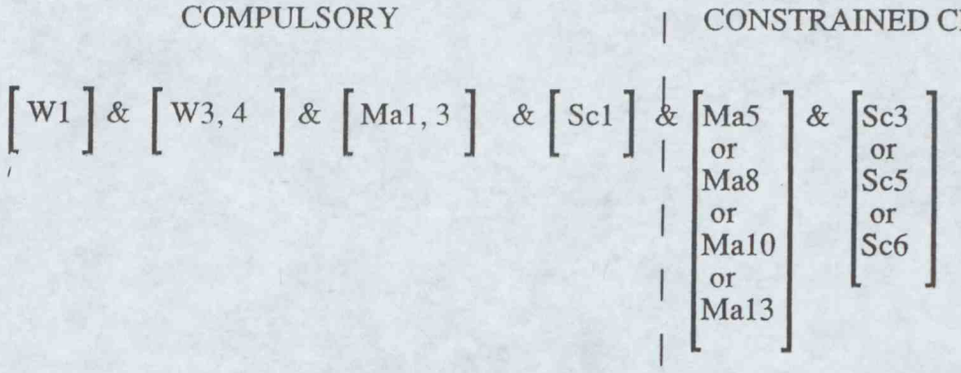
3. The agency will be contracted to produce materials to assess achievement against a number of attainment targets. The collection of assessment materials, recording instruments and a Handbook of Guidance (see paragraphs 46-54) will form a standard assessment task. This Handbook will be issued to schools as part of SEAC's School Assessment Folder.

4. Each classroom containing pupils in the last year of key stage 1 will need a SAT box containing a 'compulsory' section and a 'constrained choice' section. The following diagrams are shown as illustrations only. The actual coverage of attainment targets will be announced by the agency at National Training Conferences in January 1991.

5. For schools in England and English-speaking schools and classes in Wales the SAT model is:

COMPULSORY				CONSTRAINED CHOICE		
[En2]	& [En3, 4, 5]	& [Ma1, 3]	& [Sc1]	& [Ma5 or Ma8 or Ma10 or Ma13]	&	[Sc3 or Sc5 or Sc6]

6. For Welsh-speaking schools and classes the SAT model is



7. For English, the collection of attainment targets in the English-medium SAT will allow a level to be determined on the basis of SAT evidence alone for two of the three profile components (Reading and Writing). For science, one of the attainment targets from the constrained choice element will form the focus of an assessment of profile component 1 (Exploration of Science). For mathematics, two attainment targets from profile component 1 (Number, Algebra and Measures) are included with a further attainment target to be chosen from either profile component 1 or profile component 2 (Shape and Space and Data Handling). The Welsh-medium SAT has a similiar coverage apart from Welsh profile component 1 (Oral: Listening, Viewing and Speaking) being included instead of Reading.

8. The only remaining profile components, English profile component 1 (Speaking and Listening) and Welsh profile component 2 (Reading), will be supported by the provision of specific guidance to support Teacher Assessment. This guidance will be prepared by the agency and distributed to schools as early as possible in the Spring term 1991 forming a component of part 2 of the School Assessment Folder.

B: <u>USE OF THE SAT BOX</u>

9. In English-speaking schools and classes the assessment of all the pupils in the last year of the key stage against the attainment targets, with the exception of the reading aloud required by En2 Reading, see paragraphs 24-27 below, should occupy in the region of one-half of the classroom time of a three week period, that is about 30 hours. In Welsh-speaking schools and classes, the assessment of all pupils in the last year of the key stage should occupy no more classroom time than that taken by the English-medium SAT, including the assessment of En2 (Reading). The teacher will be able to use the SAT materials with pupils at any time throughout the first half of the summer term 1991.

10. Some of the assessment activities will be written to fit into a broad theme identified by the agency and announced at the National Training Conferences in January. A suggested programme of work will need to be prepared for teachers to use during the conduct of the SAT, if they wish. However, the activities should be sufficiently free standing for teachers to fit into any theme or topic they have already identified for the Summer term of 1991.

11. The number of activities that require teachers to observe closely and record the responses of individual pupils on a one-to-one basis will need to be limited, as this is time consuming and can lead to difficulties of classroom management. Any proposal will need to indicate an approach to this issue.

12. The agency will need to design the SAT such that all activities can be conducted by a single teacher working alone throughout the period of time set aside for the SAT. Consideration will need to be given to the length of classroom time each individual activity will take. Lengthy tasks involving the teacher observing pupils caused manageability problems during the pilot.

C: APPROACHES TO TASK SETTING

Reliability and validity

13. Pupils must have the opportunity of demonstrating their maximum attainment, across levels 1-3 on each attainment target in the SAT, that is, they must be able to show what they know, understand and can do.

14. Some attainment targets, Ma2 for instance, have a developmental strand across all three levels. Other attainment targets, such as Sc11, have statements linked across two of the levels (1a and 2b) but with no corresponding statement at the third level. Some other attainment targets have a statement (Ma11/3a) at a particular level not linked to statements at either of the other two levels. Any proposal will need to indicate for the attainment targets included in the 1991 SATs, exactly how teachers could operate a flexible approach to levels of entry and exit from the SAT activity particular to individual pupils.

15. The SAT material should enable the teacher to confirm or revise the attainment target level declared earlier when Teacher Assessment was completed. As a general rule it will be a requirement for the teacher to give the pupil a lower level task if the attainment target level is not confirmed, unless it is level 1 that has not been confirmed.

16. If the attainment target level is confirmed then the teacher will be required to proceed with activities at a higher level, unless it is level 3 that has been confirmed. However in these cases teachers will need guidance on the circumstances in which they would not need to continue the assessment activity at the higher level if the pupil was not demonstrating success.

17. Lower attaining pupils were found in the pilot to benefit from tasks well matched to their capabilities. Higher attaining pupils were disadvantaged by tasks at too low a level. Any proposal should explain in detail how these issues will be handled.

Flexibility

18. The 'compulsory' element will be used in the same way with all pupils. Thus all pupils in English-speaking classes will be assessed against En2 & En3, 4, 5 & Ma1, 3 & Sc1. In Welsh-speaking classes, all pupils will be assessed against W1 & W3, 4 & Ma1, 3 & Sc1.

19. The 'constrained choice' element would allow a school to determine which attainment targets would be covered within any one particular class. For example one class may use the materials for Ma5 and Sc3. All pupils in that class would be assessed against those two attainment targets. Another class in the same school may use materials for Ma10 and Sc6. Again all pupils in that class would be assessed against those two attainment targets.

20. This element of choice within the school should give teachers the flexibility to allocate any resources needed for the assessment across the classes in the school as well as allowing standards to be compared within any one class.

Scope of Tasks

21. For any one individual pupil a teacher should be expected to make fewer than 50 assessments, with each assessment broadly equating to one statement of attainment (SoA). However, any collection of nine attainment targets (eight for the Welsh-medium SAT) put together from the SAT box illustrated in paragraphs 5 and 6 will have in excess of 80 statements of attainment. Any proposal would need to include the ways in which the number of assessments would be kept within manageable limits while still providing reliable and valid assessments in the form of attainment target levels.

22. As a ground rule, any level awarded should be on the basis of at least one assessment against each statement of attainment that defines that level. The evaluation of the pilot has shown however that some statements of attainment are not particularly amenable to assessment through a SAT, either because they require long time periods, such as recording observations over more than three weeks, or need elaborate situations to be set up. The assessment of pupils' attainment against some other statements may not add any significant information. Any proposal must indicate any statements of attainment to be excluded and the reason for their exclusion.

23. An attainment target level will be awarded by aggregating successes recorded against statements of attainment. A ground rule to be used for the 1991 SAT is:

- where an attainment target level is defined by one SoA, success must be recorded against it
- where an attainment target level is defined by two SoAs, success must be recorded against both
- where an attainment target level is defined by three or more SoAs, success must be recorded against all but one SoA

During the pilot this became known as the 'n' or 'n-1' rule. Any proposal will need to indicate how this ground rule will be implemented for each one of the attainment target levels covered by the SAT, and any possible exceptions to it.

D: TASK CONSTRUCTION

Reading

24. Four of the statements of attainment - En2/1b, En2/2a, En2/2f, En2/3a - contained in the reading attainment target involve a pupil reading aloud to a teacher. Schools need the flexibility in conducting this part of the SAT assessment of reading at their convenience, within the statutory requirement of assessment taking place at or near the end of the key stage. The time for reading aloud can be counted separately from the 30 hours or so set aside as the SAT period.

25. The agency will be required to produce or identify texts for reading aloud, as part of the contents of the SAT box. As far as possible each text should be suitable for one level only. The number of texts will need to be sufficient to exemplify the 'range' required in the Order (document E *) and to cover levels 1-3. As part of the SAT assessment each pupil will be required to read one text. Mastery of the range of texts should imply mastery of any one in particular. Any proposal should specify how these principles would be achieved.

26. Any proposal must indicate how the other reading statements of attainment are to be covered. A flexible approach will be required so that a teacher, possibly the headteacher, could undertake all the assessment of En2 including that of reading aloud. Alternatively the class teacher should be able to choose to cover the statements, other than those involving reading aloud, in her normal classroom activity during the SAT time.

27. For this attainment target exceptionally the 'n' rule will apply at all three levels, that is, all statements of attainment at a level will need to be achieved for the award of an attainment target level.

Language of presentation

28. The use of language in assessment tasks should conform to the following (document M):

Presentation: The teacher should ensure that the pupils understand what is expected of them. There will be no restriction on the language used or on the use of the skills of another adult who is normally present in the classroom. Non-linguistic methods of presentation may also be used.

Pupil operation: The pupils will work in whatever languages or combination of languages they normally use in mathematics or science, and may use technological aids, such as computers for physically disabled pupils, at the teacher's discretion.

Pupil response: Oral responses relating to mathematics and science can be in any language or combination of languages that the teacher can understand, with the support of an adult normally present in the classroom, if necessary.

Written responses in mathematics and science must be in English or Welsh, as appropriate.

All responses leading to an assessment of English must be in English, with permitted exemptions or modifications as specified in the Order (document E).

Mode of operation

29. Teachers should have opportunities to adapt the tasks to enable them to be used with any of their pupils with special educational needs. Permitted adaptations which do not affect the assessment will be detailed by the agency within the Handbook of Guidance for SATs as part of the statutory arrangements.

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* Document references are to Part IV.

Other modifications made by the teacher so that the pupil can participate will need to be noted by the teacher so that a judgement about the validity of any assessment can be made by the LEA moderator. As far as possible tasks which are repeated by successive groups of pupils should be avoided. In a concentrated period of time these tend to become invalid and do not provide the most favourable circumstances for pupils to demonstrate their best attainment.

Modes of response

30. Some written or other work leading to tangible products should be included for as many as possible of the attainment targets to provide materials for standardisation training and some tangible evidence for any required moderation. However any pupil should only be asked to convert oral responses into written, pictorial or graphical form where the production of such material is of intrinsic value to the pupil.

31. This procedure will also assist teachers in classroom management, because some of the assessment and recording decisions can take place outside classroom time. However the amount of such work required of teachers outside the school sessions during SAT time, including completing records and planning the next day's activities, should be kept to a minimum.

E: RECORD KEEPING

32. The class teacher will assess and record pupils' attainments during the conduct of the SAT. The administration therefore should be as undemanding as possible. In particular it would be helpful if the number of times teachers were required to enter pupils' names etc onto a record sheet, and to transfer data from one record sheet to another, were kept to a minimum. Any proposal should indicate clearly the amount of data recording and transfer envisaged.

33. For each pupil a decision will need to be made about the level attained in each of the attainment targets. To do this teachers will need to operate rules determined by the agency and approved by SEAC. The rules will be applied to assessment data set out on a record sheet for each pupil. A draft of this final record sheet will need to be supplied as part of the proposal. This will enable SEAC to judge whether the demand on teachers is being kept within manageable limits.

34. The form which teachers will use to record their judgement about an attainment will need to be finalised by 1 November 1990 so that those LEAs wishing to prepare versions preprinted with pupils' names can do so. The agency will be required to provide advice to LEAs on the most efficient method of undertaking this work.

F: SCHOOL ASSESSMENT FOLDER

Part 2

35. The guidance given on Teacher Assessment in part 2 of the School Assessment Folder may need updating. If this proves to be the case, suitable further guidance will need to be prepared by the agency in time for the January conferences. It is intended that the document for Teacher Assessment will be sent to schools in the SAT box.

Part 5

36. The issues covered in part 5 of the School Assessment Folder may need further exposition in relation to activities contained in the SAT box. Particular care will be needed to judge the language, tone and volume of this guidance. Any proposal should contain an example of what is judged appropriate in the light of the pilot for any two of these issues. Some possibilities for development are listed in the following paragraphs.

Organising and managing the classroom

37. Guidance will be needed on strategies for using the SAT material in mixed age classes. Particular attention will need to be paid to Year 1 pupils grouped with Year 2 pupils.

38. Horizontally grouped classes with 30 or more pupils pose considerable management problems and clear advice and guidance will be needed.

39. Special consideration will need to be paid to small schools where many heads are class teachers with some having Year 2 pupils.

Fluency

40. Further guidance will be needed to reassure teachers of pupils who are not fluent in English or Welsh.

Providing Support

41. Clear guidance on the way tasks are presented to pupils is necessary. Options must be left open to teachers to use language which is appropriate to the needs of their pupils. Clear guidance will be needed so that teachers use any provided scripts appropriately. Special attention must be given to pupils who are not fluent in English and Welsh.

42. Advice will also be needed for teachers whose pupils keep asking the teachers for help during the SAT administration.

Individual Needs

43. Advice must be given to help teachers reduce pupil stress when success against any particular statement of attainment is not achieved.

Children working in groups

44. Strategies will need to be specified which will assist teachers to make assessments of an individual pupil when working in a small group.

Part 6

45. Part 6 of the School Assessment Folder: Guidance on Moderation will be distributed to schools in February 1991. The agency will need to contribute to the preparation of this document by SEAC.

Part 7

46. The agency will produce a 'Handbook of Guidance for the SAT' to assist teachers conduct standard assessment tasks. This will form part 7 of the School Assessment

Folder and will be specific to the 1991 SAT. Some of its contents will be the focus of training in the period January-March to be conducted by LEAs so that Year 2 teachers, at least, are fully prepared for the 1991 assessment.

47. Some sections, at least, of the Handbook will be part of the statutory arrangements for assessments. These sections must be clearly delineated from any general guidance or advice also contained within the Handbook.

48. Care must be taken to avoid the use of jargon wherever possible. Each section should be brief so that teachers are not presented with a daunting volume of text to read and absorb.

49. The Handbook should distinguish between essential resources which the school is required to provide and desirable resources which the school may care to provide. In general however the resources necessary for the conduct of the SAT should be no more than those required for the implementation of the National Curriculum, unless they are supplied within the SAT box.

50. Advice should be given so that teachers are encouraged to use the SAT materials in ways which meet their teaching styles.

51. The purpose of entry and exit points must be explained. Not only do pupils find inappropriate work boring and a waste of time but the assessments themselves become invalid. There is also some evidence from the pilot that the presentation of work deteriorated as pupils became disaffected. This was equally true of their behaviour.

52. Guidance will be needed on the recording of unintended outcomes in which a pupil demonstrates achievement of a statement of attainment not explicitly covered by the SAT materials.

53. Strategies should be provided for teachers to enable them to prepare suitable materials for pupils who are not actively engaged in the SAT.

54. Teachers will find suggested time constraints on activities useful as guidelines when conducting the SAT. However the suggested allocations should be as generous as possible in order to prevent or reduce teacher stress.

G: WELSH ISSUES

55. A process of 'parallel' development of English and Welsh-medium materials in which English and Welsh speakers agree on the assessment activities for mathematics and science before writing them has been shown to be beneficial. This avoids difficulties associated with translation. It also avoids questions of comparability that arise when the materials are developed separately. Any proposals would need to detail the way in which Welsh-medium material would be originated.

56. In Welsh-speaking schools, the results of assessing pupils in mathematics and science in 1991 through the SATs will need to be reported to their parents. Many of the pupils however will come from English-speaking homes and will not be fluent Welsh speakers, readers or writers. Teachers in these schools therefore will need to ensure accessibility, and that the pupils fully understand what is expected of them. The agency will need to include suitable guidance in the Handbook.

57. The assessment of Welsh itself in 1991 will serve as a pilot for the statutory assessment due in 1992. The agency will need to give particular attention to this in its evaluation of the 1991 SATs.

H: NATIONAL TRAINING CONFERENCES

58. The agency will need to determine LEAs' expectations of the conferences to be held in January. Some likely topics are

- the 1991 standard assessment tasks
- moderation
- standardisation of teachers' judgements

I: TIMETABLE

59. The contract will run from 1 November 1990 to 31 March 1992 and will consist of five phases.

60. Phase 1: 1 November 1990 - 31 December 1990

The phase has two activities:

- the origination of manuscript copy of all material
- the editing and design of these materials

61. The agency will be responsible for design, proof reading and typesetting, including any artwork, taking the SATs and the Handbook through to proofed Camera Ready paged bromides. The agency will need to liaise closely with Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO) who will publish the SATs, the Handbook and supporting documents. Camera Ready Copy, together with specified pan tone colours will need to be passed to HMSO in stages between 17 December and 21 January, with a notional 50% having been transferred by 7 January. This arrangement is to allow time for printing and collation so that delivery to schools can be completed by 11 March 1991. Manuscript copy of all contents of the SAT box, however, suitable for photocopying, must be available for approval by SEAC on or before 31 December 1990 so that the agency can distribute it at National Training Conferences.

62. Phase 2: 1 January 1991 - 31 January 1991

During January the agency will run National Training Conferences for LEA assessment co-ordinators, and others, on behalf of SEAC. There will be nine conferences across England and Wales within a two week period. The agency will be required to produce conference packs for delegates containing all supporting materials and copies of the SATs. All work relating to the organisation and running of the conferences forms part of this contract and estimates of costs are to be included in any proposal. The dates and venues are:

Conference	LEAs	Venue	Date
1	North East England	York	7 January 1991
2	North West England	Manchester	8 January 1991
3	West Midlands	Birmingham	10 January 1991

Conference	LEAs	Venue	Date
4	South Yorks & East Midlands	Nottingham	11 January 1991
5	Central London Boroughs	London	14 January 1991
6	Boroughs & Counties N & NE of London	London	15 January 1991
7	Boroughs & Counties SE, S & W of London	London	16 January 1991
8	South and South West England	Bath	17 January 1991
9	Wales	Llandrindod Wells	18 January 1991

63. Phase 3: 1 February 1991 - 30 April 1991

The agency will be required to evaluate the 1991 Teacher Assessment. During this phase and the previous phase the agency will trial assessment material, especially for the attainment targets not included in the 1991 SATs so that decisions can be made about including them in the 1992 SAT.

64. Phase 4: 1 May 1991 - 31 December 1991

The agency will be required to evaluate the 1991 SAT assessment and to originate the 1992 SATs.

65. Phase 5: 1 January 1992 - 31 March 1992

The agency will be required to evaluate the 1992 Teacher Assessment and to liaise with any agency put under contract from 1 January 1992 to originate the 1993 SATs.

J: MANAGEMENT OF CONTRACT

66. SEAC's KS1/Development Steering Committee will manage the programme of work. Upon being awarded the contract by SEAC on behalf of the Secretary of State the agency will need to obtain agreement from SEAC for its proposed method of working. The agency must therefore be prepared and capable of responding to the requirements of the Steering Committee.

67. Day to day liaison will be with officers of the Council. As the materials are written the agency must be prepared to submit them for scrutiny by an editorial body established by the Council for that purpose.

PART III: - INFORMATION FOR LEAS

1. Local Education Authorities will have a major role to play in the support of Year 2 teachers carrying out the first statutory assessment in 1991. As well as training teachers LEA staff may produce documentation to support materials produced by the agency writing the SATs and materials produced by SEAC, HMI, DES and WOED.

Teacher Assessment

2. This will be carried out in accordance with the Section 4 Order in the light of guidance contained in the DES Circular 9/90 and WOED Circular 34/90 and part 2 of SEAC's School Assessment Folder. Any updating of the guidance will be given at in the National Training Conferences planned for January 1991.

3. A draft of the document to be completed by the teacher is illustrated in part 2 of the School Assessment Folder. Sufficient copies of the actual document will be supplied to the schools with the SAT box. Spare copies will be lodged with LEA assessment co-ordinators.

The Standard Assessment Tasks

4. The SAT boxes will be distributed directly to schools by 11 March. Spare copies will be lodged with LEAs' assessment co-ordinators. Data to enable this distribution will be collected by SEAC's School Co-ordinating Unit based in Slough.

Manageability

5. The agency will produce the recording instruments to be used as part of the SAT by 1 November 1990. As with the documents for Teacher Assessment it would be of considerable benefit to teachers if LEAs could preprint recording instruments with pupils' names etc on the basis of class lists supplied to them by schools in January 1991.

PART IV:

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

A: A Report of the Task Group on Assessment and Testing (TGAT), together with the Government's 7 June 1989 statement on the Report

B: Three supplementary Reports of TGAT

C: The Statutory Orders for Mathematics Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study

D: The Statutory Orders for Science Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study

E: The Statutory Orders for English Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study

F: The Statutory Orders for Welsh Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study

G: The report of SEAC's Evaluation and Monitoring Unit on the 1989 formal trials of assessment materials and the agencies' reports

H: The report of SEAC's Evaluation and Monitoring Unit on the 1990 pilot of standard assessment tasks and the agencies' reports

I: SEAC's advice to the Secretaries of State, 'National Curriculum Assessment Arrangements', in July 1989 and the reply of July 1989

J: SEAC's advice to the Secretaries of State, 'National Curriculum Assessment Arrangements (2)', in December 1989 and the reply of March 1990

K: School Assessment Folder: Parts 1-5, Exemplifications and RoA.
Anthology of assessed pupils work.
Guidance on Records of Achievement.

L: 'A Guide to Teacher Assessment', SEAC

M: The Assessment Order under Section 4 of ERA and the accompanying DES circular 9/90 and WOED circular 34/90

N: The Regulations under Section 22 of ERA and the accompanying DES circular 8/90 and WOED circular 39/90

O: Responsibilities of LEAs in 1990/91, SEAC July 1990.

APPENDIX

This appendix would not form part of any published version of the specification.

Documents to accompany proposal

Any proposal for this work must contain the following:

1) a list of SoAs proposed for exclusion from the SAT box and the reasons for doing so

2) for each of the included statements a list of the number of times a teacher would be expected to assess and record a response of a pupil

3) for each one of the attainment target levels, the method of applying the 'n' or 'n-1' rule

4) at least two examples of a 'pathway' a teacher could take through the material to identify the maximum attainment of an individual pupil against the attainment targets. This should show clearly the number of times she would need to assess and record the response of a pupil to an assessment activity.

In both examples the Teacher Assessment is to be taken as

En2	En3	En4	En5	Ma1	Ma3	Ma5	Sc1	Sc3
2	2	2	2	2	3	2	1	1

The SAT outcome in the first example is

En	En3	En4	En5	Ma1	Ma3	Ma5	Sc1	Sc3
2	2	2	2	2	3	2	1	1

and in the second example

En	En3	En4	En5	Ma1	Ma3	Ma5	Sc1	Sc3
2	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3

5) an estimate of classroom time required for

a) a class containing 16 pupils in the final year of the key stage and 14 others
b) a class containing 28 pupils in the final year of the key stage and no other pupils
c) a class containing 36 pupils in the final year of the key stage and no other pupils

In each case the amount of time spent on assessment activities by an individual pupil is also to be indicated. Further, the amount of time spent by the teacher on SAT related work not involving the pupils, such as administration, should also be indicated.

6) Copies of the recording instruments to be used by teachers must accompany the proposals. This will allow a judgement to be made about whether the numbers of assessment per pupil is being kept within manageable limits. This applies particularly to the document on which the results of the assessment are gathered together so the teacher can make a decision about the attainment levels for each individual pupil. Further design work can be carried out but the content cannot alter without SEAC's agreement.

Background information

7) The following paragraphs contain information that the agency may find useful in its writing of the SATs for 1991.

Cost of the statutory assessment

8) When the SATs have been written they will need to be printed and the appropriate number of copies of each SAT distributed to schools by 11 March 1991. The use of the word 'printed' should not inhibit the agency if other than paper based material is felt to be appropriate. Her Majesty's Stationery Office will publish the SATs on behalf of the Secretaries of State and will arrange for their printing, collation and delivery to a distribution house. The printing and distribution is not the subject of this contract.

9) The large number of pupils to be assessed in 1991 has considerable cost implications. Obviously, the more complex the SATs are, the more expensive the printing and distribution will become. The information in the following paragraph is to assist the agency to judge the form of SAT that will be acceptable to SEAC and is not part of this contract.

10) There will be some 620,000 pupils reaching the end of key stage 1 in 1991, being taught by somewhere in the region of 60,000 teachers. The cost of printing, packaging and distributing a SAT box for each teacher containing sufficient material for the 7 year olds in the class should not exceed an average of £6.00. This figure is quoted so that the agency can judge the extent of material to be included in the SAT box.

11) The materials should be written so that the absolute minimum additional cost burden falls upon the schools. Thus any resources needed for the conduct of the SAT must not exceed those required by the implementation of the National Curriculum, unless supplied within the SAT box. Further, sufficient copies of all material will need to be supplied in the SAT box so that photocopying in the school is not a requirement for the complete assessment of all pupils in the last year of the key stage against the attainment targets.

MATHEMATICS [redacted] PART V C.

Knowledge, skills, understanding and use of number, algebra and measures

AT1	Using and applying mathematics	Use number, algebra and measures in practical tasks, in real-life problems, and to investigate within mathematics itself.	3
AT2	Number	Understand number and number notation.	7
AT3	Number	Understand number operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) and make use of appropriate methods of calculation.	9
AT4	Number	Estimate and approximate in number.	13
AT5	Number/Algebra	Recognise and use patterns, relationships and sequences, and make generalisations.	15
AT6	Algebra	Recognise and use functions, formulae, equations and inequalities.	17
AT7	Algebra	Use graphical representation of algebraic functions.	19
AT8	Measures	Estimate and measure quantities, and appreciate the approximate nature of measurement.	21

Knowledge, skills, understanding and use of shape and space and data handling

AT9	Using and applying mathematics	Use shape and space and handle data in practical tasks, in real-life problems, and to investigate within mathematics itself.	23
AT10	Shape and space	Recognise and use the properties of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes.	27
AT11	Shape and space	Recognise location and use transformations in the study of space.	29
AT12	Handling data	Collect, record and process data.	31
AT13	Handling data	Represent and interpret data.	35
AT14	Handling data	Understand, estimate and calculate probabilities.	43

SCIENCE.

Exploration of science, communication and the application of knowledge and understanding

AT1	Exploration of science	3

Knowledge and understanding of science, communication, and the applications and implications of science

AT2	The variety of life	6
AT3	Processes of life	8
AT4	Genetics and evolution	10
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ENGLISH.

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ANNEX B

DRAFT PARLIAMENTARY STATEMENT

[ ]: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Science, if he will make a statement about the Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs) to be used to assess 7 year olds in English, mathematics and science in 1991.

JOHN MacGREGOR

Following advice from the School Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC), the Secretary of State for Wales and I have today agreed a specification for the tests - or Standard Assessment Tasks (SATS) - to be used in the first national assessments of 7 year olds in 1991.

The SATs will test the attainments of all 7 year olds in the fundamentals of reading, writing and arithmetic; and basic scientific skills. In addition to these common and compulsory elements, teachers will use the SATs to test one further aspect of mathematics and one further aspect of scientific knowledge of their choice from a specified selection; and they will have a duty separately to carry out their own tests for all pupils across all aspects of English, mathematics and science in the National Curriculum.

Because of its crucial importance to pupils' future development, the SAT specification provides that there will be a separate test of reading for all 7 year olds. To help ensure consistency of standards, that test will include common set texts which pupils will read aloud.

Focussing the SATs on the fundamentals of the curriculum will ensure that they are manageable for teachers. The specification stipulates that, the testing of reading aside, the SATs should be

designed to take up no more than the equivalent of about a week and a half in the first half of the Summer term.

The specification also takes on board many other practical lessons of last Summer's pilot assessments which will help to ensure that the 1991 SATs fit smoothly into the classroom and are appropriate for all pupils.

I am placing copies of the specification itself, SEAC's advice and my reply in the libraries of both Houses.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

ELIZABETH HOUSE YORK ROAD LONDON SE1 7PH
TELEPHONE 071-934 9000

The Rt Hon JOHN MacGREGOR OBE MP

CONFIDENTIAL

The Right Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe, QC, MP
Lord President of the Council
Privy Council Office
Whitehall
London SW1A 2AT

12 OCT 1990

Dear Lord President

School Transport and Parental Choice

I am faced with a decision in relation to school transport in Hertfordshire which will have implications for our education policies nationally but also has political considerations in relation to the Churches. Before I come to final conclusions, I thought it right to consult colleagues on the wider policy issues. We shall have an opportunity to discuss this in H Committee on 22 October.

2. The Roman Catholic and Church of England diocesan authorities seek from me a direction either under Section 68 or under Section 55 of the Education Act 1944 to prevent Hertfordshire altering its existing policy whereby free school transport is available for pupils attending church schools, where there is no alternative church school of the appropriate denomination within the statutory walking distance. That policy in Hertfordshire has stood since 1944. It is similar to arrangements to protect denominational choice in the vast majority of LEAs.

3. Hertfordshire, following local consultation now propose from September 1991 to require parents of children at denominational schools to make a contribution of £50 a term towards the cost of school transport (up to a maximum of 2 pupils per family) except where a pupil qualifies for free transport by virtue of the denominational school being the nearest school beyond the statutory walking distance or on grounds of poverty. This change will apply only to pupils starting at denominational schools (not those already attending) but will eventually affect over 2000

DES

pupils in the county. There would be expenditure savings rising to £0.4m after 7 years.

4. There are good educational grounds for not intervening to overturn this local decision:

- having consulted Treasury Counsel, I am clear that Hertfordshire is not acting illegally. School transport arrangements remain largely a matter of discretionary policy for the LEA and provided that they act reasonably in the consideration of individual cases, the policy change which the Authority proposes offers no grounds for intervention by me under Section 68 of the Act.

- My powers under Section 55(1) are however much wider. It is open to me to substitute my judgement for that of the LEA even when it is acting within the law, if I have reasonable grounds for doing so. But the powers have not been used in any substantial way since the 1940s and there ought to be very compelling reasons for using them now.

- To direct Hertfordshire to maintain its existing generous arrangements for transport in support of denominational choice would have no overall implications for public expenditure. We could continue to plan as at present for efficiency savings on school transport as a whole. But it would have serious consequences for our policies on Local Management of Schools. At present, LEAs do not have to delegate expenditure on school transport nor is there any statutory limit on the scale of such expenditure. I am proposing to tighten the financial requirements so as to increase the pressure on LEAs to allocate more to schools by ensuring that they keep discretionary expenditure held back at the centre as low as possible and provide central services as efficiently as possible. But if I deny Hertfordshire and other LEAs the opportunity to make these savings I shall be unable to bring home to school transport within the new control arrangements. As a result we would have less chance of squeezing out savings in a service which costs LEAs over £200m a year, and of seeing some of this expenditure, where LEAs are able to make savings, reallocated for example to school expenditure on books and equipment for which there is a big need.

- Although the issue will be presented by our critics in terms of reducing parental choice, there is no clear evidence that parents seeking a church education for their children will be deterred by the introduction of charging on the scale proposed. Indeed Hertfordshire will continue to discriminate positively in favour of

pupils attending church schools, although within less generous overall arrangements.

5. Nevertheless, I have been made very much aware by the Churches - and in particular the Roman Catholics - that they view such a change of policy as striking at the heart of the long-standing arrangements for voluntary aided schools within the dual system established by the Butler Act. Other LEAs can be expected to follow where Hertfordshire leads. The churches intend to seek judicial review of Hertfordshire's decision and will endeavour to join me in the action. The issue will be presented as striking at the right of parents to choose denominational schools; our support for voluntary aided schools will be queried; and we shall be attacked for failing to defend parental choice - a central part of our philosophy for school reform. In short, the basis of our relationship with the Churches in the provision of school education will be called into question. This argument will inevitably spill over into Parliament and we could expect considerable sympathy for the Roman Catholic position, particularly in the House of Lords. Our attempt in 1980 to revise school transport law, to require all parents using the service to make a contribution towards its costs, was defeated in the Lords by a strong coalition led by the Catholic Church; that reform was seen as a direct threat to the 'understandings' over school transport which had supported the dual system since 1944.

6. I shall have to reach a decision about whether to intervene using my powers under Section 55 later this month. My initial view is that despite the difficulties I should not be justified in overturning a local decision which remains a matter for the local authority to justify to its own community charge payers. On the legal advice available to me, it seems unlikely that the Churches could successfully challenge my decision at judicial review. Whatever the final decision, it will need careful presentation. A decision not to intervene could be presented along the following lines:

- It is not my practice to overturn decisions properly and conscientiously taken by local education authorities in cases of this kind. It is right that decisions on matters like this should be within the local authorities' own discretion.

- While any decision which bears on denominational choice is important, it is evident that Hertfordshire have considered all relevant factors and as a result have acted to maintain a significant subsidy to those choosing schools on religious grounds.

- Hertfordshire's action has been taken to meet their chargepayers' legitimate demands for economy in educational spending and to reflect their own educational priorities.

7. But such a decision will inevitably be controversial and in view of the wider considerations that I have set out, I would welcome your views and those of my colleagues before I come to a final view.

8. I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Members of H Committee and to Sir Robin Butler.

Yours sincerely

S.P. Crowe

ppJOHN MACGREGOR
(approved by the
Secretary of State and
signed in his absence)

EDUCATION
POUR PAIX

CCPO

n.b. P.M. – circuit outcome of 'H'.
BHP
19/10

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

ELIZABETH HOUSE YORK ROAD LONDON SE1 7PH
TELEPHONE 071-934 9000

The Rt Hon JOHN MacGREGOR OBE MP

CONFIDENTIAL

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ppJOHN MACGREGOR
(approved by the
Secretary of State and
signed in his absence)

cst.ps/dr/6nl2.10

UNCLASSIFIED

~~cc PU~~

n.b. P.M.
BHP
8/10

CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street SW1P 3AG

The Rt Hon John MacGregor MP
Secretary of State for Education and Science
Department of Education and Science
Elizabeth House
York Road
London
SE1 7PH

5 October 1990

Dear Secretary of State,

GRANT-MAINTAINED SCHOOLS: PARTY CONFERENCE SPEECH

Thank you for your letter of 27 September and for sending me a copy of your minute to the Prime Minister of the same date.

2. It is clear from what you say that the number of GM schools is growing more slowly than you had hoped. I shall be interested to see if the measures you are proposing will stimulate numbers over the next eighteen months. I am content for you to announce these measures at Bournemouth, but I am concerned about the implications of one of your proposals and should be grateful for reassurance from you.

3. The measure which worries me is A, where I fear that removing the barrier to small primary schools opting out could exacerbate the difficulty of restructuring school provision, especially in rural areas, and be used to undermine plans to remove surplus places. We must not allow this to happen. Our supporters in these areas, who are attempting to rationalise provision, will not thank us if your proposal makes their task more difficult and delays the point at which the benefits of restructuring can be enjoyed. I hope that you can assure me that this will not be a consequence of what you propose and that you will have the considerations I have outlined very much in mind when reviewing applications from schools in this sector.

4. As for the other items; on B and C I am grateful for your assurance that you will live within the agreed provision for 1991-92 and that you will not be entering bids for the later years during this Survey. Needless to say, if you do chose to enter bids for 1992-93 and later years in subsequent Surveys, my agreeing to your making this announcement now in no way implies any acceptance on my part that those bids need to be met.

UNCLASSIFIED

5. On D, the measure you propose involves reallocating resources within a given total and does not require any additional funds to be made available. As you say, the wider question of schools' capital is a major element in our Survey discussions this year.

6. Finally, I see that E and F are not for implementation in the life of this Parliament, but, once again, I should make it clear that my agreement to your announcing F does not imply acceptance of any future request that might be made for additional funds.

7. Copies of this letter go to the Prime Minister and to Geoffrey Howe, John Major, Kenneth Baker, Malcolm Rifkind, Chris Patten, Peter Brooke, David Hunt and Sir Robin Butler.

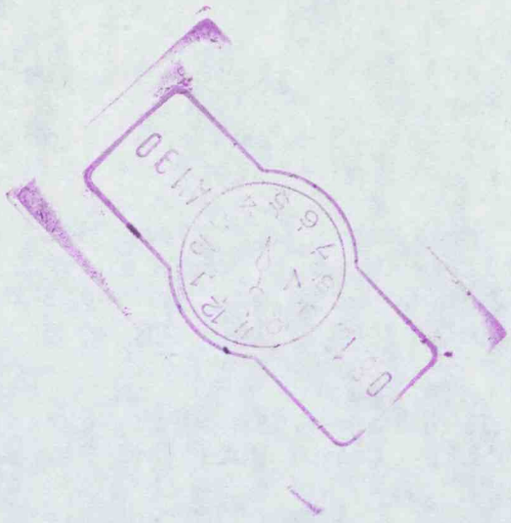
Yours sincerely

Stephen Boys

NORMAN LAMONT

[approved by the Chief Secretary and signed in his absence]

EDUCATION : Policy Pt 26 -



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n.b. P.M.
BHP
3/10

cc PO

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster

CABINET OFFICE
70 Whitehall, London SW1A 2AS
Telephone 071-270 0400

The Rt Hon John MacGregor MP
Secretary of State for Education and Science
Elizabeth House
York Road
London SE1 7PH

2 October 1990

Dear John,

GRANT-MAINTAINED SCHOOLS: PARTY CONFERENCE SPEECH

I was very pleased to see your ~~minute~~ at Flap to the Prime Minister which set out the various changes to the regime in grant-maintained (GM) schools which you intend to announce at the Party Conference. In particular I was very pleased to see that you intend to remove the level of three hundred pupils and therefore allow all schools to apply. As you know this was envisaged in our legislation and hence you have the order making power to do this. It will be very widely welcomed by parents but resented by many local education authorities (LEAs). I also welcome the three proposals on grants and the improvement of the capital position of GM schools.

I am also glad to see that you are going to reduce the percentage to trigger a ballot and that you are going to provide grants to help parents campaign for GM schools. I assume these are in effect manifesto commitments, part of a much larger package to accelerate the move to create GM schools. One thing that does concern me is the way that some LEAs and Chief Education Officers are actively campaigning against the concept of GM schools. I really do think this must be controlled in some way. If it cannot be then perhaps you may consider providing more assistance to the GM Schools Trust to help them promote the concept to GM schools.

Finally I also think it is important to promote the success of the existing schools. Can something be done in the way of pamphlets and leaflets, showing their success and popularity with staff, parents and children?

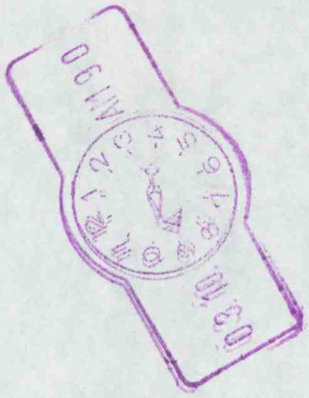
I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Geoffrey Howe, John Major, Malcolm Rifkind, Chris Patten, Peter Brooke, Norman Lamont, David Hunt and Sir Robin Butler.

Yours

Kenneth

KENNETH BAKER

EDUCATION: Policy A26



CONFIDENTIAL

EAM

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

1 October 1990

Dear Stephen,

GRANT MAINTAINED (GM) SCHOOLS

The Prime Minister was grateful for your Secretary of State's minute of 27 September setting out a proposed package of measures on grant-maintained schools.

The Prime Minister is content for your Secretary of State to make the announcements A to D set out in paragraph 6 of his minute.

The Prime Minister has noted that E and F are measures which go further and would require legislation in the next Parliament. She has commented that it may be necessary to consider more exciting proposals on GM schools for the next Parliament.

Accordingly, the Prime Minister would be grateful if your Secretary of State would consider further what measures on GM schools might be introduced in the next Parliament; and whether it would be appropriate to announce more than proposals A to D (which require no new primary legislation) at next week's Party Conference.

Yours,

Barry

BARRY H POTTER

Stephen Crowne Esq
Department of Education and Science

CONFIDENTIAL

KW

PRIME MINISTER

GRANT MAINTAINED SCHOOLS: PARTY CONFERENCE SPEECH

You will recall the earlier discussion with Brian Griffiths about longer-term policy on education and the role of grant-maintained (GM) schools.

You agreed with Brian that measures to strengthen the GM schools initiative would be a useful short-term step. Brian Griffiths discussed measures with the Education Secretary: and in the attached minute, Mr. MacGregor makes specific proposals.

Also attached is a minute from Robin Harris (Policy Unit) which places the proposals on education in the context of other policy initiatives which might be announced at the Party Conference.

Education Secretary's Proposals

Mr. MacGregor's proposals are set out in paragraph 6 of the attached minute. The first four, A-D, can be introduced under present legislation - if agreement can be struck with the Chief Secretary on their financing. All reflect your earlier discussion with Brian Griffiths.

The remaining two (E&F) would require legislation in the next Parliament. E, reducing the number of parents required to trigger a ballot in a school seeking GM status, is particularly important in improving access to GM status. Proposal F - to provide grants for parents and governors to help with campaign costs - is also helpful.

Conclusion

As paragraph 3 of Mr. MacGregor's note makes clear, only about 100 schools are expected to have GM status by January 1992 - less

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than 1 per cent of the total number. Even with the measures A-D in place, this cannot be expected to increase substantially. Important though E is, would it make much difference?

A-D should go ahead as you indicated earlier. But you will wish to consider whether the two steps (E & F) promised for legislation in the next Parliament go far enough. If the Government is planning a more fundamental change, is it right to indicate only such a relatively modest proposal at this stage?

i) Content to accept Mr. MacGregor's proposals? or

Accept A-D. — We need more exciting proposals for after the next election

ii) Prefer to discuss further with Brian Griffiths next week?

BHP

BARRY H. POTTER
28 SEPTEMBER 1990

c:\wpdocs\economic\Schools.MRM

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PRIME MINISTER

28th September 1990

GRANT MAINTAINED SCHOOLS: PARTY CONFERENCE SPEECH

In Brian Griffiths' absence, I cannot comment on the technical details of what Mr MacGregor proposes. However:

- the encouragement of more G M Schools in the rest of this Parliament is vital if we are to go into the next Election with a credible, attractive pledge of far more radical future action to get schools out of local authority control;

- G M Schools have proved successful and popular: Mr MacGregor should be encouraged in his Party Conference Speech to give some examples - and the DES should field some of their headmasters for the media straight after the announcement;

- an announcement on G M Schools could, if combined with others on a pilot Rents-to-Mortgages Scheme for England (on which, though, we have heard nothing from Mr Patten) and encouraging for the future of training credits, provide a handy package of announcements illustrating that we have radical visionary policies for the future.

/...2

I **recommend**

(a) that Mr MacGregor should make his announcement

and (b) that he should field G M School heads in the media to answer the inevitable Labour criticism.

ROBIN HARRIS

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

ELIZABETH HOUSE
YORK ROAD
LONDON SE1 7PH
071-934 9000

PRIME MINISTER

GRANT-MAINTAINED SCHOOLS: PARTY CONFERENCE SPEECH

1. You asked me to prepare a package of measures on grant-maintained schools to be announced at the Party Conference. This minute sets out my proposals.

2. There were just 18 grant-maintained schools last September: 44 are now operating. I will be announcing approval to the fiftieth grant-maintained school very shortly. 12 other proposals for GM status will reach me for decision over the next weeks. A further 12 schools are committed to holding ballots. But GM schools are still less than 1% of the schools eligible to apply for GM status.

3. I want to accelerate the momentum of the programme and reinforce the confidence of the existing GM schools. But we cannot realistically expect a dramatic increase in the number of GM schools before the next election. A steadily expanding sector of close to 100 GM schools by January 1992 is within our reach. This would provide the secure foundation for a rapid expansion in the number of schools after the next election.

4. All the GM school headteachers I talk to speak very highly of the advantages of their new status. The first GM schools are maximising the commitment and enthusiasm of governors, parents and teachers. GM schools are proving to be 'the jewel in the crown of parent power'.

5. GM schools tell us of the benefits of increased speed and efficiency in appointing teachers. They are relishing freedom from LEA constraints. They are using the resources formerly held back by the LEA for central costs at school level directly to help pupils. Their decisions have meant that money once spent on bureaucracy is now going on books and equipment. They are using non-teaching staff much more flexibly than in the past. They are developing exciting new ways of making the best use of resources.

6. My proposals are:

A to allow all primary schools to apply for grant-maintained status and not restrict eligibility just to secondary schools and the largest primary schools

B to double the maximum transitional grant payable to a GM school to help it prepare for GM status to £60,000

C to increase specific grant payments to GM schools to assist with staff training and curriculum development by an average £10,000

D to allocate a higher proportion of the capital sum for GM schools through a formula to help with small scale projects

E to reduce the number of parents required to trigger a ballot seeking GM status

F to provide for grants to be paid to parents and governors at prospective GM schools to help with campaign costs

Further details are set out in the attached note.

7. I am urgently seeking the agreement of the Chief Secretary to these proposals. The costs of A, B and C can be met within my PES baseline of £8.5m for current expenditure on GM schools for 1991-92. I am proposing that D should be a first call on whatever sum is available for capital expenditure in GM schools from within the overall total to be agreed in due course with the Chief Secretary for capital expenditure on schools. We shall in any case need to return to the costs for future years in subsequent surveys.

8. E and F will require legislation. I am not asking for legislation in this Parliament. I think they are a priority for the next Parliament. I propose to say in the Conference speech that it is our longer term aim to modify the legislation in those two important respects.

9. I am copying this minute to Geoffrey Howe, John Major, Kenneth Baker, Malcolm Rifkind, Chris Patten, Peter Brooke, Norman Lamont, David Hunt and to Sir Robin Butler.

JM

27 September 1990

PROPOSALS FOR ANNOUNCEMENT IN THE PARTY CONFERENCE SPEECH

A All schools should be able to apply for GM status

1. All secondary schools can seek GM status, but primary schools can only apply if they have 300 or more pupils. Retaining the threshold is inconsistent with the Scottish legislation which allows all schools to apply for self-governing status irrespective of their size. Many primary schools are now receiving substantial delegation of responsibilities under our LMS initiative. Now that we have seen that GM schools can cope effectively with their new freedom and responsibility we should abolish this threshold. This will be a clear vote of confidence in the policy. I can make this change simply by laying an Order before Parliament which is subject to the negative resolution procedure. This side of the election relatively few primary schools will seek GM status, but interest in becoming GM will grow as these schools become more self-confident in dealing with financial matters.

B Transitional Grant should double

2. Transitional grant is currently paid up to a ceiling of £30,000 to each new GM schools to help it prepare for its new responsibilities. There are considerable pressures on a school both before it formally opens as a GM school and in the few months afterwards. The head and governors must rapidly introduce new contracts both for staff and for the wide range of services they need.

3. They must get to grips with education law and their new financial responsibilities. Schools would benefit from more governor training. Many would benefit from the appointment of one person with the sole task of overseeing the preparations for GM status or from short term consultancies. Doubling the grant ceiling to £60,000 would give schools the flexibility they need.

C **Specific Grant payments to GM schools should be increased by about £10,000 for each school**

4. The main source of funding for a GM school is the Annual Maintenance Grant which is recouped in full from the relevant LEA. In addition GM schools receive some specific funding from the Department to assist in such areas as staff training and curriculum development. On average the existing grant is about £22,000 for each school. Because of their greater freedom and their vitality GM schools provide an excellent basis for innovation. A modest average increase of about £10,000 for each school will help GM schools build on that foundation.

D **A higher proportion of the GM capital sum should be allocated through a formula to help with small scale projects**

5. Capital allocations for GM schools in 1990-91 have been split between named projects (£6.7m) and a formula allocation (£0.65m). Many GM schools have long been neglected by their LEAs. The formula allocation has given each school an average of £16,000 to help with the purchase of equipment and small scale capital projects. Schools are using this flexibility for the school's immediate benefit. I plan to increase the formula allocation for GM schools by 50% to an average of £25,000 within whatever sum is agreed with the Chief Secretary for capital expenditure in 1990-91.

E **Reducing the number of parents required to trigger a ballot**

6. Under existing legislation a ballot of parents about seeking GM status must be held if requested by a number of parents equal to 20% of the number of pupils. This threshold should be reduced by half to 10% to make it easier for parents to put together a petition which requires a ballot to take place.

F **Providing for grants to be paid to parents and governors to help with campaign costs**

7. The Scottish legislation allows a school board to claim from the Secretary of State the costs of campaigning up to the maximum that the Education Authority may spend. The school may spend more than this maximum provided this is paid for out of private funds. We should introduce similar arrangements south of the border as LEAs often try to persuade governors and parents against GM status. Many LEAs are spending money through an organisation called Local Schools Information on propaganda against schools seeking GM status.

010

CC PU
(Minute Order)

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

PRIME MINISTER

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

Last summer you approved the establishment of a Working Group, under the Chairmanship of Professor Martin Harris, Vice-Chancellor of Essex University, to advise the Secretary of State for Wales and me on the attainment targets and programmes of study for modern foreign languages in the National Curriculum. In March you saw the Group's initial advice and agreed to its publication. The Group has now submitted its final report, and I enclose a copy at Annex A. – passed to PU.

The Group has built upon the advice contained in its interim report, which received wide support. David Hunt and I believe that the recommended framework of attainment targets and programmes of study will raise the linguistic standards of all pupils, and challenge the most able.

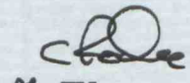
I believe that the Group's recommendations will give schools the sort of flexibility that we want in the National Curriculum. Teachers will be free to exercise their individual skills and judgment in choosing the precise topics and in selecting the relevant forms of language and vocabulary. The attainment targets and statements of attainment are defined mainly in terms of skills - speaking, listening, reading and writing - and of understanding (Chapter 5). The knowledge content to be taught is illustrated in the examples that are given with the attainment targets at each level and defined more fully in the programmes of study (Chapter 6). Pupils will of course necessarily have to demonstrate their knowledge of the language, in terms of both vocabulary and structure, when being assessed against the four targets. This approach has already been adopted in, for example, English and Welsh and the proposals are similar in structure to those which we have already put into the statutory Orders for those subjects.

In Chapter 12, the Group has reaffirmed that the study of a single modern foreign language for the five compulsory secondary years should be the normal pattern for the substantial majority of pupils. However, it believes that there would be an interim period of around five years, during which teachers should develop ways of sustaining the interest and progress of pupils of all abilities in one foreign language over five continuous years. In that interim period the Group considered that schools would need the flexibility to allow individual pupils to change language at the end of key stage 3. It recommends, however, that schools should exercise this flexibility only in exceptional circumstances. This is pragmatic and realistic. We could not in any case legislate to require all pupils to study the same language for five years: there are always going to be circumstances, such as pupils changing schools, when pupils might be obliged to change languages.

In Chapter 11 the Group has restated from its interim report its advice on the format and content of the existing statutory Order, which specifies the languages which may be taught as the National Curriculum foundation subject. We drew this to your attention at interim report stage. By its reaffirmation of its earlier advice, the Group continues to give firm backing to our policy that all schools should be required to offer one of the working languages of the EC.

David Hunt and I have concluded that this report forms a good basis for our proposals for modern foreign languages in the National Curriculum. We want to start implementing them in autumn 1992 for key stage 3 pupils and in autumn 1995 for key stage 4 pupils. I should be grateful for your agreement to our publishing the proposals (Annex B) in mid October.

I am copying this minute and report to the Foreign Secretary, to the Secretaries of State for Wales, Trade and Industry, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Employment, and to Sir Robin Butler.



AT JM
19 September 1990
(Approved by the Secretary of State and signed in his absence).

n.b. P.M. at this stage
BHP
19/9

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FROM THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR WALES

17th September 1990

Dear Mr Potter,

WELSH IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM: EXEMPTIONS

My Secretary of State has given careful consideration to your minute of 10 August about exemptions from Welsh in the National Curriculum.

He accepts the Prime Minister's concerns that to delay an announcement on exemptions at key stage 4 would mean that parents and schools would not know where they stand. He therefore proposes to publish now the list of schools concerned. The Act requires him to consult on his proposals and this will give an opportunity to amend the list in the light of the responses we receive. To preserve pupil choice he would propose that the exempted schools should make Welsh available as an option for those pupils who want it.

He has noted the Prime Minister's concern about pupil choice before key stage 4. He has asked me to stress that he would not at all rule this out but that his consultations so far have not evoked any significant demand. If he does receive such requests he is quite ready to consider them.

Yours sincerely,
Anna Coleman.

ANNA E COLEMAN

Barry Potter Esq
PS/The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
Whitehall
LONDON SW1

EDUCATION: Policy A26

CONFIDENTIAL



10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

10 August 1990

Dear Lawrence,

WELSH IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM: EXEMPTIONS

The Prime Minister was grateful for your Secretary of State's minute of 9 August about exemptions from Welsh in the National Curriculum. The Prime Minister has commented that if choice means anything in Wales it should include exemptions from being compelled to learn Welsh. She would like to see choice given to pupils before Key Stage 4 rather than allowing them only to opt out at that point. She is unconvinced by the arguments put forward for delaying an announcement on opting out. She recognises that the Welsh Secretary would have to publish now the list of schools to be exempted from the National Curriculum requirement, and that would not come into effect until 1995 at the earliest, and for some schools as late as 1997. There may be a 5 to 7 year time lag, but the Prime Minister has pointed out that children are entering school who will be there for 5 to 7 years.

The Prime Minister would be grateful if further consideration could be given to this point.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline

CAROLINE SLOCOCK

Lawrence Conway Esq
Welsh Office

CONFIDENTIAL

This is such a simple question compared with the ones I have to deal with. If choice means anything in Wales it should include exemptions from being compelled to learn Welsh not

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Prime Minister

Mr Hunt had proposed a review in 1993; but you wanted him to announce an opting out power in the immediate future. This suggests an alternative way forward! Content?

CCPU

GDS 9/8

PRIME MINISTER

WELSH IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM: EXEMPTIONS

Barry Potter's minute of 24 July registered your reservations about my proposals for exemptions from Welsh as far as they affected 14 to 16 year olds in Key Stage 4 of the National Curriculum.

I understand your concerns that we should make our policy clear now rather than later, though there are some constraints on that. As I mentioned in my earlier letter I have to prescribe the individual cases in the regulations. That would mean that I would have to publish now the list of schools to be exempted from a National Curriculum requirement that would not come into effect until 1995 at the earliest and for some schools as late as 1997. A great deal has changed in local attitudes in Wales to Welsh in the last 5 to 7 years. The changes in the next 5 to 7 years could be just as great, and in either direction. There are grave risks in tying our hands now. There could be other or different schools we would want to exempt by that time.

But children are entering schools who will be there for 5-7 years.

However I believe the issue is now overtaken by John MacGregor's opening up this week of consultation on the wider question of whether at Key Stage 4 some subjects should be capable of being dropped by wider categories of pupils. This reflects our concerns about possible overcrowding in the curriculum at Key Stage 4. John has drawn attention specifically to art, music and PE and has not specifically ruled out consideration by the NCC of history and geography. He has asked for the NCC's advice by the end of October. I will need to open up the same issue to public debate in Wales and this must logically encompass the wider question of whether pupils should be allowed to drop Welsh at Key Stage 4. In the circumstances it would be illogical for me to announce any specific proposals for exemptions from Welsh in advance of that debate.

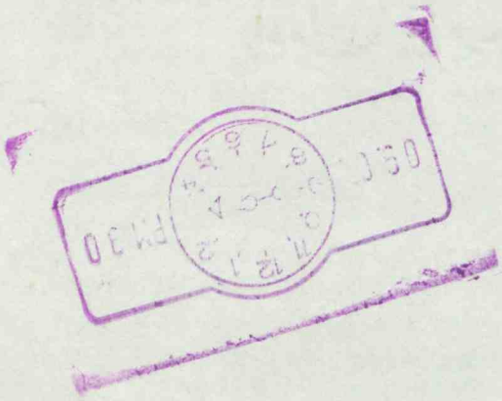
Why should they even start it?

Subject to your agreement I would therefore propose to announce the other exemption proposals I set out in my earlier minute but to say that I propose to consider further the representations I received about Key Stage 4 in the light of consultations about Key Stage 4 generally; and that I would make a further statement of our position later in the year.

9th August 1990

DH

EDUCATION: General Policy pt 26.



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F. BG/CF

3A (a-L)

PRIME MINISTER

1 AUGUST 1990

REFORMING LEAs

The starting point of this note is the judgement that LEAs have become a major obstacle to reforms of schools in this country.

They have opposed increased choice, fought against LMS, were highly critical of CTCs and have been hostile to Grant-Maintained Schools. They have frustrated the introduction of LMS by holding back a large proportion of school budgets, and have attempted to disadvantage GM schools relative to their own county maintained schools.

Our education reforms will achieve maximum effect only if more funds find their way into the classroom and individual schools are given maximum operating freedom.

This can be achieved only through a radical restructuring of LEAs which results in the transfer of LEA resources into the schools themselves.

This involves three major issues:

A. Taking FE colleges out of LEAs and granting them independent status.

B. Extending greatly the number of GM schools and changing their method of funding.

C. Restructuring what remains of LEAs.

A. GRANTING INDEPENDENCE TO FE COLLEGES

The 1988 Education Reform Act granted independent status to all

polytechnics and 48 other large colleges of higher and further education. Instead of being maintained by LEAs they are now funded as independent institutions by the Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council (PCFC).

The next Manifesto is an ideal opportunity to extend the same privileges which these colleges now have to the remaining 365 FE colleges in England.

These colleges vary greatly. Some such as Bradford and Ilkley Community College are very large, with more higher education students than a good many of the PCFC colleges. Others such as some of the agricultural colleges are very small. (Details of FE are set out in the attached table.) But taken together FE involves over 2 million students - roughly ¾ million part-time and 1¼ million full-time.

All would gain by being given a similar degree of independence to that granted PCFC colleges. The overwhelming majority of the 365 institutions would be able to stand on their own feet. Some such as the Kent Careers Service colleges which has a staff of only 4.6 or the Gainsborough Agricultural Centre with a staff of 7 might be best left with the local authority. But colleges such as these are no more than a handful.

The remaining 360 or so, including tertiary colleges, could be granted independent legal status and constituted in a way similar to PCFC colleges thereby involving the business community in a major way on the governing body. They would own their own property and equipment, employ their own staff and determine policy on the scope and range of courses. They would be funded partly through attracting customers (private companies, private individuals and TECs), and partly through a block grant (which hopefully would be relatively small) allocated through a new body, the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) which would have comparable powers to the PCFC.

C

FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGES

(1988 - 89)

ENGLAND

TYPE OF COLLEGES (LEA)	NUMBER OF COLLEGES	STUDENT NUMBERS (FTE)		STAFF NUMBERS (FTE)	
		HE	FE	HE	FE
Large	61	34,000	190,000	2,670	16,770
Medium	84	13,000	190,000	1,100	16,700
Small	175	10,700	175,000	1,000	15,900
Tertiary	36	3,400	89,000	300	8,000
TOTAL	356	61,100	644,000	5,070	57,370

Source: Annual Monitoring Survey, DES

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Further education has been the Cinderella of education for many years. However given the importance the Government now attaches to training the FE colleges have a very important role to play.

B. GRANT-MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

Expanding the number of GM schools and funding them directly from the DES is by far the most effective way to undermine LEAs. From the evidence we have so far this route is also popular with parents.

If the number of GM schools is to be expanded, there are three choices.

(i) Increased incentives for GM status

One is to improve the incentives to obtaining GM status. Increased incentives would include, inter-alia:

- the ownership of the site of a GM school would be transferred to the individual schools' trust;
- GM status would be available for all schools with over 100 pupils, or better still for all schools - many rural communities would obviously be delighted (and this could be an important part of our attempt to support rural England);
- the right of a GM school to change its character and increase student numbers should be granted within a period of 3 years, and with as little discretion as possible by the Secretary of State;
- direct funding of GM schools by DES on a per capita basis, with the capitation payments being fixed at a standard rate per head for the main pupil categories (primary, secondary etc) with

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limited add-ons for certain aspects (eg ethnic diversity, sparse population).

Comment

All of these are useful changes and will help GM schools. If changes such as these however are to be the route for increasing the number of GM schools, the critical issue will be funding. The new arrangements will have to be sufficiently attractive to entice parents and schools to shift from LEA to GM status. This should not be difficult, but the capitation formula will have to be simple - and the message very clear: GM status means more money for the classroom.

(ii) Compulsory Ballot of Parents

An alternative way of increasing GM schools is by forcing the issue: each school would be required to ballot its parents on opting-out. Either they could choose between GM status and remaining in the LEA, or if LEAs were to be scrapped in their present form, they could choose between GM status and a new kind of Trust School.

Comment

Such a proposal suffers from two difficulties. One is that a compulsory ballot would make the issue a national party political event - and could easily be presented as 'blue schools' versus 'red schools'. This would be unhelpful as one of the attractions of GM schools is that they appeal to all parents who wish the best for their children. In addition, as with HATS, a vote such as this could easily go against GM schools and prove a terminal setback.

The second difficulty is that if one wished to offer a choice between GM status and something other than the LEA

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(such as Trust status) the problem of arranging the necessary trusts and grouping schools is difficult. In practice it could well prove an impossible hurdle, so that the choice was reduced to GM versus LEA, which would suffer from the drawbacks already outlined.

On balance this does not seem a good way to proceed.

(iii) Transfer of all schools to GM status

A third way forward would be to convert all existing county maintained and voluntary schools to GM status. The case for such a proposal is that:

- using the voluntary route would take too long and is too uncertain;

- education is perceived as a national priority, which is the basis for a national curriculum.

A national system of independent state schools, each with considerable autonomy and tied in to the local community, but funded via a capitation formula from the centre, would produce effective schools and a fair system.

The schools would be effective because they would be given maximum freedom and funds would reach the classroom. The system would be fair because one area of the country would not lose out to another, simply because its LEA was not prepared to devolve power to the individual school.

Comment

Such a move will be seen as draconian. Its merits however are that you will have created a level playing field right across the country which strengthens the individual school

by transferring authority to it from the LEA. In addition I suspect it will be very popular with parents who would be excused the hassle of voting.

One argument against it is that you are creating "DES schools" which are open to the whims of bureaucrats and politicians in Elizabeth House rather than the Town Hall. Certainly the DES has shown a great reluctance to encourage the granting of either voluntary-aided or voluntary-controlled status to schools, despite their success and popularity. If you were to choose the transfer route - and there is much to be said for it - it would be necessary to encourage the growth of voluntary-aided GM schools rather than just GM schools or to take a similar action to ensure that GM schools are not just "DES schools".

Another problem with this route, but it is also one which would arise with a significant growth in the number of GM schools is that one would need some agency intermediate between DES and the individual schools - a Schools Funding Council.

The functions of such a body would be:

- to apply the capitation formula to individual schools;

- to ensure that the funds were properly handled;

- to allocate fresh capital to individual schools; in doing so it would be responsive to parental choice (ie it should not be able to use its powers to prevent the growth of popular schools);

- but such a Funding Council should not have a say on the curriculum policies of schools or their admissions policies.

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Such a Schools Funding Council could be structured in one of two ways:

either it could be an enlarged DES operating via a regional/area structure;

or it could be a Next Steps Agency, similar to the NHS, but based on the existing GM trust and having an independent council appointed by the Secretary of State.

The latter is far more attractive than the former.

C. RESTRUCTURING LEAs

Apart from the provision of schools and FE colleges, LEAs perform the following twelve additional functions:

(i) provision of nursery schools and child-care for children below compulsory school age;

(ii) the provision of a youth service;

(iii) the provision of an adult-education service;

(iv) the provision of a careers service (but under the supervision of the Secretary of State for Employment);

(v) the provision of special schools (though special needs pupils are increasingly integrated in normal schools);

(vi) the provision of education psychologists;

(vii) the provision of advisory services to schools which now accounts for around 15,000 staff - all teachers who are not teaching;

(viii) running an appeals system for parents who challenge the admissions decisions of schools;

(ix) dealing with truancy;

(x) provision of INSET (in service training) and governor training;

(xi) provision of sports facilities;

(xii) the monitoring and inspection of standards in schools, mainly relating to the curriculum but also involving such matters as standards of premises, health and safety;

Of these 12 functions, the first 11 are the provision of various kinds of services; and the twelth, the enforcement of standards.

In terms of the <u>provision of services</u>:

- Michael Howard is already considering the removal of the careers service from LEA control and transferring it to the private sector under the supervision of TECs;

- nursery schools which are already attached to voluntary or county maintained schools should remain attached and be financed on a capitation basis. The remainder can stay with the LEA;

- the provision of INSET and other training services would be transferred to the GM Schools Trust;

- appeals against admission to a school should be heard by the governing body of the school concerned, with the responsibility to co-opt one or two outsiders from given categories (councillors, magistrates etc);

- the remaining services (youth, adult education, truancy, special schools, education psychologists) would need to remain with the LEA;

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- the provision of advisory services would be left to individual schools to arrange: eg a school could hire the services of a local head of history in another school on a consultancy basis.

Because of the LEAs' changed functions however this would require a new name such as the Local Schools Special Services Unit.

The matter of inspection needs to be dealt with in the context of the future of HMI. Under the National Curriculum, the responsibility of LEAs in monitoring and inspecting standards mean that they have effectively become agents of HMI. Perhaps this should be formalised? If it were, it would give HMI considerably greater power and influence. It must be doubtful however whether the present staffing, ethos and leadership of HMI is suited to this purpose. Formally transferring these powers to HMI would only make sense if HMI were given new guidelines so that they placed much greater emphasis on results and much less on the process of what goes on in schools. I doubt whether this could be achieved without a major review of HMI and inspection chaired by someone of considerable distinction.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The key to the future of our education reform is the method of funding. Three options exist:

   (a) Direct funding from the centre, but retaining the existing structure of LEAs, including LMS.
   This would be an enormous disincentive to the growth of GM schools; county maintained schools would remian under local political control.

   (b) Direct funding from the centre but only for GM schools.
   This would be a considerable incentive for the growth of GM schools. But it would be difficult to predict the extent of such growth.

(c) Direct funding from the centre with all schools converted to GM status.
This is the ideal solution, but there would probably need to be an escape clause for those schools who wished to retain LEA status.

2. The choice is between (b) and (c). Although (c) looks to be draconian the case for such a change is powerful:

- all schools would have the status of independent state schools;
- more money to the classrooms for all schools;
- all schools treated equally regardless of local authority;
- taking the 'politics' out of schools by having governing bodies independent of local political parties;
- but tying the schools firmly to their local communities;
- it is the obvious solution if county councils are abolished.

3. A new Schools Funding Council to be set up, at arms length from DES, to fund schools. But it is crucial this body does not also control curriciulum or INSET issues. The former will be handled by the NCC and the latter by the GM Schools Trust.

4. The remaining services (careers etc) need to be transferred to other bodies.

SECRET

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5. The remaining services to be the responsibility of a reconstituted rump of the LEA.

6. A review of inspection and monitoring of standards leading to a reconstituted HMI, operating under very limited rules.

Brian Griffiths

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

(044)

Choice in Education

Help and advice for schools seeking Grant-Maintained Status
239 Vauxhall Bridge Road,
London SW1V 1EJ
Telephone: 01-233 5526
Fax: 01-828 1882

Professor Brian Griffiths
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

manf0107-ajt
2nd July 1990

Dear Brian

PROPOSALS FOR NEXT MANIFESTO

No doubt I should be cautious in believing what I read in the papers; I am however concerned about suggestions that there should be compulsory ballots every four years on opting out.

These are the reasons:

1 Grant-maintained status will succeed if there is a reasonable head of steam behind the proposals; it will probably not succeed where it is voted for by accident by parents who happened to be expressing their distaste for the LEA, but who hadn't got a group of leaders who wanted it to work.

2 Quadrennial (or other regular) ballots would degenerate into a trial of strength between well-funded LEAs and underfunded CiE and parents, on the lines of the ballots on the trade union political funds (which, you will recall, were uniformly disastrous for the Government).

3 Given the amount of misunderstanding that exists even now (except where parents have been involved in a ballot) on the consequences of grant-maintained status, it would be very easy for the opposition parties to portray this as the introduction of selection, fee-paying, and sale of premises to the highest bidder - difficult to rebut in the heat of a general election campaign.

I am happy to let you have details in due course of improvements which I would support!

Andrew

ANDREW TURNER
Director, Choice in Education

A company limited by guarantee. Registered office: 14/15 Craven Street, London WC2 N5AD
Reg. No 2371513

YG DSG

file

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA
From the Private Secretary

1 August 1990

The Prime Minister was grateful for your Secretary of State's further note on the National Curriculum following their meeting on 30 July. This she has noted without comment.

Dominic Morris

Stephen Crowne, Esq.,
Department of Education and Science.

MRM

Prime Minister (2)

Policy unit are content.

RHP

31/7

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

PRIME MINISTER

There are a few points which we were not able to discuss this morning.

It is clear from my discussions with teachers and others over the last few months that there is a need for a little more flexibility in the National Curriculum for 14-16 years olds (Key Stage 4). At present there is insufficient room for desirable subjects such as a second modern foreign language, classics, and for three sciences.

I raised the issue in my speech to the Society of Education Officers earlier in the year, and will be floating some more ideas in a letter to the National Curriculum Council tomorrow, including whether each of Art, Music and PE should be compulsory for all pupils in Key Stage 4. This will certainly not be a weakening of the essentials of the National Curriculum, and will get an understanding response from good schools.

I have been thinking carefully about how to beef up the National Curriculum Council and the School Examinations and Assessment Council. A number of places are coming up for replacement, and I shall be appointing new members to add to those with a background in business. I can confirm that Frances Morrell has no known involvement with the NCC.

I understand your concern about cross-curricular themes. There is scope for helpful material here. The guidance on Economic and Industrial Understanding - which I launched personally - is very good and will be influential in getting the right attitudes to wealth creation in schools. The draft publication on Health Education - dealing amongst other things with drugs and AIDS - is balanced and sensible and will help to emphasise personal responsibility. A publication on Environmental Education will fit well with the strategy we discussed in MISC 141 of getting more emphasis on the environment in schools. I shall be looking very carefully at the planned publication on Citizenship, where it will be vital to get the correct balance between rights and responsibilities.

I shall send you the full list of NCC and SEAC changes as soon as complete. I hope we can have a brief resume of the points we were discussing when we get back from the holiday break.

JM

JM

30 July 1990

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PRIME MINISTER

MEETING WITH JOHN MACGREGOR

You are meeting John MacGregor at 0930 on Monday. Brian Griffiths will also attend. A very short pre-meeting has been arranged at 0915 with Brian.

The main meeting should fall into two parts:

- First, Mr. MacGregor wishes to discuss two or three small but important issues on examinations and the curriculum.

- Second, this is an opportunity to set the agenda for a more thorough consideration (perhaps bringing in the Junior Ministers and selected DES officials) of the way forward for education policies.

Examinations and the Curriculum

I understand that Mr. MacGregor wishes to raise three issues:

(i) Membership of the School Examinations and Assessments Council (SEAC);

(ii) Membership of the National Curriculum Council (NCC);

(iii) The National Curriculum.

The attached Policy Unit note suggests that the additional names proposed for both SEAC and NCC are good news. You will wish to consider Mr. MacGregor's proposals.

As the Policy Unit note also points out, Mr. MacGregor has also been working hard to make the National Curriculum more rigorous, and to take on board your earlier criticisms of the proposals. But there are still battles to be fought - including the future of A-levels and the introduction of external tests by SEAC.

The Way Forward

Mr. MacGregor will wish to test how far his ideas reflect your own thinking; and, for the short and longer term, just how radical Government action might be on the critical issue - breaking up the monopoly (outside the small existing private sector) of local education authorities.

It might be useful to group the discussion under four headings:

(A) The development of GM schools in the short term;

(B) City Technology Colleges (CTCs);

(C) Local Management of Schools;

(D) The longer term.

GM Schools

On (A) Brian suggests a need for a publicity campaign on GM schools. This seems wholly sensible. And there may be other measures which could be taken to encourage their development.

First, it might be possible to look at the pupil number thresholds for GM schools to see whether they can be pushed lower so that more primary schools can opt out of LEA control. This can apparently be done by secondary legislation.

Second, it might be useful to consider what further action is necessary to give schools more of a clear right to declare unilateral independence. It is difficult to form a clear picture: but some LEAs are clearly making it difficult, through negative and misleading publicity, for schools to move to GM status.

Third, it might be helpful to see whether additional financial incentives to create GM schools could be created. So long as GM schools are funded on a par with LEA schools

that might be difficult to achieve. (There is, however, an interesting relationship between the budget given to a GM school and that typically given to an LEA school under local management. The GM school gets more because LEAs keep money back from locally managed schools - see below.) But any short-term steps may be of only marginal impact: anything radical such as funding GM schools by means of a national formula requires primary legislation.

CTCs

On (B), the important issue is the further development of CTCs. Full CTCs are expensive; and it has proved difficult to attract all the private sector finance for them. Voluntary aided CTCs cost much less and are another important way of breaking up the LEA "monopoly".

You will wish to probe with John MacGregor what progress he is making. The real obstacle will be resources: the Chief Secretary will resist extra money for this initiative - because John MacGregor is not in a position to find offsetting savings from within the LEA sector.

Also worth considering is the possible integration of the GM and voluntary CTC initiatives - schools opting out to become CTCs.

Local Management of Schools

On (C) there is a single problem. There are suggestions that some LEAs are retaining up to 40 per cent of budgets centrally. This squeezes the amount available for the school and makes the scheme unpopular and unattractive. What can be done to put pressure on local education authorities to distribute resources fairly?

The Longer Term

(D) is the key issue. As you know, Brian is working on a paper which would consider a radical break-up of LEAs. In their place would come trusts: these trusts might be funded by the churches;

by major national companies in several locations; by local companies; by geographical area, etc. In essence, the proposal would bring competition to education in local areas by offering a choice between schools run by different trusts. LEAs would be confined to a residual safety-net role.

Mr. MacGregor is presumably not aware of this. (Nor is he aware of other work in the Policy Unit to consider what the implications might be for the future structure of local government.)

You will wish to decide how far he should be brought into the picture, particularly on the basic concept of trust schools. Given the record, you may feel constrained about how much can be revealed - particularly if it might be passed on to senior DES officials. You will however wish to probe Mr. MacGregor's own views on what can be done pre- and post-election.

Whatever is planned, the picture going into the next election would already be more varied. There will be more GM schools and CTCs. If there were proposals in a Manifesto for new Trust schools the separate roles of (and inter-relationships between) CTCs; Trust schools; GM schools (funded by central government under a national formula); and LEA schools would need to be very carefully thought through.

Conclusion

The second part of this discussion might usefully lead to an agenda for a further discussion. That would certainly cover areas (A)-(C) above; but you might feel it is safer to keep (D) under wraps for the moment.

You will also wish to consider whether the full Ministerial team and carefully selected senior officials should be brought into any further discussion.

BHP

BARRY H POTTER
27 July 1990

PRIME MINISTER 27 JULY 1990

MEETING WITH JOHN MACGREGOR

John MacGregor will wish to raise a number of issues at the meeting on Monday - dealing with the Curriculum, appointments to the NCC and SEAC and possibly universities. The real purpose of the briefing however is to find out how far you are prepared to go in reforming LEA's and to get some idea of your thinking about the Manifesto.

To deal with each in turn.

National Curriculum

The Secretary of State has been courageous and tenacious in making the National Curriculum more rigorous eg by changing the history working party's recommendations, insisting that the sciences can be taught separately and not just as one integrated subject, stipulating that at least 30% of GCSE English should be tested by written examination.

All of these detailed improvements are important steps in the right direction. To achieve them John MacGregor has had some bruising battles with officials.

His achievements need to be recognised and he should be encouraged to take further steps down this road. The two crucial areas are the future of A levels and the introduction of simple, external, written tests by SEAC - which they will never produce of their own volition.

NCC and SEAC Appointments

Hopefully the Secretary of State will have good news about some of the names he is recommending. My impression is that he wishes to put John Marks on SEAC, David Pascall on the NCC and so on. If so this will be extremely good news.

As the number of vacancies are small, these might be agreed at the meeting.

Voluntary-aided CTCs

This is an important issue, which the Secretary of State might not raise.

The dramatic local election result in Wandsworth was not just because of a low community charge. A major issue in the campaign was education. The intention of the borough is to close 4 secondary schools (out of 11), open 2 CTCs (one of which is voluntary-aided) and change all the remaining county maintained schools to magnet status - (comprehensive schools which specialise in certain areas and are thereby able to introduce selection in admissions).

The cost of voluntary-aided CTCs are a fraction of the cost of full-CTCs. Two or three pilots started relatively soon would be an important pointer to the way forward and crucial to Wandsworth. It could also form an announcement at the Party Conference - which showed we have not given up on this idea but are keen to see it established in every locality.

Reforming LEA's

John MacGregor is not sure how radical he should be in coming forward with proposals on the future of GM schools - in particular how far you are prepared to contemplate changes in the

structure of local government which would follow.

Two points are worth making.

First, a major publicity campaign for GM schools this coming autumn would strengthen support in existing schools and encourage others.

Second, whatever the route finally chosen to increase the number of GM schools (increased incentives for opting out, change of status of all secondary schools to GM status - much as we did with the polytechnics, opting-in as in Holland etc) - if successful it will mean a major change in the function of the LEA and therefore this should be looked at.

My personal view is that he should be given the greatest possible freedom in coming up with proposals - but probably asked, at least over the summer, not to discuss them with DES officials.

Brian Griffiths

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

P.S. I enclose a report in todays Independant regarding a new task force set up by the NCC to oversee the implementation of history. It is something which might also be raised with the Secretary of State.

(033)

B.G.

The publicity has come our week, but 'X' is very worrying. Is there anything to be done about this? JR

Facts and dates will form core of history teaching in schools

By Mary Braid
Education Reporter

CHAMPIONS of traditional "facts and dates" school history triumphed over progressive colleagues yesterday when John MacGregor, the Secretary of State for Education, ordered greater emphasis on historical knowledge in the new national curriculum.

His decision to make knowledge a distinct area for testing and to give it greater weight than historical skills runs contrary to proposals put forward by the history curriculum working group. The group had recommended that knowledge should not be tested separately and should be on a par with skills and understanding.

While Mr MacGregor said that the changes resulted from the great importance he attached to pupils' knowledge and understanding of history studies, supporters of the skills-based new history said they were disappointed by his proposals.

Mr MacGregor's announcement comes after months of bitter wrangling between rival historians and teachers in what has been dubbed the "great history debate". Margaret Thatcher's preference for facts is said to have played a significant part.

Teachers had warned that the testing of facts and dates would herald a return to rote learning where children might memorise the date of the Battle of Hastings but be unable to explain its significance. Some historians and politicians have claimed that it could also lead to the establishment of a national history and to political manipulation of the school curriculum.

Yesterday traditionalists declared the battle over, but there were signs that a declaration of victory might be premature.

Commander Michael Saunders Watson, chairman of the history curriculum working group, said the emphasis on knowledge could devalue skills and understanding but insisted the minister's unprecedented intervention did not mark a significant departure.

However, Robert Skidelsky, director of the traditionalist History Curriculum Association, said he was delighted with with the "major" change in emphasis. He claimed it was a sign that the days of the skills-based "new history" approach were numbered.

The Historical Association, which represents 7,000 teachers and historians, said it hoped that the changes would be no more than cosmetic. Mr MacGregor has changed the title of the first of four skills and knowledge target areas from "understanding history in its setting" to "knowledge and understanding of history".

However, the association admitted it was apprehensive that there would be unacceptable emphasis on facts and dates when tests are devised in the autumn.

Claims that the traditionalist triumph might be premature are based on the composition of a task force formed by the National Curriculum Council to oversee further consultation on the report. The group is believed to be dominated by new history supporters, described by one historian as "no friends of the Prime Minister".

Meanwhile, Mr Skidelsky yesterday admitted he is involved in talks to form a consortium which will bid to devise tests.

The confrontation between the two historical camps could continue throughout the consultation and test-setting period. One historian said yesterday that "all hell would break loose" if a consortium headed by Mr Skidelsky was chosen for the pilot schemes.

Dr Chris Husbands, of the Historical Association, said he was relieved there had been no interference with the curriculum content put forward by the working group. He said there had been great concern about undue emphasis on British history and the possible establishment of a restrictive national history.

Jack Straw, Labour's education spokesman, said: "Factual knowledge is essential to the teaching of history, but reports of the Prime Minister's interference in the history curriculum raise quite different questions with sinister implications. She appears to want to lay down what facts children should be taught, but the national curriculum can only work if there is wide agreement about it across the political spectrum."

Two of three remaining curriculum target areas set out by the working party – involving acquiring and evaluating historical information, and teaching points of view and interpretations of history – are to stand, but the target devoted to organising and communicating the results of historical study may be swallowed up by the other areas.

History is to be introduced into the national curriculum between autumn 1991 and 1994.



Preparing to fire during a

Ramb



Kinnock rejects plans for Lib-Lab pact in Liverpool

By Nicholas Timmins
Political Correspondent

MOVES by the Liberal Democrats to form a coalition with Labour to govern Liverpool and reconstruct its ailing finances were rejected yesterday by Neil Kinnock, however, said the real test was for the Liberal Democrats, who had also voted against the rent rise. "Do they want good government that builds a secure

Rimmer is a good leader working

File TW
cc PU

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

24 July 1990

Dear Lawrence,

NATIONAL CURRICULUM - PROPOSALS FOR HISTORY IN WALES

The Prime Minister was grateful for your Secretary of State's minute of 23 July setting out his proposals for history in Wales under the National Curriculum.

The Prime Minister is content for your Secretary of State to publish his proposals at the same time as those for schools in England are published.

I am copying this letter to Robert Canniff (Office of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster), Jim Gallagher (Scottish Office), Stephen Leach (Northern Ireland Office) and Stephen Crowne (Department of Education and Science).

Yours,

Barry

BARRY H POTTER

Lawrence Conway, Esq.,
Welsh Office.

R

A: WELSH

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

24 July 1990

WELSH IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM: EXEMPTIONS

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute covering proposals for teaching Welsh in the National Curriculum.

The Prime Minister has noted that the issue of whether schools in Wales should be able to opt out of teaching the Welsh language to pupils after the age of 14 is particularly sensitive. She considers that, rather than reviewing the case for an opting out power in 1993 as your Secretary of State proposes, it would be better to announce such a power in the near future. If this is not done, schools cannot plan for the years ahead.

I am copying this letter to Stephen Crowne (Department of Education and Science).

BARRY H POTTER

Lawrence Conway, Esq.,
Welsh Office.

(1)

PRIME MINISTER

WELSH IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM: EXEMPTIONS

Attached a **FLAG A** is a long, complex and badly written minute and attachment from David Hunt setting out proposals for teaching the Welsh language under the National Curriculum.

As Brian Griffith's note at **FLAG B** points out, the most sensitive issue is whether schools in Wales should be able to opt out of teaching the Welsh language to pupils after the age of 14.

Mr Hunt proposes that the case for such an opting out power should be reviewed in 1993.

Brian Griffiths proposes that the Government should announce the opting-out power in the near future.

Content for me to write to Mr Hunt on the basis proposed by Brian Griffiths?

Yes - otherwise they cannot plan for the future. Consultation on this matter was not part of our consultation paper.

BHP

BARRY H POTTER
23 July 1990
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PRIME MINISTER

23 JULY 1990

NATIONAL CURRICULUM : HISTORY IN WALES

David Hunt's proposals follow John MacGregor and are all acceptable.

He emphasises in para 2 his belief that knowledge must be tested and that all the Attainment Targets must be assessed strictly as they apply to the knowledge set out in the History Study Units. They must not be capable of being satisfied on the basis of general knowledge. (This is exactly what some historians think may happen if the titles of the Attainment Targets are too vague.)

David Hunt's statement on this is very important and your strong endorsement of it would be valuable in ensuring that there is no backsliding on testing for knowledge when the NCC and CCW turn their attentions to the history syllabus.

BG.

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

(016)

PRIME MINISTER

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: PROPOSALS FOR HISTORY IN WALES

I attach a minute from the Welsh Secretary setting out his proposals for History in Wales under the National Curriculum.

Also attached is a short note from Brian Griffiths. As Brian points out, the Welsh statement is very much along the same lines as that of John MacGregor - which you have already endorsed. Indeed, Mr Hunt's proposals make the key points even more strongly: that history must be knowledge-based; that historical knowledge must be tested; and that all attainment targets must be assessed in relation to the actual history taught rather than some amorphous "general knowledge" of the subject.

(You do not need to read the detailed proposals attached to Mr Hunt's minute.)

Content for Mr Hunt to publish his proposals to coincide with those for England?

Yes

BHP

BARRY H POTTER
23 July 1990
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B

B

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

23 JULY 1990

WELSH IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM : EXEMPTIONS

David Hunt has sent you a rather complicated minute regarding this sensitive issue.

Last year you had a very lively meeting with Wyn Roberts in which you insisted that schools in Wales which wished to opt out of teaching Welsh compulsorily after the age of 14 should be allowed to do so.

I have now discovered that there are in fact schools in Wales which have indicated that they would wish to take advantage of this option. The Welsh Office however propose that they should not grant them such a right now, as it will not be exercised until 1995. The Secretary of State adds in the penultimate paragraph of his minute, "Attitudes to the teaching of Welsh have changed considerably in recent years and may change further in either direction before then."

He therefore proposes to review the case for exemptions in 1993.

The Government was very clear however in the consultation paper that parents would be granted this right - the argument being that it would give children the possibility of studying other subjects if they considered them more important. They could well feel cheated if the Government in announcing the conclusion of the review is prepared to make a decision on most aspects of exemption except this one. It should be said that the lobby for compulsory teaching of Welsh is very strong indeed among a small minority in Wales.

CONFIDENTIAL

RECOMMENDATION

Suggest to the Secretary of State that he announces the exemption for the teaching of Welsh post-14 in those schools which wish to opt-out in the very near future.

Although it cannot now be done tomorrow, it should and could be done soon. If it is not we run the risk that it will never take place.

Brian Griffiths

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

(015)

PRIME MINISTER

App Part 25

NATIONAL CURRICULUM - PROPOSALS FOR HISTORY IN WALES

I wrote to you on 14 May about the final report of the History Committee for Wales which, with your agreement, was published on 12 June. You suggested that John MacGregor and I should consider further before we made our formal proposals. John's letter to you of 13 July reflects our discussions.

You asked me in particular to consider further the testing of historical knowledge. As I said to you, I am quite clear that historical knowledge should be tested. I am persuaded by the SEAC's arguments that changes can be made to the History Working Group's approach so that it will do what we want. The two key requirements are that we specify the knowledge in the History Study Units and that we make it absolutely clear that the attainment targets are to be assessed strictly as they apply to the knowledge set out in the individual HSUs and that they are not to be capable of being satisfied on the basis of general knowledge.

The full text of my proposals are set out in the annex to this letter, and you will see that they match John's exactly so far as the attainment targets are concerned.

For the content of the history course, I told you in May that I thought the Committee's recommendations would be a sound basis for my formal proposals for programmes of study. I still think so. Initial reactions to the publication of the report have been favourable and with your agreement I intend to adopt their History Study Units for the purpose of the consultations.

However, like you I am keen to minimise any risk of over-prescription, and I have agreed with John MacGregor that we should find ways to simplify the presentation of the study units if this seems to be what the teachers would find most helpful. I therefore propose, as John is doing, to omit all the ancillary guidance which was contained in the Committee's units. This will bring our presentation into a common format. But I shall want to make sure in the course of the consultation that in doing so we have drawn the line in the right place between what should be required and what can be left as informal guidance.

With your agreement, I would like to publish my proposals to coincide with those for schools in England.

/ I am copying this letter to Kenneth Baker, Malcolm Rifkind, Peter Brooke and John MacGregor.

23 July 1990

DH

HISTORY 5-16

PROPOSALS OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WALES FOR SCHOOLS IN WALES

The origins and scope of the proposals

1. The History Committee for Wales was appointed in January 1989 to advise on the content of the history course which should be taught to pupils aged from 5 to 16 in the schools of Wales. The Committee was asked to take account of the Final Report of the History Working Group, which was appointed in January 1989 jointly with the Secretary of State for Education and Science. It was the task of the History Working Group to advise on appropriate attainment targets and programmes of study for history. It was the task of the History Committee for Wales to advise on a balanced and complete curriculum for history in Wales in the light of the final recommendations of the History Working Group. The Report of the History Working Group was published on 3 April 1990, and the Report of the History Committee for Wales was published on 12th June 1990. Copies of both Reports were distributed to all Local Education Authorities and to all maintained schools in Wales.

2. The Secretary of State for Education and Science sought the advice of the School Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC) on whether the proposals of the History Working Group would secure the effective assessment of pupils' mastery of historical knowledge.

3. In the light of the advice of the SEAC, and the reports of both the History Working Group and the History Committee for Wales, I now make my formal proposals under Section 21 of the Education Reform Act 1988 for the history curriculum for pupils between the ages of 5 and 16 in schools in Wales. These proposals are confined to attainment targets and programmes of study. They do not relate to assessment arrangements, although advice on such arrangements was included in both Reports, and I am grateful for the thought that the Working Group and the Committee gave to assessment issues. I am asking the SEAC to take that advice into account in advising me in due course on the Orders specifying assessment arrangements covering history.

4. I consider that the recommendations of the History Committee for Wales provide a sound basis for my proposals. The completion of their report

represents a considerable achievement, and I am grateful to them for their work. The Committee has given me advice on other matters, such as the implications for resources, staffing and teacher training of establishing history within the National Curriculum in Wales. I will consider the Committee's advice on these points, together with any comments made on them during the consultation.

Objective of the Consultation Exercise

5. The publication of my proposals marks the beginning of a statutory consulation as required under Section 21 of the Education Reform Act. The objective of this consultation is to enable me to publish draft Orders under Section 4(2)(a) and (b) of the Act. My proposals for attainment targets and programmes of study are based on those recommended by the History Committee for Wales. I indicate below those parts of their recommendations which are sufficient in themselves, and those where further consideration or refinement seems to me to be desirable.

THE PROPOSALS

Attainment Targets

6. The History Working Group's Report defined four attainment targets which are grouped into a single profile component for assessment and reporting purposes. These are:

Attainment Target 1: Understanding history in its setting.

Attainment Target 2: Understanding points of view and interpretations of history.

Attainment Target 3: Acquiring and evaluating historical information.

Attainment Target 4: Organising and communicating the results of historical study.

7. For each attainment target the Group have defined 10 levels of attainment: the statements of attainment at the various levels specify what pupils should know, understand and be able to do, appropriate for pupils of different ages and abilities. The Report also recommends the ranges of levels of attainment which should apply to pupils at the end of each key stage - ie at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16. These are:

Key stage 1: levels 1 to 3

Key stage 2: levels 2 to 5

Key stage 3: levels 3 to 7
Key stage 4: levels 4 to 10

8. Both the broadly framed attainment targets and the associated statements of attainment at each level will need to be included in the Orders to be made under Section 4(2)(a) of the Act. The History Committee for Wales endorsed the History Working Group's identification of the four broadly framed attainment targets for history, but they had reservations about some aspects of the statements of attainment within each attainment target.

9. I agree with the Working Group's general approach to the identification of four broadly framed attainment targets, but I propose certain departures from their recommendations.

10. I propose that the first of the attainment targets should be called "Knowledge and understanding of history", to distinguish it from the other targets primarily concerned with the acquisition and practice of skills. Although I recognise that all the attainment targets proposed by the Working Group presuppose the mastery of knowledge, the first of them seems to me to measure most directly what pupils have learned from their historical studies. For that reason I attach special importance to assessment against the first attainment target, and I consider that it should carry a higher weighting than the other targets for the purposes of assessment. I am asking the CCW to consider, with the NCC, the appropriate weighting, and to offer me advice.

11. I am concerned to reduce and simplify the burden of assessment of National Curriculum subjects. I therefore also propose that the fourth attainment target - organising and communicating the results of historical study - should be re-examined with a view to combining its constituent statements of attainment with those under the other 3 attainment targets.

12. With a view to further simplification, and in the light of the advice from SEAC, I propose that the examples drawn from the essential information in the programmes of study should be omitted from the statements of attainment for all the attainment targets. I am asking the CCW to publish appropriate exemplary material as guidance for teachers.

13. With these modifications and subject to review of the statements of attainment and re-examination of the fourth attainment target during the consultation period, I propose that the attainment targets and their

constituent statements of attainment at each level should be included in the Order to be made under Section 4(2) (a) of the Act.

Programmes of Study

14. The course of history recommended in the Report of the History Committee for Wales seems to me to offer a sound and comprehensive coverage of the essential content which pupils should study in each key stage from age 5 to 16. The Committee recommended a course consisting of 38 individual History Study Units (HSUs), grouped as appropriate for each of the four key stages, and with a separate programme of study for each HSU. I have considered their recommendations and my proposals are based closely on them.

15. I propose a programme of study for each of the four key stages. Each programme of study comprises:-

a. History Study Units (HSUs), of three kinds:

i. those for which detailed study programmes will be set out in the statutory Order, and which schools must teach (the core HSUs);

ii. those for which detailed study programmes will be set out in the statutory Order, some of which must be taught (the optional HSUs); and

ii. those which will be designed by schools themselves, in accordance with groundrules which will be specified in the statutory Order.

b. Rules prescribing the number of HSUs of each kind which must be studied and the relationship between them, including the order in which the core British and Welsh HSUs should be taught, and the discretion which schools will have to select between the optional HSUs in each key stage.

c. The groundrules for the school-designed HSUs.

16. I propose that the History Study Units for each of key stages 1 to 4, and the arrangement of core, optional and school designed HSUs in each key stage, should be those recommended by the History Committee for Wales in Chapters 6

to 9 of its Report. For ease of reference the Committee's recommendations are summarised in Appendix 2 to my proposals.

History Study Units

17. I consider that certain changes in the format of the HSUs are needed to reduce the amount of real and apparant prescription. I recognise the potential value as guidance to teachers of the illustrative and exemplary material which the Committee's HSUs provide, but I believe it to be inappropriate to a statutory Order for history. I therefore propose to omit from the HSUs, as they would appear in the statutory document, all of the material which appears in italics in the Committee's published report against the titles "Links" and "Focus" and under the heading of "Examples" within the description of essential knowledge. I invite the CCW to make use of this material in drawing up appropriate guidance for teachers.

18. SEAC have advised that the "essential knowledge" set out in each HSU would be better described as "content", and have drawn attention to the need for a consistent approach between and within HSUs in the degree of detail with which the content is described. I propose that the HSUs in the statutory Order should prescribe what is to be taught under the heading of "Content" rather than "essential knowledge". I am also asking the CCW and other consultees to examine the Committee's recommendations for the content to be taught and to advise me, in the light of the advice from SEAC, on whether the definition of the content in each HSU is sufficiently clear, and consistent in the degree of detail, to provide an appropriate level of prescription while leaving scope for teachers' to exercise their discretion in framing schemes of work for their pupils.

19. The History Committee for Wales recommended various approaches to the description of content in the HSUs in the different key stages. For key stage 1 and for key stage 2 a simple, largely chronological layout is suggested: I propose to adopt this as recommended by the Committee. For key stages 3 and 4 the content in all but one of the HSUs is described under the four separate headings of the "PESC" format - Political; Economic; Social; and Cultural and religious. The Committee's intention was to offer guidance to teachers to help them to ensure a balanced approach to the subject matter in each HSU. I think it important to protect the Committee's objective of securing breadth and balance in the treatment of the full range of dimensions of history, but I am asking the CCW and other consultees to consider whether any changes of

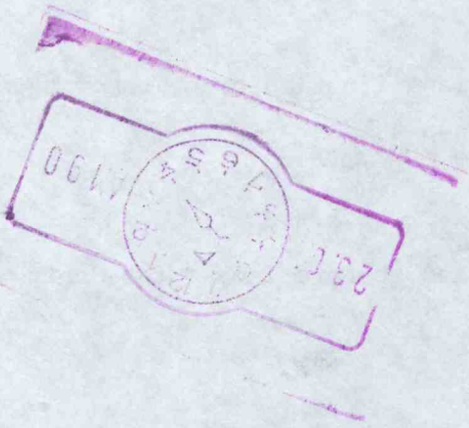
format are needed, either by revising the PESC classification or by removing it from some or all of the HSUs in key stages 3 and 4.

20. I will consider the format of the study programmes in the light of the comments made to me during the consultation process, before I make the draft Orders under Section 4(2)(b) of the Act.

Commencement Dates

21. I propose to introduce the attainment targets and programmes of study for all pupils in Wales in the first year of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 in autumn 1991, and of Key Stage 4 in autumn 1994.

EDUCATION: Policy Part 26



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10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

20 July 1990

Dear Stephen,

HISTORY AND THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

The Prime Minister was most grateful for your Secretary of State's minute of 13 July covering revised proposals for the treatment of history in the national curriculum.

The Prime Minister very much appreciates the efforts which your Secretary of State has made to meet her concerns and those of others about the original proposals. She considers that your Secretary of State's revised proposals are suitably less prescriptive in nature; will provide a sufficient coverage of British history within the curriculum; and will also put the broad sweep of history into proper perspective.

The Prime Minister is also pleased that the new testing arrangements will place suitable emphasis on knowledge as well as skills. She has commented that it will be important for the statement of attainment target 1 to be sufficiently precise: it must apply to the knowledge and understanding of the history studied.

Finally, the Prime Minister has drawn attention to one possible omission in the curriculum: she has noted that there appears to be no reference to the development of the European Community; she feels this should have appropriate coverage within the syllabus.

I am copying this letter to Robert Canniff (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's Office), Jim Gallagher (Scottish Office), Stephen Leach (Northern Ireland Office) and Lawrence Conway (Welsh Office).

Yours,
Barry

BARRY H. POTTER

Stephen Crowne, Esq.,
Department of Education and Science.

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PRIME MINISTER

HISTORY AND THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

At Flag A is Mr MacGregor's revised proposals on history and the national curriculum. At Flag B is a note from John Mills in Policy Unit.

Your concerns on the earlier History Working Group (HWG) report were:

- that it was too prescriptive;
- that there was insufficient coverage of British history;
- that the curriculum did not put the broad sweep of history into perspective; and
- that the testing arrangements need to cover knowledge not just skills.

Advice from the Policy Unit is that Mr MacGregor's revised proposals met your first three concerns. However P.U. is not persuaded that Mr MacGregor's proposals are adequate on the testing arrangements.

They recommend two further small changes:

i) that the title of attainment target 1 needs to be amended from "Knowledge and understanding of history" to "Knowledge and understanding of the history studied".

ii) it needs to be made clearer in this test that people will be given credit for the amount of knowledge they demonstrate rather than just amorphous understanding.

CONFIDENTIAL

You will wish to consider whether these further relatively minor changes need to be made.

Conclusion

i) Content with Mr MacGregor's revised proposals?

ii) or suggest the further amendments proposed by Policy Unit to Mr MacGregor?

BHP

Barry H Potter

19 July 1990

c: history (MJ)

As Tom Macgregor has changed the title of ATU (1) to avoid vagueness, and as it is nevertheless vague we must say what he means by 'the history studied' - otherwise it continues to suffer from the defect he is trying to correct.

CONFIDENTIAL

I don't think we need to further. We should thank him for the fact that he has made to meet people's concerns.

N.B. I hope pupils will be taught about the European Community - I didn't learn it in the Syllabus. no

B

PRIME MINISTER 19 JULY 1990

HISTORY IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

John MacGregor has done a good deal to meet your concerns on the History Working Group (HWG Report). It is a measure of the success of your intervention that we have moved, since March, from his uncritical acceptance of the entire HWG Report, which would have been a disaster, to the significant modifications he now proposes.

Most of what he proposes is reasonable. But there is a little further to go on the testing of knowledge to ensure this key aspect is right.

Background

Your concerns on the HWG Report were:

- too prescriptive; would put teachers in a straightjacket;
- insufficient British history and unlikely to give pupils any feeling for the broad sweep of history;
- the testing arrangements needed explicitly to cover knowledge not just skills.

Too Much Prescription

Your well-publicised remarks on this struck a chord and this has become the main theme of the responses to the consultation.

John MacGregor has a long list of proposals to reduce prescription (paras 13-27 of his draft proposals). These

include:

- reducing the number of History Study Units at Key Stages 2 and 3 (the 8-13 age range);

- dispensing with the PESC (Political/Economic/Social/Cultural) framework in the options at Key Stage 2 and asking NCC to review its suitability in other cases;

- much greater freedom to use school-designed units;

- reducing the "essential information" in the History Study Units to give teachers more freedom.

All this is welcome, and will be seen as a positive response to your concerns.

There is no need to press further.

British History and the Broad Sweep

The main change is his proposal to ask NCC to design proper, synoptic courses on 20th Century British history and the 2nd World War. This means that the core units during secondary school will run right through British history from the Conquest to the present day, plus the War and one term on the Romans. This will all be covered whether or not GCSE is taken.

Ideally one would like still a bit more scope for British options at Key Stages 3 and 4 (currently 3 out of 6) but what is now proposed is reasonable and will give older pupils a fair broad sweep of British history - certainly a much better one than most are now getting. A proper 20th Century course makes a considerable difference.

We do not recommend pressing this further.

Testing Knowledge

(i) The case for testing knowledge

This is simple. History is a knowledge-based subject. Unless testing of knowledge is clearly required, it will not be tested. All the emphasis will be on so-called skills and on empathy. The desired rigour will be lost.

The case for testing knowledge has however been subverted by accusations that all it means is rote-learning of facts. That is nonsense. Knowledge is not the mere recall of unrelated information. It is the presentation of relevant material in an ordered way: the deployment of knowledge in context.

Only explicit testing for knowledge will enable to the setting of "why" questions which are the key to displaying historical understanding. They are also the key to keeping essay questions in GCSE.

(ii) John MacGrgeor's Proposals

These are:

- renaming Attainment Target 1 (AT1) as **"Knowledge and Undertstanding of History"**. This is in place of the Working Group's vague "Understanding History in its Setting";

- increasing the weighting given to this attainment target.

These are steps in the right direction, particularly the second. But the amended title of AT1 is still too vague. It is not linked with what pupils will actually have studied, and will thus

be quite easy to subvert. And John MacGregor is putting it forward on the basis that there should not be an attainment target specifically linked to knowledge. So the actual effect of the new title is unclear.

This is too important to be left in the air. It is vital to guard against a situation where, whatever the underlying intention, in practice testing is done solely for skills and empathy. As it stands, AT1 will leave this hanging in the air.

Moreover, this has to be seen in the context of reducing prescription.

The History Working Group justified not testing for knowledge by saying that the skills-related attainment targets required pupils to draw on the essential information in the programmes of study. Examples of essential information would be included in the statements of attainment. This would, it was argued, provide more than adequate safeguard that pupils would acquire knowledge. All your critics have relied on this in support of the case against a specific knowledge-related attainment target. So does SEAC, as John MacGregor spells out.

But the goal-posts have now changed. John MacGregor now intends to reduce the amount of "essential information" in the programmes of study in favour of shorter lists of 'content'. In the manner of a traditional syllabus, these would provide a few broad topics for teachers to build courses on. 'Essential information' examples will <u>not</u> be included in the statements of attainment.

These changes, and all the others to reduce prescription, weaken the links between the programmes of study and the statements of attainment which the Working Group built in to justify not having a separate attainment target for knowledge. Thus the rationale for the Working Group's and SEAC's argument is undermined. Indeed, unless there is now a clear knowledge-based attainment

target there will be even less assurance that pupils will acquire knowledge, let alone be tested on it.

(iii) The Way Forward

Only two small changes are needed to secure the position:

- **The title of Attainment Target 1 needs to be further amended to 'Knowledge and understanding of the History studied';**

- **the rubric to it needs to make clear that pupils will be given credit for the amount of knowledge they demonstrate appropriate to the given task.**

The first of these is essential for the avoidance of doubt and to make clear that the testing is to relate to the historical material which has actually been studied. The second is a crucial incentive, for both teachers and parents, given the reduction in prescribed content.

Without these, we do not think your concerns on testing knowledge will be met.

Recommendations

- Welcome the changes to the HWG Report which John MacGregor proposes, particularly those to reduce prescription, to improve the Key Stage 4 syllabus, and to increase the weighting for Attainment Target 1.

- The proposed change in the title of AT 1 is a step in the right direction, but still remains too vague. It should be amended further to 'knowledge and understanding of the history studied'. This will make it clear beyond doubt

that testing what pupils have actually learnt and their ability to put it in context actually takes place.

- This is also particularly important because the proposals to reduce prescription will break the close link between the essential information and the statements of attainment on what the HWG, and SEAC, based their case against testing for knowledge.

- The rubric to AT 1 should also state that pupils will be given credit for the amount of knowledge they demonstrate appropriate to the given task.

- We should make clear that by testing for knowledge the Government does not simply mean rote-learning of facts. It is about ensuring pupils can present relevant historical material in an ordered way and put their knowledge into context.

John Mills

JOHN MILLS

P. G. Keen

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

(003)

C/PU

A

PRIME MINISTER

WELSH IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM: EXEMPTIONS

When the decision was taken to include Welsh in the National Curriculum it was agreed that there would need to be a power to make exemptions in order to cater for areas such as Gwent and South Pembrokeshire. Peter Walker said then that he proposed to operate such a power in consultation with the Welsh LEAs who already had widely accepted policies about the teaching of Welsh in their areas.

As Peter said to you in his letter of 4 April, he launched a consultation exercise on exemptions. I enclose a copy of the consultation document which sets out the arguments in more detail. I have been giving careful consideration to the responses to what is clearly a delicate issue in Wales. I now propose to announce what I think will be seen as a balanced package and I enclose a copy of the announcement which I should like to make in the next week or so.

It may help if I explain some of the background. We have to cater for the widely differing linguistic circumstances in different parts of Wales. We have attempted to do so as far as possible within the attainment targets and programmes of study themselves. As a result we have a relatively complex structure compared with other foundation subjects: separate provision for first and second language Welsh; options at Key Stage 4 of GCSE and reduced non-GCSE courses, together with special provision for those who begin Welsh at age 11. All this has met with wide approval and has been aimed at keeping to the minimum the need for exemptions.

I now need to build on this consensus - to keep up the pressure on schools and LEAs to press on with the implementation, but at the same time be seen to be reasonable and responsive. The Act does not allow me to delegate the exemption power to anyone. I cannot for example leave it to schools or LEAs. I have to specify in the regulations the categories or cases who are to be exempt. I want these regulations to be seen as a balanced package.

The proposal to disapply the requirement that schools should teach Welsh for a "reasonable time" before the formal phasing in of the attainment targets and programmes of study meet general approval and I am now consulting on draft regulations to put this into effect.

I am also proposing a blanket exemption for pupils who move into Wales from elsewhere at the age of 13 or more. Most people accepted this though there were some concerns from Welsh speaking areas worried about the influx of non Welsh speakers.

I am proposing to allow some delays in implementation in agreement with the LEAs where these form part of a clear plan. These are set out in the announcement. A notable feature is that Dyfed LEA have reached agreement with all but one of the South Pembrokeshire secondary schools that they would seek to implement Welsh at Key Stage 3 (though not Key Stage 4) beginning in 1994. I propose to accept that and to ask Clwyd LEA, who have so far sought no exemptions, to negotiate similarly with those of their schools who have sought exemption. Gwent LEA who start from the lowest baseline are proposing implementation in all their schools in a phased programme and I see great advantage in agreeing to that. A few secondary schools in Gwent may be unhappy with that but they will be in no different a position from the one the South Pembrokeshire schools have agreed to and that I have asked Clwyd LEA to consider for their schools.

It was significant that the consultation exercise revealed very little opposition to implementation in primary schools, and that in those areas where there was opposition from secondary schools it was concerned much more with Key Stage 4 than with Key Stage 3. Key Stage 4 does not begin to be implemented in schools which are not yet teaching Welsh until 1995 at the earliest and in some cases 1997. I therefore want to keep the door open on Key Stage 4 exemptions. Attitudes to the teaching of Welsh have changed considerably in recent years and may change further in either direction before then. So I am proposing to review in 1993 the case for exemptions from Key Stage 4.

There is a debate on the Order on Attainment Targets for Welsh on Tuesday, 24 July and it would be extremely helpful if I could announce these proposals then.

17th July 1990

DH

EC E408f685

Swyddfa Gymreig
Parc Cathays
Caerdydd CF1 3NQ

Welsh Office
Cathays Park
Cardiff CF1 3NQ

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Telephone (Switchboard) 0222 825111 GTN Code 1208
(Direct Line) 0222 82
Fax: GP2-0222 823204; GP3-0222 823036

Eich Cyf/Your ref

CURRICULUM COUNCIL FOR WALES
DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION
AND ALL OTHER CONSULTEES

Ein Cyf/Our ref
PSE/33/105/63
Dyddiad/Date
28th February 1990

Dear Colleague

WELSH IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM: EXEMPTIONS

The Secretary of State for Wales has, today, published for consultation proposals for exemption from Welsh in the National Curriculum and sets out other circumstances on which he is seeking views before considering whether he should make further proposals.

Section 17 of the Education Reform Act 1988 gives power to the Secretary of State to make regulations for exceptions on modifications to the National Curriculum. The Secretary of State's draft Order for attainment targets and programmes of study for Welsh for pupils aged 5-16 was published on 23 January 1990.

In accordance with the requirements of Section 21(2) of the Act the Secretary of State is hereby consulting with the Curriculum Council for Wales, local education authorities the WJEC and all those organisations listed in Annex A to the attached document. Other recipients eg schools, are being sent this document for information.

The proposals and circumstances set out in the document, on which the Secretary of State is seeking views, are based on comments received in response to the earlier proposals for Welsh in the National Curriculum published in the Interim and Final Reports of the Welsh Working Group.

It is the Department's normal practice to make available to the public, on request, copies of respondents' replies to consultative papers. The Department will assume therefore, that any response can be made available to members of the public on request. Where respondents indicate that all or part of a reply should be excluded from this arrangement, confidentiality will be respected.

EC E408f685

Responses to this consultation should be sent by **6 April 1990** to:-

Mrs M Simons
Schools Curriculum Division 3
Welsh Office
Cathays Park
CARDIFF
CF1 3NQ

Yours sincerely

M L EVANS
Schools Curriculum
Division

G408H283

WELSH IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM: EXEMPTIONS

INTRODUCTION

1. On 23 January 1990, the Secretary of State for Wales published, for consultation, the draft Order setting out the attainment targets and programmes of study for teaching Welsh in the National Curriculum.

2. Section 17 of the Education Reform Act 1988 gives power to the Secretary of State to make regulations for exceptions or modifications to the National Curriculum. This paper sets out proposals by the Secretary of State for such regulations relating to Welsh. In accordance with the requirements of Section 21(2) of the Act, this paper seeks the views of the Curriculum Council for Wales (CCW), the local education authorities (LEAs) and those listed at Annex A. The Secretary of State will consider these views before drawing up draft regulations.

BACKGROUND

3. Section 3 of the Act established Welsh as part of in the National Curriculum in all schools in Wales.

4. In April 1988 the Secretary of State for Wales set up a Working Group (under the Chairmanship of Professor Gwyn Thomas) to advise him on the attainment targets and related programmes of study for pupils studying Welsh. The Group was asked to take into account the variety of linguistic situations in Wales thus minimising the need for specific exemptions from the teaching of Welsh in the National Curriculum.

5. The Group's Interim Report (November 1988) and Final Report (July 1989) on which the Secretary of State based his proposals set out in the draft Order, were the subject of extensive consultation.

6. There was widespread support for the Secretary of State's proposals from a range of agencies and bodies representing educational interests in Wales. These agencies and bodies included CCW, all LEA's, Welsh Joint Education Committee, Schools Examinations and Assessment Council, teacher unions and parent associations.

7. The head teachers of some schools in Clwyd, Dyfed (Pembrokeshire), Gwent and West Glamorgan, supported by their governing bodies, parent/teacher associations and a number of individual parents, expressed reservations about or objection to the compulsory nature of Welsh as a National Curriculum subject either for Key Stage 4 or generally. Fourteen schools specifically requested full or partial exemption from the statutory requirements.

STATUTORY POWERS

8. The power available to the Secretaries of State for Wales and Education and Science to make exceptions from or modifications to the statutory requirements set out in Orders for subjects in the National Curriculum are specified under Section 17 of the Act.

9. Section 17 states:-

"The Secretary of State may by regulations provide that the provisions of the National Curriculum or such of those provisions as may be specified in the regulations -

a. shall not apply; or

b. shall apply with such modifications as may be so specified;

in such cases or circumstances as may be so specified."

10. The main effect of these requirements are:-

- exemptions have to be made by Regulations. Decisions cannot be made on individual cases as they occur;

- such Regulations must themselves specify the "cases or circumstances". These Regulations cannot delegate power to the Secretary of State or LEA, for example, to decide individual cases.

11. Section 19 of the Act already provides head teachers with power to make temporary exceptions for individual pupils. For the purposes of

enabling development work or experiments, Section 16 of the Act provides the Secretary of State with further powers to disapply or modify the requirements of the National Curriculum in a particular maintained school.

12. The Act does not enable individual schools to decide whether to "opt out" of the teaching of a National Curriculum subject. The Secretary of State's proposals provide 2 models of study, Welsh and Welsh Second Language and within Welsh Second Language an option at Key Stage 4 (aged 14-16) for those pupils not wishing to study the subject to GCSE standard. There is also provision for a separate programme of study at Key Stage 3 (secondary level) to cater for pupils starting to learn Welsh at aged 11. The Secretary of State considers that these provisions minimise the need for exemptions.

13. However, having fully considered the representations arising from his earlier consultations, the Secretary of State has concluded that there is a need in limited circumstances to introduce exceptions. These circumstances are described below.

PROPOSALS

Incomers

14. The Welsh Working Group considered the problems of pupils arriving in Wales part way through their education. Their general conclusion was that the powers under Section 19 of the Act to make regulations enabling head teachers to make temporary exemptions from the National Curriculum would generally be appropriate in these cases. They acknowledged, though, that more thought was needed about pupils who arrived during Key Stage 4 and perhaps in the final year of Key Stage 3.

15. Educationally it is desirable for all pupils moving between counties in Wales and from areas outside with no previous experience of Welsh to be fully absorbed into the mainstream of teaching and activities in the schools they are joining. However, it may be unrealistic, to expect such pupils at a late stage of their school careers to achieve a reasonable standard in the relevant attainment targets for Welsh.

16. The Secretary of State **proposes** to exempt pupils from outside Wales who for the first time enter a school in Wales, if they are in the final year of Key Stage 3 or are in Key Stage 4, from the requirement to study the attainment targets and programmes of study for Welsh in the National Curriculum. Such pupils would however retain the option to study Welsh and the Secretary of State encourages schools to provide opportunities for such pupils to follow a Welsh course. Where possible this should be based on the Welsh Second Language programme of study.

Reasonable Time

17. Pending the introduction of Welsh in the National Curriculum in a particular key stage in a school, Section 10(3) of the Act provides for Welsh and all other core and foundation subjects to be taught for a "reasonable time" in each key stage before the statutory attainment targets and programmes of study are brought into effect. The arrangements as they apply to Welsh are set out in Welsh Office Circular 15/89 paragraphs 31-33 and Annex B. The practical effect of this means that by September 1990 all schools in Wales would be required to teach some Welsh.

18. The Secretary of State takes the view that schools not in a position to introduce the attainment targets and programmes of study set out in the draft Order by September 1990 are also unlikely to be equipped to teach it for a "reasonable time". He therefore **proposes** to use his powers under Section 17 of the Act to disapply the "reasonable time" requirement for a school or classes in a school where Welsh is not currently taught. This does not, of course, prevent such schools from introducing Welsh into the curriculum if they so wish.

19. Schools which currently teach Welsh in some classes or to particular groups between the ages of 5 and 16 will nevertheless be required to continue teaching Welsh at least to the extent presently provided until the provisions for the Order for Welsh in the National Curriculum apply.

THE NEXT STEP

20. Under Section 21 of the Act, the Secretary of State has to give notice of proposals to make regulations under Section 17 of the Act. Consultees are invited to submit evidence and representations to the proposals set out

in paragraphs 16 and 18 above. These should be submitted by 6 April 1990 and sent to:

Mrs M Simons
Schools Curriculum Division - Branch 3
Welsh Office
Cathays Park
CARDIFF CF1 3NQ

21. After considering any representations submitted, the Secretary of State will publish for further consultation draft regulations with an accompanying explanation of their provisions.

22. Following the consideration of any further representations the Secretary of State will consider whether to make any Section 17 regulations and if so he will lay them before Parliament.

OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES

23. The following possible circumstances for exemption under the provisions of Section 17 of the Act were raised in response to the Secretary of State's consultation on his proposals for Welsh in the National Curriculum. These were:-

EXTENDED INTRODUCTION

24. Welsh will be introduced in the National Curriculum beginning in September 1990 for schools already teaching Welsh and by September 1992 for all other schools. The Secretary of State's proposals provide for a phased period of implementation stretching well into the 1990's.

25. For schools currently teaching Welsh, the Order for Welsh in the National Curriculum will come into effect in August 1990 for pupils in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 (ages 5-14) and in August 1993 for Key Stage 4 (pupils aged 14-16). For all other schools the requirement would be introduced in Key Stage 1 (pupils aged 5-7) and Key Stage 3 (pupils aged 11-14) in August 1992, Key Stage 2 (pupils aged 8-11) in August 1994 and Key Stage 4 in 1995.

26. Generally LEAs have indicated that in most cases this timetable is achievable. Some LEAs have, however, expressed the need for a limited extension in some cases to assist them to develop the necessary resources needed to teach to the standards required in the proposals.

27. The Secretary of State generally considers the proposed timetable demanding but reasonable to enable schools prepare for the introduction of Welsh in the National Curriculum although he recognises that such a timetable may prove impracticable in some cases.

28. The Secretary of State will consider proposals from LEAs to exempt by regulations for a further period of up to 2 years, a limited number of schools in the general context of the LEAs overall timetable to implement Welsh in the National Curriculum. These proposed regulations would form the basis of later separate consultation under Section 21 of the Act.

29. LEAs seeking exemption under such regulations should submit by 6 April 1990 (to the address set out in paragraph 20) for the Secretary of State's consideration:

- details of the county's planned timetable to introduce Welsh in the National Curriculum;

- a list of the limited number of schools to be covered in such regulations; and

- the reasons in respect of each individual school for which an extended exemption is sought.

CROSS-BORDER FLOWS

30. A small number of schools along the Welsh border, most notably in Gwent, Clwyd and Powys, take in significant numbers of pupils at secondary level from their neighbouring English county. Some such schools have argued that the compulsory inclusion of Welsh in the National Curriculum will discourage parents from sending their children to these schools. This, they argue, would significantly affect school numbers and hence the funding of the school.

31. Pupils normally resident outside Wales will have attended primary schools where Welsh is not taught. It would be possible to include in the regulations exemptions for such pupils ordinarily resident outside Wales. Such exemptions could however be culturally divisive, lead to curriculum planning problems and perhaps undermine school or LEA policies for Welsh language teaching. The Secretary of State's proposals for Welsh in the National Curriculum already provide for a separate programme of study at Key Stage 3 for those starting to learn Welsh at age 11.

32. The Secretary of State is not yet persuaded of the need for exemptions in such cases. He therefore invites the views of CCW and LEAs on this issue before deciding whether or not to propose such regulations.

KEY STAGE 4

33. The majority of respondents seeking exemption from the compulsory study of Welsh were primarily concerned about the effect its inclusion in the National Curriculum would have on subject choice at Key Stage 4. These schools were predominantly those in which Welsh would be taught as a second language.

34. Many pointed to the fact that they offered Welsh at present as a subject in the early years of secondary schooling - often to the end of Key Stage 3 - but thereafter the majority of pupils chose not to study the language to GCSE standard in Key Stage 4.

35. The Secretary of State's draft Order for Welsh in the National Curriculum already allows for a degree of flexibility at Key Stage 4. Pupils not wishing to study Welsh Second Language to GCSE standard will have available a separate programme of study occupying less teaching time. This therefore provides scope for them to study other subjects.

36. In schools currently not teaching Welsh, the Key Stage 4 requirements are not due to be introduced until September 1995. The Secretary of State does not, therefore, propose at this stage to introduce specific exemptions

at Key Stage 4 but proposes to review the position with CCW and LEAs in 1993 to determine what practical problems may still exist. The need for further limited exemptions will be considered in the light of that review.

28 February 1990

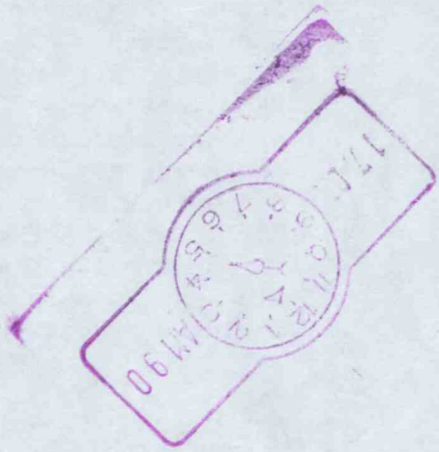
WELSH OFFICE
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

EXEMPTION FROM WELSH IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM: CONSULTEES

Curriculum Council for Wales (x6)
Schools Examination and Assessment Council (x6)
Welsh Local Education Authorities
Welsh Joint Education Committee (x6)
Confederation of British Industry
Welsh Language Education Development Committee
Wales Advisory Board
Training Agency (Wales)
Polytechnic of Wales
University College Wales, Aberystwyth
University College North Wales, Bangor
University Wales College Cardiff
University College, Swansea
Normal College, Bangor
North East Wales Institute of Higher Education
Trinity College, Carmarthen
Gwent College of Higher Education
South Glamorgan Institute of Higher Education
West Glamorgan Institute of Higher Education
Open University in Wales
National Union of Teachers
Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru
National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers (Wales)
Professional Association of Teachers
Assistant Masters and Mistresses Association (Committee in Wales)
Wales TUC
National Association of Head Teachers (Wales)
Cymdeithas Prifathrawon Dros Addysg Gymraeg
Secondary Heads Association (Wales)
Welsh Secondary Schools Association
Society of Education Officers (Wales)
National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education
National Association of Careers and Guidance Teachers
Association of Careers Teachers
National Association of Governors and Managers
Institute of Careers Officers
Association of Vice Principals of Colleges
Association for Adult Education
Parent Teacher Associations (Wales)
Church in Wales Provincial Council for Education
Church in Wales Sector for Statutory Education
Synod Secretary, The Methodist Church, Ruthin
Undeb yr Annibynwyr Cymraeg
Presbyterian Church of Wales
Undeb y Bedyddwyr
The Venerable A J F Lewis, St Hilary
Education Office, The Roman Catholic Church, Cardiff
Menevia Diocesan Education Committee
Wrexham Diocesan Education Committee
The Reverend Canon J W J Rees, Llanyre
Monmouth Diocesan Education Office
The Reverend Arthur Edwards, Cwmbran
The Reverend R Lewis Edwards, Llandegfan
Diocesan Resource Centre, Wrexham
Christian Education Movement

ANNEX A

Llandaff Diocesan Council for Education
Cyngor y Dysgwyr, Aberystwyth
Urdd Gobaith Cymru
Association of the Retarded in Wales
National Association for Mentally Handicapped Children
Wales Council for the Blind
Wales Council for the Disabled
National Association for Advisory Officers for Special Education
The Spastics Society
MENCAP Wales
Association for All Speech Impaired Children, South Wales Branch
Wales Council for the Deaf
The Heart and Handicapped Children's Society
British Association of Teachers for the Deaf (Wales)
Gwynedd Dyslexia Association
South Wales Dyslexia Association
West Wales Dyslexia Association
Dyslexia Unit, UCNW
National Association for Gifted Children (South Wales Branch)
Council for Racial Equality
Equal Opportunities Commission
National Union of Students (Wales)
NFER (Wales)
Council for Education in World Citizenship - Cymru
Workers Education Association
The Federation of Welsh Chambers of Commerce
Welsh Health Promotion Authority
Society of Health Education Officers in Wales
Welsh Consumer Council
Nature Conservancy Council
Advisory Centre for Education
Welsh Language Board
Association of Polytechnic Teachers
Plaid Cymru Women's Group
Technical and Vocational Education Initiative Units
Wales Assembly of Women
Pre-School Playgroups Association (Wales)
Yr Academi Gymreig
Cymdeithas Athrawon Bro
Welsh Counties Committee
Institute of Welsh Affairs
Welsh National Centre for Religious Education
Canolfan Iaith Genedlaethol
MPs for Wales - ask Parliamentary to send direct and not via vote office because of interest expressed by individual MPs
The Council of Welsh Districts
Cymdeithas Ymgynghorwyr y Gymraeg
Rhieni dros addysg Gymraeg
Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin
Y Colegiwm Cymraeg
Hospital Association of England and Wales
Welsh Traffic Education Programme
Cymdeithas y Gymraeg mewn Addysg
National Language Unit of Wales
Members of National Curriculum Welsh Working Group
Confederation for the Advancement of State Education
Advisory Centre for Education



SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

ELIZABETH HOUSE
YORK ROAD
LONDON SE1 7PH
01-934 9000

The Rt Hon Mrs Margaret Thatcher MP
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

13 JUL 1990

Dear Prime Minister

History in the National Curriculum

1. Having consulted widely I am now able to bring forward my statutory proposals for History in the National Curriculum. They are summarised in this minute. The detailed proposals follow at Annex A together with a letter requesting further advice from the National Curriculum Council. I also attach as background a summary of the responses to consultation and a copy of the advice that I have received from SEAC on the assessment of historical knowledge.

2. Two of our earlier concerns about history I believe need not detain us further. The amount of British history, including local history, would in practice exceed half the syllabus on the basis of the Group's recommendations. This has been generally well received. If anything, the critics say there is too much. My view is that if we have more we shall unbalance the whole: there is already a strong body of opinion which holds that there is not enough wider European history in the recommendations. We were also concerned that pupils should gain a good grasp of chronology. Here too I think the Group have found a sensible approach which for the most part commands wide support not only from teachers but from academic historians.

3. You and I were especially concerned that pupils should be properly tested on historical knowledge. A very high proportion of respondents agree that historical content should be in the programmes of study rather than in the attainment targets. The consensus among teachers is virtually unanimous. That was perhaps predictable. Less so, however, is the large majority among professional historians who believe the recommendations are sound.

4. SEAC's advice is:

> "In our view any sensible approach to assessment in terms of the four history attainment targets would require pupils to make use of appropriate historical knowledge in the course of demonstrating that they had attained the various levels. ... We are confident that the assessment arrangements for the national curriculum, as they are being developed step by step, will match this requirement."

5. I have not, however, accepted the Group's recommended attainment target structure as it stands. I want to simplify the burden of assessment and to underline the importance of the assessment of knowledge by making a number of changes. SEAC say that further work is needed on the statements of attainment that make up the targets and this accords closely with the concerns of the History Committee for Wales which you noted. As you suggested, I have discussed these questions with David Hunt and we are agreed on the need to review the statements of attainment thoroughly to ensure that they are clear and specific and no more detailed than they need to be. My proposals for changing the attainment target structure suggested by the Working Group are summarised in paragraph 8(i) below.

6. I am more concerned about two aspects of the programmes of study. One is that the Group's recommendations are too prescriptive and detailed, leaving insufficient scope for good teachers. You made this point strongly in your Sunday Telegraph interview in May. The other is that in selecting content the Group did not always strike the right balance between aspects of history (political, economic, social and so forth) and have sometimes included content on an arbitrary basis. These concerns come together for example in the Britain in the 20th Century study unit for Key Stage 4. I believe we can achieve most of the changes needed by reducing the detail and prescription. That will both give teachers more scope and remove much of the contentious factual material.

7. There are however political and practical limits on how far I can go. First, I cannot ditch a report which has now received very wide support. No-one has offered me a detailed alternative for establishing National Curriculum history other than by using that report as a basis for my proposals. Second, I cannot rewrite the content myself. To do so would bring charges of political interference in the history taught in schools. The Opposition have already failed to make that charge stick because I pointed out that I will not be ruling on what facts or interpretations of history are to be taught. Third, we must not relax the framework so far that National Curriculum fails to provide a rigorous guide for history teachers.

8. My statutory proposals involve the following main changes from the Working Group report. The key changes are:

Attainment Targets

(i) the title of the first attainment target "Understanding history in its setting" is unhelpfully vague and should be changed to "Knowledge and understanding of history". I am asking for the need for a separate fourth target "organising and communicating the results of historical study" to be re-examined; there may be a case for combining its constituent statements of attainment with those under the other 3 attainment targets, although we must be confident that the emphasis on coherent written work would not be lost as a result. I consider that the renamed first target should be more heavily weighted than the others when pupils are tested. In order to simplify all the targets, and to avoid the mistaken impression that they are self-contained (they are not because the knowledge content is in the programmes of study), I intend that the examples of essential information from the programmes of study should be removed. Taken together these changes simplify and underline the knowledge dimension of the targets.

Programmes of Study

(ii) there is no disagreement about the single history study unit for Key Stage 1. At Key Stages 2 and 3 the Group have included too much content. I am proposing a reduction in the number of units. That reflects the Welsh approach.

(iii) I propose to relax the structure of the programmes of study for key stages 2 and 3 to give teachers greater choice between study units and more freedom to design units for themselves. As a consequence, none of the 14 optional units recommended by the Group for key stage 3 will appear in the statutory Order;

(iv) at key stage 4 there is wide agreement on the need for 2 core units covering 20th Century history, including the Second World War, for all pupils. But the content of these core units has been rightly criticized. I intend to ask the NCC to re-design the units so that they give a broader and more balanced view of 20th Century history.

Design of History Study Units

(v) The units are far too detailed and prescriptive and must be simplified. That is one of the clear messages coming out of consultations on the Working Group report. I propose to omit from all the units all the non-statutory material which appears in italics, including the "concepts" section and all the "exemplary information" at the bottom of each unit;

(vi) there has also been controversy about the "PESC" (political, economic, social, cultural) framework used by the Group to set out the essential information to be covered in each unit. The formula helps to prevent teachers from

under-playing important aspects of history : eg, the political. But in some cases it is artificial and may have led to undesirable restrictions on teachers and excessive content in the study units. I propose to remove the PESC framework from the optional units in Key Stage 2 where it seems particularly inappropriate. And I will ask NCC to consider whether it is needed elsewhere or whether balance could be obtained in some other more flexible way.

9. May I have your agreement to proceeding as in the attached proposals at Annex A ? I understand that David Hunt is writing to you separately about the proposals for Wales, but he and I are in broad agreement on the way forward.

10. I am copying this letter to Kenneth Baker, Malcolm Rifkind, Peter Brooke and David Hunt.

Yours sincerely

S. T. Crowne

(approved by the Secretary of State and signed in his absence)

ANNEX A

HISTORY 5 TO 16:

PROPOSALS OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE FOR SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND

.....

The origins and scope of my proposals

1. In January 1989, jointly with the Secretary of State for Wales, I appointed a Working Group to advise on appropriate attainment targets and programmes of study for history. The Group's final Report was published on 3 April 1990[1]. I announced in the House on that day[2] that because History was such an important and potentially controversial subject, it would be right, before I made my statutory proposals, to have a period of consultation to allow public reaction to the report; that I was inviting comment from a wide range of representative bodies; and that schools would also have the opportunity to comment.

2. At the same time I wrote to the Chairman of the Schools Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC) to seek the Council's advice on whether the proposals of the History Working Group would secure the effective assessment of pupil's mastery of historical knowledge.

3. My letter, and the reply from the Chairman of SEAC, are published at Appendix....

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1 "National Curriculum History Working Group, Final Report" HMSO, April 1990.

2 Hansard, col 504.

4. In the light of the responses to the consultation on the Working Group's report, and of the advice of SEAC, I now make my formal proposals under Section 20 of the Education Reform Act for the history curriculum for pupils between the ages of 5 and 16 in schools in England. These proposals are confined to attainment targets and programmes of study. They do not relate to assessment arrangements, although advice on such arrangements is included in the Report. I am grateful to the Working Group for the thought it has given to assessment issues. I am asking the School Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC) to take the Group's advice into account in advising me in due course on the Orders specifying assessment arrangements covering history.

5. I consider that the Working Group's recommendations provide a sound basis for my proposals. The Group has also given me advice on other matters, such as the implications for resources, staffing and teacher training of establishing history within the National Curriculum. These will be duly considered, together with any comments made on them.

Objectives of the statutory consultation

6. The objective of the processes for statutory consultation is to produce clear recommendations in a form which can be put into draft Orders under section 4(2) (a) and (b) of the Act. My proposals for attainment targets and programmes of study are based on those recommended by the Working Group. I indicate below where I am proposing certain changes, or where I am asking for further consideration and refinement by the National Curriculum Council (NCC) in the light of the consultation

THE PROPOSALS

Attainment Targets

7. The Working Group's Report defines four attainment targets which are grouped for assessment and reporting purposes into a single profile component. For each attainment target there are statements of attainment which define 10 levels of attainment specifying what pupils should know, understand and be able to do, appropriate for pupils of different ages and abilities. The Report also recommends the ranges of levels of attainment which should apply to pupils at the end of each key stage - ie at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16. These are:

Key stage 1: Levels 1 to 3
Key stage 2: Levels 2 to 5
Key stage 3: Levels 3 to 7
Key stage 4: Levels 4 to 10

8. I agree with the Working Group's general approach to the identification of attainment targets, but I propose certain departures from the Working Group's recommendations.

9. I propose that the first of the attainment targets should be called 'Knowledge and understanding of history', to distinguish it from the other targets primarily concerned with the acquisition and practice of skills. Although I recognise that all the attainment targets proposed by the Working Group presuppose the mastery of knowledge, the first of them seems to me to measure most directly what pupils have learned from their historical studies. For that reason I attach special importance to assessment against the first attainment target, and I consider that it should carry a higher weighting than the other targets for the purposes of assessment. I am asking the NCC to advise me on the appropriate weighting.

10. I am concerned to reduce and simplify the burden of assessment of National Curriculum subjects. I therefore also propose that the fourth attainment target - organising and communicating the results of historical study - should be re-examined with a view to combining its constituent statements of attainment with those under the other 3 attainment targets.

11. With a view to further simplification, and in the light of the advice of SEAC, I propose that the examples drawn from essential information in the programmes of study should be omitted from the statements of attainment for all the attainment targets. I am asking the NCC to publish appropriate exemplary material as guidance for teachers.

12. With these modifications and subject to review of the statements of attainment and re-examination of the fourth attainment target by the National Curriculum Council, I propose that the attainment targets and their constituent statements of attainment at each level should be included in the Order to be made under Section 4(2) (c) of the Act.

Programmes of Study

13. I propose programmes of study for the four key stages as summarised below. My proposals are based closely on the recommendations of the Working Group, but I have made certain changes with the object of lightening the load of teaching and assessment and increasing, outside the core of history study units (HSUs) to be studied by all pupils, the scope for teachers to choose between HSUs or to design their own units.

14. Each key stage programme of study comprises :

- History study units (HSUs), of two kinds:

  i Those to be specified in detail in the

statutory Order

ii Those which are intended to be designed by schools themselves, in accordance with specified ground rules.

- Rules prescribing the relationship between HSUs in each key stage, including the choice between options, and the order in which core British HSUs should be taught.

- The ground rules for the school-designed HSUs.

Key Stage 1

15. For key stage 1 I propose that the programme of study should consist of the single HSU recommended by the Working Group, studied over the two years of this stage.

Key Stages 2 and 3

16. In Key stages 2 and 3 I propose to adopt the core HSUs recommended by the Working Group with no changes, but I propose a reduction in each key stage of one in the number of HSUs to be studied outside the core, and, at key stage 3, a relaxation of the constraints on choice between non-core units.

17. In Key stage 2 I propose that pupils should study nine HSUs, consisting of:

i Either five or six core HSUs
ii Either one or two of the optional HSUs
iii Either two or three school-designed HSUs

18. In Key stage 3 I propose that pupils should study 8 HSUs

consisting of:

i Four core HSUs
ii Four non-core HSUs

19. The Working Group recommended that of their five non-core units, a maximum of three should be designed by schools themselves. I propose that schools should be free to design all four non-core units, within the indicated themes and subject to the ground rules for school-designed HSUs, or to use the optional HSUs recommended by the Working Group. In order to reduce the total programme of study by one HSU, my proposals amalgamate two of the option lists recommended by the Working Group. Schools will therefore have a choice, for one of the HSUs, between the study of either a non-European or a New World culture from its own perspective. In addition, in order to broaden the scope of the fourth option, my proposals allow a choice between a British theme of a long-term nature and a further theme from European history.

20. Under my proposals, schools would thus not be obliged to select from the optional HSUs (HSUs 18 to 31) recommended by the Working Group in this key stage, so these Units do not form part of my proposals. However, since many schools will find them valuable models, either for adoption or adaptation, I am asking the NCC to consider how best these models might be included in appropriate guidance for teachers.

Key Stage 4

21. In this key stage I depart from the Working Group's recommendations in proposing an alternative programme of study which will provide a greater measure of flexibility to allow pupils who do not study for a single subject GCSE in History to combine the study of the subject with that of another for the purpose of joint GCSE accreditation.

22. I propose that the programme of study for all pupils should include two core HSUs in 20th Century history. In addition :

i For pupils studying for a single subject GCSE in history, my proposals for optional and school-designed additions to the core follow those of the History Working Group without modification.

ii Other students should study one more unit, which may either be :

- any of the options, other than the school-designed unit, as recommended by the Working Group

- or, a unit containing a substantial proportion of history, and conforming to the general ground rules for school-designed HSUs, designed to form part of a syllabus for combined studies to be jointly accredited for GCSE purposes.

23. I accept the advice of the History Working Group that the two core units in this key stage should be concerned with 20th Century history; that one should cover British history, and the other embrace - with a wider frame of reference than Britain - the era of the second World War. However, I believe that both units should be broader in treatment, and provide a better overview of 20th Century history, than those proposed by the History Working Group. I am therefore asking the NCC to advise me on how these HSUs should be broadened, without loss of coherence or rigour, to ensure a synoptic survey of history in the 20th Century, with particular reference to British and European History.

History Study Units

24. I consider that certain changes in the format of the HSUs

are needed to reduce the amount of real and apparent prescription. I recognise the potenial value as guidance to teachers of the illustrative and exemplary material which the Working Group's HSUs provide, but I believe it to be inappropriate to a statutory Order for History. I therefore propose to omit from the HSUs, as they would appear in the statutory document, all of the material which appears in italics in the Working Group's published report against the titles 'Links', 'Focus', and 'Concepts, and under the heading of 'Exemplary Information'. I invite the NCC to make use of this material in drawing up appropriate guidance for teachers.

25. Responses to the consultation on the Working Group's report have raised the question whether the prescription of 'essential information' within the individual HSUs recommended by the Working Group is excessive in amount or detail. SEAC has also drawn attention to an inconsistency between and within HSUs in the degree of detail with which such information is prescribed. Others have suggested that the prescription of content under the four separate headings of the PESC formula[3] has in some cases produced units of excessive weight, and in others unnecessarily and undesirably circumscribed the freedom of the teacher to select content and emphasis appropriate to the topic and indicated focus of the Unit.

26. In the light of these responses, and of SEAC's advice, I propose that the HSUs in the Statutory Order should prescribe what is to be taught under the heading of 'content' rather than 'essential information'. I am also asking the NCC to examine with care the Working Group's recommendations for the content to be taught and to advise me on the following questions:

i Whether some HSUs should be reduced in content

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3. Political; Economic, including technological and scientific; Social and religious; Cultural and aesthetic.

ii Whether some HSUs might be made less prescriptive, to give teachers greater discretion to select appropriate content

iii At what level of detail it is appropriate for content within the HSUs to be specified

iv What changes in any of these respects might be achieved without loss of rigour or damage to the breadth, balance and coherence of the School history course

27. I propose to dispense with the PESC framework for the optional HSUs in key stage 2. I am asking the NCC to give particular attention to the question of the content to be retained within these HSUs, with the questions in para 26 in mind. I am also asking the NCC to consider whether it is necessary or desirable that in the case of all other HSUs in all key stages the indicated content of the HSU should be structured in accordance with the Working Group's classification, or whether the Group's objective of securing breadth and balance in the treatment of the full range of dimensions of history might be safeguarded in some other and perhaps more flexible way.

Modified programmes of study

28. The programmes of study for key stages 2-4, as modified by my proposals, are set out in the Annex.

Commencement dates

29. I propose to introduce the attainment targets and programmes of study for all pupils in England in the first year

of each of Key Stages 1, 2, and 3 in autumn 1991, and of Key Stage 4 in autumn 1995.

ANNEX TO THE PROPOSALS

PROGRAMME OF STUDY FOR KEY STAGE 2

The programme of study for this key stage will consist of 9 units, selected from, or designed within, the following categories

Core History Study Units

Either 5 or 6 units :

*HSU 2 Invaders and settlers : the Romans, Anglo-Saxons, and Vikings in Britain

*HSU 3 Life in Tudor and Stuart times

Either or both :

*HSU 4 Victorian Britain, or :

*HSU 5 Life in Britain since 1930

HSU 6 Ancient civilisations : Egypt and Greece

HSU 7 Explorations and encounters : c 1450 to c 1550

Optional History Study Units

One or two from the following list :

HSU 8 Ships and seafarers through history

HSU 9 Food and farming through history

HSU 10 Houses and places of worship through history

HSU 11 The development of writing and printing

HSU 12 Land transport through history

HSU 13 Domestic life, families and childhood in Roman and Victorian times

School-designed History Study Units

Two or three, at least one based on local history

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*To be taught in chronological order, not more than one per year

PROGRAMME OF STUDY FOR KEY STAGE 3

The programme of study for this key stage will consist of eight units, comprising :

Core History Study Units

*HSU 14 Medieval realms : c 1066 to c 1500

*HSU 15 The making of the United Kingdom : c 1500 to c 1750

*HSU 16 Expansion, trade and industry : Britain c 1750 to c 1900

HSU 17 The Roman Empire

Optional History Study Units

One unit of each of the following kinds. Examples are given in each category, but schools will have discretion to substitute a unit of their own design, according to specified ground rules

A. A British History Study Unit to complement or extend the study of the British core History Study Units in this key stage. For example :

- Castles and cathedrals : c 1066 to c 1500
- Culture and society in Ireland up to the early C20th
- The British Empire at its zenith : 1877-1905

- Britain and the Great War : 1914-1918

B. A Unit involving the study of a major European turning point before 1914. For example :

- Reformation and religious diversity in Western Europe in the C16th

- The Italian Renaissance

- The French Revolution and the Napoleonic era

C. A Unit involving the study of a non-European or New World culture from its own perspective. For example :

- Islamic civilisation up to the early C16th

- Imperial China : 221 BC to the Mongol conquest in 1279 AD

- India from the Mughal empire to the coming of the British : c 1526 to c 1805

- Native peoples of the Americas

- Black peoples of the Americas : C16th to early C20th

- The American Revolution

- The American frontier : c 1650 to c 1900

D. One school-designed History Study Unit, of either of the following kinds :

i Long-term in nature, and based on British history.
Or :

ii A topic drawn from European history before 1914. This could be a second HSU of the List B kind : ie, a major turning point in European history. Or it could be the study of European history over a longer period, illustrating one or more major themes.

*To be taught in chronological order, not more than one in each of the three school years.

PROGRAMME OF STUDY FOR KEY STAGE 4

The programme will vary according to whether a pupil is pursuing a full course of study leading to a full GCSE in History. All pupils should take the two core units. GCSE History pupils should also choose two options and study the school designed unit. Other pupils should take one more unit, which should either be one of the options (but not the School-designed HSU), or a unit containing a substantial proportion of history, and conforming to the general ground rules for school-designed HSUs, designed to form part of a syllabus for combined studies to be jointly accredited for GCSE purposes.

The **Core History Study Units** comprise :

HSU 32 Britain in the twentieth century

HSU 33 Twentieth century World history, including the Second World War

The two **optional History Study Units** should be chosen one from each of the following lists :

LIST A

HSU 34 East and West : Europe from 1948 to the present

HSU 35 Russia and the USSR : 1905 to the present

HSU 36 The United States of America : 1917 to the present

LIST B

HSU 37 India and Pakistan, 1930-1964

HSU 38 Africa south of the Sahara since 1945

HSU 39 Japan : 1868 to the present

HSU 40 China : 1937 to the present

One **school-designed** History Study Unit, based on revisiting British history, studied over a long time-span (starting at least before 1500 and continuing up to the present)

DRAFT LETTER TO CHAIRMAN OF NCC

As you know, the final report of the National Curriculum History Working Group was published in April without my statutory proposals, because I wanted there to be a period of consultation to allow for a thorough assimilation and consideration of the report and the issues it raised. I also wrote to the Chairman of the School Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC) to ask that Council's advice on whether the Group's proposals would secure the effective assessment of pupils' mastery of historical knowledge.

2. Philip Halsey wrote to me on 12 June with the advice of his Council ; he sent you a copy. The period of consultation ended on 15 June. In the light of the Working Group's report, the responses to consultation and SEAC's advice, I am now in a position to make my formal proposals for pupils in schools in England. The text of the proposals is enclosed with this letter. The Secretary of State for Wales will publish his proposals separately on the basis of the advice he received from the History Committee for Wales in its report published on 13 June.

3. My proposals are based on the final report of the History Working Group, but they depart in some respects from the Group's recommendations. In addition I am asking your Council for advice on some particular aspects of my proposals before I finally resolve the terms of the statutory document accompanying the Order for history. In doing so, I have taken account of the responses to consultation and the advice of SEAC. I have also had regard to the final report of the History Committee for Wales.

4. In England the National Curriculum Council is now required to give notice of the proposals to those organisations specified in section 20 of the Act and any others it considers appropriate, and to afford them a reasonable opportunity of submitting evidence and representations as to the issues arising. The Council is then to prepare a report to me on the proposals,

containing a summary of the views expressed during the statutory consultations, together with the Council's own recommendations and advice. I ask that the Council's report to me should be submitted by 17 December 1990. For the purposes of this consultation, despite the fact that the History Working Group's report has already been published, I am reproducing it with my own proposals so that it will be clear to all readers where my proposals do and do not coincide with the Group's recommendations.

General questions

5. I ask the Council for clear recommendations in a form which can be put into a draft Order under section 4(2)(a) and (b). I should be grateful if the Council would have regard to the following general issues when preparing its advice in the light of the consultations:

(i) practicability: are the proposals achievable by pupils, including (with appropriate modifications) pupils with special educational needs, and their teachers?

(ii) level: are the levels of attainment within the proposed targets pitched so as to be both realistic and challenging across the whole ability range?

(iii) coverage: do the proposals for attainment targets and programmes of study embrace an acceptable spread of the areas of knowledge, skills and understanding and topics within them to be covered in the school curriculum for history?

(iv) precision: are all the statements which define levels of attainment specific

enough to provide a clear basis for assessment?

Your Council will want to look to SEAC for advice on the assessment implication of these questions : especially (iv).

6. The Working Group makes certain suggestions relating to the assessment of pupils with special educational needs, and it invites the Council to issue non-statutory guidance on the teaching of the programmes of study to such pupils. However, it makes no recommendations with regard to disapplication or modification of the Section 4 Orders. In seeking NCC's advice on this matter, I particularly ask that you should seek comments and advice from the various specialist organisations representing pupils with special educational needs.

Particular questions

i. Attainment targets and statements of attainment

7. SEAC have advised me that the HWG's proposals offer a sound and workable basis for assessment. In the light of that advice I accept that pupils' knowledge and understanding of content specified in the programmes of study can and should be assessed against attainment targets and statements of attainment which do not themselves specify content.

8. The History Committee for Wales, though fully endorsing the Working Group's treatment of knowledge and its proposed attainment targets, expressed certain reservations about the statements of attainment. In particular they doubted whether the Group had been successful in differentiating ten distinct levels under each attainment target, and called in question the need for the levels under all four attainment targets.

9. The advice of SEAC, on the other hand, was that the recommended assessment structure was likely to provide an effective economical and practicable basis of assessment. They

contrasted the relatively small number of statements of attainment in each key stage with the number already prescribed by Order for the core subjects and Technology, and recommended for Geography. They did, however, indicate that further detailed consideration should be given to a number of points relating to the statement of attainments. These include the clarity of those statements for teaching, assessment and reporting purposes; their division into strands within an attainment target; progression between levels; and the demands made at particular levels. I ask NCC to have special regard to the concerns expressed by the History Committee for Wales, and to the questions identified by SEAC, in addressing the issues in paragraph 5 above.

10. As you know it is my concern in all national curriculum subjects that the burden of assessment should not be excessive, and that the significance of assessments should be clear to teachers, pupils and parents. With this in mind, I am proposing that the need for the fourth attainment target - organising and communicating the results of historical study - should be re-examined. There may be a case for combining its constituent statements of attainment with those under the other 3 attainment targets, if this can be done without prejudice to the need to test the ability to produce coherent written exposition. You will remember that a similar target was proposed in the Science Working Group report, and at my predecessor's request it was found to be possible to combine its statements of attainment with those of the other science ATs. I invite NCC to consult on and consider whether the fourth history AT might be combined with the others.

11. You will see that I propose that the first attainment target should be called 'Knowledge and understanding of History'. The meaning of the title recommended by the Working Group "Understanding History in its Setting" seems to me unclear, and not to distinguish this target sufficiently from ATs 2 and 3, which are primarily concerned with the acquisition and practice of skills. I do not believe that the statements of attainment

recommended under this target should need any adjustment in consequence of the change in title.

12. Although I recognise that all the attainment targets proposed by the HWG presuppose the mastery of knowledge, the first of them seems to me to measure most directly what pupils have learned from their historical studies. For that reason I attach special importance to assessment against the AT 1 statements of attainment, and my proposals make it clear that I consider that it should carry a higher weighting than the other targets for the purposes of assessment. I invite NCC to advise me on the weighting that should most appropriately by given to AT 1, in relation to the other attainment targets, in each key stage. Although this is not a formal part of my present statutory proposals, since it does not affect the Order specifying attainment targets and programmes of study, the question will need to be resolved before I take the next step after that in establishing the History curriculum by making the Order under Section 4(2)(c) in respect of the assessment arrangements.

13. The Working Group set out underneath its recommended statements of attainment examples of essential information prescribed in appropriate HSUs. Their intention was to emphasise the interdependence of ATs and programmes of study. SEAC have however criticised this attempt as of limited value and liable to lead to the mistaken impression that the statements of attainment are complete in themselves. I agree with SEAC. The inclusion of this exemplary material appears to complicate the AT structure and gives a misleading impression of detail and prescription. I am therefore proposing to omit it from the Statutory Order. I invite NCC to publish appropriate exemplary material in due course as guidance to teachers.

ii. Programmes of Study

14. My proposals for programmes of study are based closely on the Working Group's recommendations, but with some changes which

are set out in full in the Annex to my proposals. The object of these changes is to lighten the load of teaching and assessment and increase the scope for teachers to exercise choice and judgement. This is consistent with views expressed in many of the responses to the Report, and with the proposals of the History Committee for Wales for key stages 2 and 3.

15. You will note that I have changed the terminology, to bring it into closer alignment with the Education Reform Act and the Orders already made under it. The 'programme of study' is the term used to describe the regime for a whole key stage. The individual HSU becomes an element within the programme of study for each key stage. In this way I am advised that I can prescribe the order in which such elements should be taught within each key stage, and so give statutory force to the Working Group's recommendation that core British HSUs should be taught in chronological sequence. My present proposals would have the effect of imposing such a requirement on both key stages 2 and 3. I am nevertheless aware that it may be difficult for primary schools with junior classes of mixed ages to conform to such a requirement. I therefore ask the NCC for its advice on whether this requirement should be lifted for key stage 2.

16. I do not myself propose changes in the content to be prescribed in individual HSUs, but I wish to draw the attention of NCC particularly to the two core HSUs recommended for Key Stage 4. I have accepted the advice of the Working Group that the two core units in this key stage should be concerned with 20th Century history ; that one should cover British history, and the other embrace - with a wider frame of reference than Britain - the era of the second World War. However, I believe that both units should be broader in treatment, and provide a better overview of 20th Century history, than those recommended by the Working Group. I therefore invite the NCC to advise me on how these HSUs should be broadened, without loss of coherence or rigour, to ensure a synoptic survey of history in the 20th Century, with particular reference to British and European history.

iii Individual HSUs : Format and Content

17. With a view to simplifying the individual HSUs and reducing the amount or real or apparent prescription, I am proposing that the italicised material which the Working Group did not intend to carry statutory force should - with the exception of the specification of the 'concepts' to be studied - be omitted from the document accompanying the statutory Order. Material of this kind will nevertheless be important as an aid to teachers' understanding of each Unit, and its place in the school history course. I therefore invite the NCC to make use of this material in drawing up appropriate guidance to teachers.

18. Responses to my consultation on the Working Group's report have raised the question whether the prescription of 'essential information' within the individual HSUs recommended by the History Working Group is excessive in amount or detail and in places arbitrary. SEAC has also drawn attention to an inconsistency between and within HSUs in the degree of detail with which such information is prescribed. Others have suggested that the prescription of content under the four separate headings of the PESC formula has in some cases produced units of excessive weight, and in others unnecessarily and undesirably circumscribed the freedom of the teacher to select content and emphasis appropriate to the topic and indicated focus of the Unit.

19. Accordingly the other change I am proposing to the format of all HSUs is that the final section should be headed 'content', rather than 'essential information. I ask the NCC to examine with care what is prescribed under that heading and to advise me on the following questions:

i Whether some HSUs should be reduced in content

ii Whether some HSUs might be made less prescriptive,

to give teachers greater discretion to select appropriate content

iii At what level of detail it is appropriate for content within the HSUs to be specified

iv What changes in any of these respects might be achieved without loss of rigour or damage to the breadth, balance and coherence of the school history course.

20. The responses to my consultation on the Working Group's report show some difference of view about the use by the Group of 'PESC' as a structural principle within the HSUs. I am proposing to dispense with that framework for the optional HSUs in key stage 2, because I believe that the appropriate balance should be sufficiently apparent from the long-term themes themselves. I ask NCC to give particular attention to the content to be retained within these HSUs, with the questions I have put to you above in mind. I also ask NCC to consider whether it is necessary or desirable that in the case of all other HSUs in all key stages the indicated content of the HSU should be structured in accordance with the Working Group's classification, or whether the Group's objective of securing breadth and balance in the treatment of the full range of dimensions of history might be safeguarded in some other and perhaps more flexible way.

21. I look forward to receiving the Council's recommendations and advice by 17 December 1990. I am writing separately (as attached) to Philip Halsey to seek SEAC's further advice on the assessment implications of the Working Group's proposals as modified by my own. I am sending him a copy of this letter and I am copying it also to Hywel Evans at CCW.

Prime Minister

BTHP 12/7

(2)

KC26-15

ELIZABETH HOUSE
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071-934 9000

Barry Potter Esq
Private Secretary
No 10 Downing Street
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11 July 1990

Dear Barry

As you know, my Secretary of State is planning, provisionally, to announce the results of the latest of the Department's annual surveys of teacher vacancies on Tuesday 17 July to coincide with the publication of his response to the report of the Education, Science and Arts Committee on teacher supply. He has given an undertaking to the House to make these figures available.

I understand that the Prime Minister is holding a meeting tomorrow morning to consider announcements planned for next week. My Secretary of State, who has discussed the intended teacher vacancies announcement with the Secretary of State for Energy, would be happy to be guided on timing.

The survey results will attract some negative comment. The press are likely to focus in particular on the fact that, overall, the 1990 figures, collected in January, show a rise in the vacancy rate to 1.8% compared with 1.5% in January 1989. As in past years, however, the overall figure disguises significant regional variations. When presenting the results, the Secretary of State will point out in particular how the longstanding difficulties in inner London distort the national picture, and how the Government' policies on teacher supply are targeted on particular areas of difficulty. He will highlight the positive impact of those policies in the context of his response to the Select Committee.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Crowne

STEPHEN CROWNE
Private Secretary

cc: P.U.
Press Office
DM
Q
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RMR237

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2 - JUL 1990

Dear Barry

EDUCATION DEBATE: 3 JULY

As you know there is a half day education debate tomorrow. It is likely that the Opposition will press DES Ministers on grant-maintained schools following the further press speculation over the weekend and today.

We thought you would like to see the attached Q and A material answers which our Ministers are proposing to draw from if questions arising out of the articles are raised in the debate.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Crowne

S T CROWNE
Private Secretary

QUESTIONS ARISING OUT OF RECENT PRESS COVERAGE ON GRANT-MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

Q. Is not the number of schools becoming GM very disappointing?

A. The 1988 Act was a major milestone. It provided the option for schools to seek GM status. GM schools are the 'jewel in the crown of parent power'. There will be, this September, well over double the number of GM schools in operation last September. Many governors and parents are showing a keen interest in the possibility of seeking GM status. There are more secondary schools approved for GM status than there are secondary schools in two-thirds of LEAs. The interest is quickening all the time. It is for parents and governors to decide whether they wish to take advantage of this opportunity.

Q. Are you going to require schools to have ballots about GM status?

A. There is a rapid expansion in the number of GM schools and a lot of interest among parents and governors. GM schools are the 'jewel in the crown of parent power'. Any change of the kind suggested would of course require primary legislation. We will consider carefully the views on future possibilities of all those organisations with a serious concern for education in our schools, including those of the Adam Smith Institute.

Q. Are you going to introduce legislation to make it more difficult for LEAs to obstruct schools?

A. We will be monitoring carefully the attitude of LEAs. I deplore the fact that a minority of local authorities have tried to put obstacles in the way of schools seeking GM status. For example, in a recent court judgement concerning Audenshaw School and Tameside Borough Council the judges

described the action taken by the authority 18 months ago in the following way:

> 'The hasty, furtive and downright rude way in which this business was pushed through gave it a very unattractive air, and it is not surprising that as the truth began to emerge the governors were indignant and suspicious...'

But I am glad to be able to report that in many cases earlier suspicion and antagonism is giving way to constructive working relationships. For example, when I recently met a group of Chairmen of education committees in the South-East their spokesman said that 'they wholeheartedly supported the principle of GM status'.

I particularly welcome Hillingdon LEA's intention to invite a representative of the GM sector onto its education committee. This is an example of how LEAs and GM schools can work together in the interests of the whole maintained sector.

In particular cases if there is evidence of bullying by LEAs of schools I would not hesitate to require ballots to be re-run. If there is evidence of a general problem we will consider further legislation if necessary.

Q. Will the Poll Tax be cut if schools opt out?

A. We are always open to imaginative ideas for improving education and reducing the burden of taxation. Under present arrangements GM schools are funded at the level that would have applied if they had remained with their former maintaining authority. The money is paid from the DES to the GM school. But as the money is recovered by the DES from the LEA the level of community charge does not change as a result of a school opting out.

If a large number of schools obtain GM status it might be necessary to review the funding methodology. Any change in the funding of GM schools would not necessarily involve a shift of funding between the tax payer and the community charge payer.

(EXPLANATORY NOTE)

For example, one could move over to a national funding formula for GM schools where the funds for GM schools came entirely from the Exchequer, thereby reducing the community charge and increasing central taxation: or the funding formula could be based on no change in the overall community charge; or there could be some intervening position.

file

PAUL

cc: Policy Unit

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

2 July 1990

Dear Stephen

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: ART, MUSIC AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Many thanks for your letter of 29 June, which I submitted to the Prime Minister over the weekend.

The Prime Minister was most grateful for your Secretary of State's revised proposals on the membership of the Art and Music Working Groups and clarification of the plans on assessment and broad attainment targets.

The Prime Minister was also pleased that your Secretary of State considers that a good deal of the supplementary guidance can be dispensed with.

The Prime Minister is content to proceed on the basis of the revised proposals which your Secretary of State, in consultation with the Welsh Secretary, has now put forward.

I am copying this letter to Jim Gallagher (Scottish Office), Phillip Ward (Department of the Environment), Stephen Leach (Northern Ireland Office), Lawrence Conway (Welsh Office), Martin Le Jeune (Office of Arts and Libraries) and Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

Yours

Barry

BARRY H. POTTER

Stephen Crowne, Esq.,
Department of Education and Science.

DES

Prime Minister

The Education Secretary, in consultation with the Welsh Secretary, has met the points and proposals you made, in relation to the earlier draft. (Relevant papers attached) Content with Mr McGregor's revised proposals?

PHP
29/6

ELIZABETH HOUSE
YORK ROAD
LONDON SE1 7PH
071-934 9000
From the Principal Private Secretary

Barry Potter Esq
Private Secretary
No 10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1A 2AA

29 June 1990

Dear Barry

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: ART, MUSIC AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Thank you for your letter of 25 June.

My Secretary of State has considered the Prime Minister's comments in consultation with the Secretary of State for Wales. Taking the points raised in turn:

i. he proposes to include Lady Marina Vaizey in the Art Working Group. Lady Vaizey is a broadcaster and writer, a member of the Fine Arts Advisry Committee of the British Council and a member of the Crafts Council. He has asked Mrs Angela Rumbold to interview Mr Michael Batt as soon as possible, with a view to including him in the Music Working Group;

ii. he entirely agrees with the Prime Minister's second point. From the outset he has sought to distinguish between Art, Music and PE and the other foundation subjects. The point has been stressed in discussion with the Chairmen of the Groups, and the Secretary of State intends to emphasise it in public presentation. Broad Attainment Targets will help to provide effective continuity of teaching and greater rigour in these subjects. But he will make clear that the Working Groups are expected to work within a much more

simplified framework based on the Key stages rather than a 10 level scale with up to a maximum of 3 or 4 Attainment Targets. The aim is to leave as much as possible to the discretion of teachers working within the minimum constraints of the statutory framework. This is wholly consistent with the intention behind the inclusion of these subjects within the National Curriculum, which was to achieve breadth and balance whilst avoiding undue prescription.

iii. he agrees that a good deal of the supplementary guidance can be dispensed with. It is certainly not his intention to constrain the Groups' better judgement. However, he considers that it is desirable to incorporate the substance of paragraph 2 of the guidance, which explains what is meant by simpler Attainment Targets and the time assumptions for each subject, into the terms of reference. This will help to make quite clear that these subjects are not to be treated like other foundation subjects.

The Secretary of State would be grateful for an early response. He hopes to announce the Working Groups next week.

I am copying this letter to Jim Gallagher (Scottish Office), Phillip Ward (Department of the Environment), Stephen Leach (Northern Ireland Office), Lawrence Conway (Welsh Office), Martin Le Jeune (Office of Arts and Libraries) and Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever.

Stephen Crowne

STEPHEN CROWNE

EDMC: Policy pt 26



CONFIDENTIAL

FILE
DA

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

25 June 1990

Dear Stephen,

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: ART, MUSIC & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute of 20 January setting out proposals for art, music and physical education in the National Curriculum.

The Prime Minister has a number of comments on the proposals.

First, the Prime Minister is content with the proposed membership of the working group on physical education in the National Curriculum. She has commented however that the membership of the art working group contains only two women. And the Prime Minister has also proposed that someone from Abbey Road Recording Studios, perhaps Mr. Michael Batt, might be appointed as the business representative on the music working group.

Secondly, the Prime Minister has commented that art, music and physical education are very different subjects to others covered by the National Curriculum. She does not believe they lend themselves to attainment targets in the same way as the other subjects. The Prime Minister would be grateful for a further exposition on what your Secretary of State has in mind on standards of attainment. She agrees with your Secretary of State that there is no need for any external tests in these subjects, except for pupils taking a GCSE.

Finally, the Prime Minister considers that the supplementary guidance note attached to the physical education working group terms of reference is highly unsatisfactory. She has commented that the supplementary guidance is too fussy and too detailed. Moreover if the right people were appointed to the working group, they will not need supplementary guidance - indeed it might fetter their better judgement.

The Prime Minister would be grateful if your Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of State for Wales, could consider the above points and bring forward amended proposals.

CONFIDENTIAL

I am copying this letter to Jim Gallagher (Scottish Office), Phillip Ward (Department of the Environment), Stephen Leach (Northern Ireland Office), Stephen Williams (Welsh Office), Martin Le Jeune (Office of Arts and Libraries) and Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

Yours,

Barry

BARRY H. POTTER

Stephen Crowne, Esq.,
Department of Education and Science.

POTTER 22 June 1990

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: PHYSICAL EDUCATION

with BP?

John MacGregor has minuted to the Prime Minister proposing:

- that a working group be set up to advise on basic attainment targets for physical education (PE);

- endorsing guidance for the working group.

Paragraph 9 of the proposed guidance says that the Working Group should plan on the basis that children:

- have three periods of PE a week during the first nine years of school;

- have two periods a week thereafter.

This would be a considerable reduction on the present position, where 3-4 periods a week is the norm. Colin Moynihan feels that this would send the wrong signal against the background of:

- a recommendation from the Schools Sports Forum that school children should spend at least 10% of their time on PE;

- a similar HMI Report on Wales;

- parental interest in sport, and the competitiveness of British sport;

- the fact that German school children spend between 10%-12½% of their time on PE; three periods a week is standard for all school children in France.

Colin Moynihan appreciates the pressures on the curriculum. But there is scope to fit in PE outside normal hours, perhaps with the help of outside sponsorship. He would like to avoid saying anything in the guidance about the amount of time to be given to PE, leaving it to the Working Group to come up with recommendations.

Conclusion

It is sensible to leave this issue to the Working Group. They can be told to consider the other pressures on the school curriculum. Paragraph 9 of the guidance should not say how much time is to be devoted to PE.

CAROLYN SINCLAIR

Prime Minister

These proposals seem broadly simply on art, music & PE in the National Curriculum. They largely avoid overprescription & elaborate testing. The selection of Working Group chairmen (including Ian Reed) & construction of the groups has been undertaken carefully. Colin Moynihan is concerned that the PE proposals in para 9 of the draft terms of reference for PE prescribes too short a time for PE. He would rather leave this to the working group. Policy Unit (note attached) agree. Content to approve subject to DES concerning Mr Moynihan's concern?

BTHP 22/6

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

PRIME MINISTER

David Hunt and I have been considering the further steps needed to implement the National Curriculum. Arrangements are now well in hand for all the core and other foundation subjects with the exception of art, music and physical education.

We have concluded that, although there is the same need to raise standards of attainment in these subjects as in the other foundation subjects, we do not want anything like the detailed statutory regime that has been developed for the core subjects in particular. Nor do we intend that they should take up much of the timetable. However, we need to ensure that the time that is devoted to them is spent well, and we therefore do need some simple requirements in a statutory framework. The Education Reform Act does in any case require us to make at least a minimum statutory provision.

The assessment arrangements must also be much simpler. I see no need for any external tests in these subjects except when pupils take a GCSE as a good many do in art. Schools should have maximum flexibility in the final two years of compulsory education to develop worthwhile reduced courses covering these subjects for the majority of pupils who will not take any of them to GCSE.

We have thought about the best way to tackle these subjects and have concluded that we should establish a working group for each with the task of advising on basic attainment targets and programmes of study. In the case of PE, we shall ensure that the working group is kept in touch with the review of sports policy

which Chris Patten proposes and that it reflects our wider concerns. I attach a copy of the remit I propose for a PE Working Group (those for art and music would be the same in all essentials) from which you will see that we have in mind something very different from the remits for the other Working Groups. In particular, the statutory attainment targets are to be very broad and not at all detailed, and assessment is to be a matter entirely for teachers.

You don't need a signature in P.S.

We have given careful consideration to the choice of chairmen for the Groups. I should like to appoint Professor Colin Renfrew for the Art Working Group, Sir John Manduell for the Music Working Group and Ian Beer for the PE Working Group. Professor Renfrew is Master of Jesus College and Professor of Archaeology at Cambridge. Sir John Manduell is Principal of the Royal Northern College of Music. Ian Beer is headmaster of Harrow School and a former rugby international. Angela Rumbold has had quite detailed discussion with all three, and we are confident that they will not go beyond their given task and will deliver good reports in accordance with their terms of reference.

We have also been extremely careful in our selection of members for the Groups. Again, Angela Rumbold has interviewed individually all those we now propose and has selected those who combine enthusiasm for the task and for the National Curriculum as a whole with a sound appreciation of what is realistic in the circumstances and who therefore will work constructively with their Chairman to report in line with their terms of reference. A list of names for each group is attached.

Subject to your agreement to the terms of reference and to the membership proposed, I should like to proceed to establish the groups. Our planned timetable for implementing the National Curriculum always envisaged that art, music and PE would be introduced from 1992. Unless we move quickly, that timetable will slip. I believe that would be unfortunate as it would result in standards that are already low in these subjects slipping still further.

I should be grateful to know whether you agree to my proceeding in this way. It would be a considerable advantage to be able to announce these Working Groups shortly, so that they are able to start their work as soon as possible. I am copying this letter to David Hunt, Malcolm Rifkind, Peter Brooke, Chris Patten, Richard Luce and Sir Robin Butler.

JM

JM

20 JUNE 1990

P E WORKING GROUP

Chairman	Ian Beer - Headmaster of Harrow
Primary	Ann Harris - Head of Binfield Primary School, Berkshire.
Secondary	Michael Thornton - Deputy Head of Newton Aycliffe School, County Durham. Former PE Head of Department .
Academic	Elizabeth Murdoch - Head of Chelsea School of Human Movement, Brighton Polytechnic. Nationally and internationally respected writer on PE.
	Margaret Talbot - First woman head of Carnegie PE Department at Leeds Polytechnic. Recommended by Mr Moynihan.
Business	Keith Sohl - Senior manager with IBM. Active participant in sport. Has worked with Sutton LA to create an indoor tennis centre.
	Philip Norman - Senior marketing manager with Nat West Bank. Former Olympic oarsman. Actively involved in coaching young people in rowing and rugby.
Welsh nominee	Susan Jackson - Deputy Head of Connah's Quay High School, Clwyd. Former Head of PE.
Miscellaneous:	
sport	Steve Ovett - Olympic athlete. Member of Sports Council. Recommended by Mr Moynihan.
	John Fashanu - Footballer with Wimbledon FC.
dance	Maggie Semple - Director of Arts Council Project on Arts Education. Trained as a dance teacher.
disabled	Tim Marshall - Lecturer at Birmingham University Medical School. Member of Sports Council and of DOE Review Group on sport for people with disabilities. Recommended by Mr Moynihan.
outdoor education	Professor Denys Brunsden - Professor of Geography at Kings College London. Contributor to report by Lord Hunt in 1989 on outdoor education.

ART WORKING GROUP

Chairman	Professor Colin Renfrew - Master of Jesus College, Cambridge; Professor of Archaeology, Cambridge
Primary	Gilroy Brown - Head teacher, Foundry Junior and Infants School, Birmingham
	David Derrick - Head teacher, St Clement Dane's C of E Primary School, Westminster
Secondary	Christine Bilborough - Head of Art, Thomas Bennett Community School, Crawley
Adviser	Robert Clement - Adviser for Art and Design, Devon County Council
Academic	Professor Leslie Perry - Emeritus Professor, University of London Institute of Education, formerly Professor of the Philosophy of Education at Kings College, London
Business	Merrick Taylor- Managing Director, Motor Panels (Coventry) Ltd
Welsh nominee	Gillian Figg - Lecturer in Art Education, West Glamorgan IHE
Miscellaneous	
Critic	Giles Auty - Art Critic, The Spectator
Artist	Ray Smith - practising artist whose work is represented in many public collections in the United Kingdom and abroad. Has published several award winning picture books for children and a technical manual "The Artists Handbook"
Gallery	Toby Jackson - Head of Community Development and Education, Tate Gallery, Liverpool

Only 2 women

MUSIC WORKING GROUP

Chairman	Sir John Manduell - Principal, Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester
Primary	Mrs L Read - Head of Infant Department, Elburton Primary School, Devon. Music coordinator for whole (5-11) school
Secondary	David Adams - Head of Music, Sawston Village College, Cambridge
	Michael Brewer - Director of Music, Chetham's (independent specialist music) School, Manchester. Internationally known choral specialist
Adviser	John Stephens - ex-LEA Senior Staff Inspector for music, and ex-HMI. Director of Education, Trinity College of Music from September 1990
Academic	George Pratt - Head of Music Department and Professor, Huddersfield Polytechnic. Experienced chairman and member of committees of Arts Council.
	Philip Jones - Principal, Trinity College of Music. Trumpeter.
Business	Julian Smith - Director, W H Smith & Sons Ltd.Active and supportive sponsor of Music for Youth
	Christine Wood - Director, Lovely Music Ltd, Tadcaster (specialist suppliers of music to schools). Former primary teacher
Welsh nominee	Dr Kevin Adams - Head of Music, Maesteg Comprehensive School, Mid Glamorgan
Miscellaneous	Gillian Moore - Education Officer, London Sinfonietta. Works with schools on composition and performance (recommended by Mr Luce)
Still to be found	Representative of popular music field

Someone from the Abbey Recording Centre
- belongs to Thorn EMI.
I visited - the best in the world
with all the modern equipment
? Michael Batt? - backer (musical)
of films & cartoons as well as composer in his own right

PE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

1. The Education Reform Act 1988 provides for the establishment of a National Curriculum of core and other foundation subjects for pupils of compulsory school age in England and Wales. The Act requires the Secretary of State to specify, as he considers appropriate for each foundation subject, including physical education (PE), the 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 pupils reach the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16. To promote achievement of those objectives, the Secretary of State is required also to specify programmes of study describing the content, skills and processes which need to be covered during each key stage. 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. However, the Secretary of State intends that, because of the nature of the subject, the objectives (attainment targets) and means of achieving them (programmes of study) should not be prescribed in as much detail for PE, music and art as for the core and other foundation subjects. He considers that schools and teachers should have substantial scope here to develop their own schemes of work. It is the task of the PE Working Group to advise on a statutory framework which is sufficiently broad and flexible to allow schools wide discretion in relation to the matters to be studied.

The Task

3. The Working Group is asked to submit an interim report to the Secretaries of State by 31 December 1990 outlining and, as far as possible, exemplifying:

i) the contribution which PE (including dance) 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 should be expected to have attained and be able to demonstrate at key ages; and the profile components into which attainment targets should be grouped; and

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

4. By 31 May 1991 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 programmes of study for PE.

Approach

5. In carrying out its task the Group should consult informally and selectively with relevant interests and have regard to the statutory Orders on mathematics, science, English and technology and to the work of the other subject groups - history, geography, modern foreign languages, art and music. Additionally the Group should take account of:

i) the contributions which PE, including active physical recreation, competitive sport and dance, can make to learning about other subjects and cross-curricular

themes including, in particular, expressive arts subjects (including drama and music), health education and PSE and which they in turn can make to learning in PE;

ii) best practice and the results of any relevant research and development; and

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

SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE TO PE WORKING GROUP CHAIRMAN

1. This note amplifies some of the points outlined in the Working Group's terms of reference.

Attainment targets and differentiation

2. The attainment targets are to provide objectives that show pupils, teachers, parents and others what is expected. Taken together with the programmes of study, they should provide a basis for assessment. The Group should express an attainment target in terms of what is to be expected of pupils at the end of each key stage, ie at ages 7, 11, 14 and 16. This expectation should take the form of a single statement in broad terms for each key age which may comprise components covering different aspects of the subject. Each statement should represent what pupils of different abilities and maturities can be expected to achieve at the end of the key stage in question. These statements are intended then to form part of the statutory Order for the subject. In addition, the Group should make recommendations for non-statutory statements of attainment calibrated into ten levels. It is intended that these should form part of guidance to teachers to help them to plan for continuity and progression and to identify both high attainers and those in need of extra help. It will be necessary for these 10 levels to be defined in such a way that they can be used consistently with the statutory statements for the end of each key stage.

Programmes of study

3. The programmes of study should indicate the range of content, skills and processes which pupils should be taught. The programmes of study should be related to each key stage. They should lay the foundation for the progressive development of skills and understanding in PE, ~~and have regard to the broad aims set out in the following paragraph.~~

4. PE in the school curriculum should enable pupils to acquire the knowledge and understanding needed to develop control of the body through taking part in a variety of physical pursuits. It should encourage the development of skills through practice and the deployment of those skills in sporting and recreational activities, whether in teams, groups or individually, and in dance. It should provide a foundation, in terms of knowledge, skills and understanding, for a healthy life at school and afterwards. Through team games and group activities it should foster both co-operation and competition. PE at school should provide an opportunity for those with particular sporting or dancing talent to be identified so that they may be encouraged to develop their gifts and, where appropriate, put in touch with those outside the school who can best help such development. Pupils' talents may also be fostered in extra-curricular activities such as school teams and dance clubs as well as through opportunities provided by local sports clubs. Consideration should be given to the accreditation of such activities.

Special educational needs

5. The Education Reform Act 1988 provides that where a pupil has a statement of special educational needs under the 1981 Education Act, the statement should specify any National Curriculum requirements, including assessment arrangements, which should not apply or should be modified for that individual pupil. In addition, Orders or regulations under the 1988 Act can define the cases or circumstances in which the application of the National Curriculum provisions should be modified or disapplied for any foundation subject. The Working Group should consider and advise on the adaptations that may be appropriate in the case of PE, especially for physically handicapped pupils.

Links with other subjects

6. The Working Group has dance within its remit and here the Group should liaise with the music Working Group so that their recommendations on dance and on music are complementary. Some

aspects of PE, in particular knowledge of how the body works and of the prerequisites of healthy living, provide links with health education and with science. PE also has links with PSE, careers education, citizenship, art and drama, and may promote mathematical understanding and linguistic development. Outdoor education as part of PE provides links with environmental education.

7. The Group will need to formulate recommendations for the great majority of pupils in key stage 4 who are not likely to take GCSE in PE or dance. In keeping with its general terms of reference, the Group's recommendations should be framed so as to allow schools maximum freedom in designing courses for such pupils. It should in particular allow for pupils to pursue one particular activity, such as keep fit or a particular sport. It should also allow for the possibility that PE will be combined with one or more other subjects including, in the case of dance, the other expressive arts subjects.

Ages and stages; time allocations

8. The Working Group should assume that pupils, other than any whose statement of special education needs under the Education Act 1981 specifies otherwise, will follow courses in PE throughout their compulsory schooling and that a few will take GCSE in PE.

9. The Group should plan on the basis that its recommendations should be deliverable on average in the equivalent of 3 periods of a 40 period weekly timetable during years 1-9 (ie normally primary school and years 1-3 of secondary school). The Group should not however assume that timetables will be organised in 40 period weeks. Beyond the 9th year - ie for pupils in years 4 and 5 of secondary school - the Group should plan for its recommendations to be deliverable in the equivalent of 2 periods a week and in the equivalent of 4 periods a week for those who take GCSE.

Assessment

10. The statutory assessment arrangements for PE will not include nationally prescribed tests (except in the case of GCSE examinations at the end of Key Stage 4). The Group should therefore assume that pupils' attainments in relation to the recommended targets will be assessed by the teachers themselves in the light of pupils' performance during the course of the key stage. The attainment targets which the Group recommends should be designed with this sort of assessment in mind.

GCSE

11. As indicated in paragraphs 7 and 9, it is expected that most pupils will not take GCSE examinations in PE. However, in defining the requirements for those that do, the Working Group may wish to take account of the existing GCSE syllabuses.

General principles

12. Generally in framing recommendations, the Group should endeavour to secure

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

- breadth and balance in the subject

- 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

- a contribution to the development of general personal qualities and competencies 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 and an ability to apply knowledge and use it to solve practical real life problems.

13. It will 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. Further guidance will be given on particular points to be considered in order to avoid unnecessary difficulties for children with special educational needs.

Implementation

14. In England Orders have been made under the 1988 Act requiring the core and other foundation subjects, including PE, to be taught from Autumn 1989 to most pupils for a reasonable time in each of the first three key stages (ie years 1-9). In Wales this requirement applies to core subjects from Autumn 1989; to foundation subjects from Autumn 1990. For pupils with statements of special educational needs the requirements will be introduced from Autumn 1990.

15. Statutory attainment targets and programmes of study for PE are likely to be introduced from Autumn 1992, starting with key stages 1, 2 and 3.

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FROM THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR WALES

CONFIDENTIAL

CT/3331/90

15 June 1990

Dear Mr Potter,

NATIONAL CURRICULUM HISTORY COMMITTEE FOR WALES: FINAL REPORT

Thank you for your letter of 21 May to Stephen Williams. My Secretary of State published the History Committee for Wales' report this week as agreed.

The Prime Minister asked that we think further about the testing of historical knowledge. Mr Hunt is quite clear that historical knowledge should be tested - and indeed the History Committee for Wales thought so too. They took the view that this could be achieved within the framework that the History Working Group devised, subject to a degree of simplification and clarification. We will need to see the advice which the Education Secretary has commissioned from the School Examinations and Assessment Council to see whether this is the case.

In the meantime my colleagues have talked to their DES counterparts about the other issues which the Prime Minister raised and we will write to you again when we are ready to put proposals for consultation.

I am copying this letter to John Ratcliff (Department of Education and Science) and Carys Evans (Chief Secretary's Office).

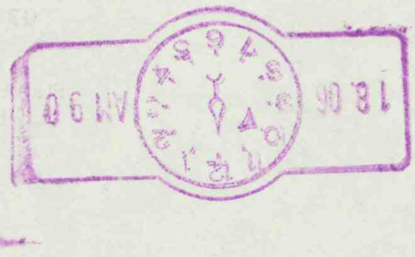
Yours sincerely

A E Coleman

ANNA E COLEMAN

Barry H Potter Esq
Private Secretary to
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1A 2AA

EDUCATION: Policy #25



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Our ref: 141

The Rt Hon John MacGregor OBE MP
Secretary of State for Education
and Science
Elizabeth House
York Road
London SE1 7PH

12 June 1990

RECEIVED 15 JUN 1990

Dear Secretary of State

Your letter of 3 April asked for Council's advice about the feasibility of the History Working Group's proposals for the purposes of assessment. In particular, you asked whether assessment against the attainment targets, as recommended in the report, would reliably reflect a pupil's level of knowledge within each study unit.

I attach a paper prepared by the Council on the basis of detailed consideration by our History Committee, responding to this request. The Council is convinced that the working group's proposals are both workable and sound for assessment purposes. The attached paper explains why we take that view.

We see the attainment targets taken together with the programmes of study as a basis for assessment at all key stages. In our view any sensible approach to assessment in terms of the four history attainment targets would require pupils to make use of appropriate historical knowledge in the course of demonstrating that they had attained the various levels.

We are confident that the assessment arrangements for the national curriculum, as they are being developed step by step, will match this requirement. I attach a short separate note about the way the system is developing across the various core and foundation subjects.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Secretary of State for Wales, to Duncan Graham (NCC) and Hywel Evans (CCW).

Yours sincerely

Philip Halsey

PHILIP HALSEY

MRF/PA1/126

THE FEASIBILITY OF THE HISTORY WORKING GROUP'S PROPOSALS FOR THE PURPOSES OF ASSESSMENT

ADVICE FROM COUNCIL

1. The History Working Group proposes that the historical information to be taught should be specified in the programmes of study rather than the attainment targets. It nevertheless asserts that assessment based on the attainment targets, which, in themselves, are not knowledge specific, will also properly assess a pupil's knowledge of the information outlined in the programmes of study. Consequently, it groups the four attainment targets into a single profile component entitled 'Historical knowledge, skills and understanding.'

2. The case for this approach is outlined in Chapter 3 and Annex A of the Report. The Council considers that these arguments, against knowledge as a separate attainment target, are cogent and well developed and provide a convincing case for the proposals. Even so certain aspects of the History Working Group report require clarification and further consideration needs to be given to those features of the proposals which might serve to indicate the advantages of this approach for the purposes of assessment in history.

3. The thrust of the History Working Group's argument, outlined in paragraph 2.6 and 8.5 of the report, that within the study of history knowledge, understanding and skills are indissolubly bound together, is accepted. It is possible to see knowledge simply as being concerned with the data of history – with dates, events, places and names – but this would be to identify only one part of what we mean by 'knowing history' and something which, by itself, is of limited value. It would be no more helpful than to claim that understanding consisted solely of the ability to give a definition of a particular concept, or that proficiency in the skill of interpreting an historical source need take no account of its specific context or the period from which it came. In history knowledge necessarily underpins our understanding and our ability to make sense of the historical records and is itself enhanced by the development of our understanding and growing proficiency in historical skills.

4. In part it is for this reason that we believe that the History Working Group is right to see knowledge infusing, and required by, all the attainment targets and not to identify it as a separate attainment target. Equally, the History Working Group would have been misguided had it suggested that the other two elements of their cone and helix (fig. 1 on page 6 of the Report) might be assessed against discrete attainment targets without any references to the knowledge through which they need to be developed. The infusion model which it has adopted, whereby each attainment target combines in varying ways elements of knowledge, understanding and skills, is the most effective approach.

5. As well as recognising the force of the argument that, in history, knowledge, understanding and skills are indissolubly linked, it is also important to be aware that the identification of specific items of information as the knowledge component of the attainment targets presents serious problems for assessment in history. The History Working Group identified two possible models for specifying information within the attainment targets, considered how these might be developed and concluded that both were unworkable in terms of history. These arguments, presented in 3.10 - 3.12 and Annex A of the Report, have beem examined closely and in the case of both models, we find the History Working Group's arguments convincing.

6. The History Working Group's first possible model consisted of a range of attainment targets each of which would have separate strands specifying an area of historical information together with the skills and understanding related to that information. Its second model identified a range of separate attainment targets related specifically to historical information with separate attainment targets for understanding and skills.

7. The History Working Group identified a range of problems with their first model. In particular, we agree with the points in A3.3 of the Report that difficulties are created if one confines understanding and skills to the information prescribed for particular levels, or if one confines pupils working at lower levels to particular areas of content.

8. However, at the root of the problem is the impossibility of establishing levels of knowledge within attainment targets on the basis of different items of information. The argument is well put in paras 3.2 - 3.6 and 3.12ii of the Report. We would simply wish to reinforce it. For assessment purposes it is necessary for attainment targets to be defined in terms of a hierarchy of progressively more demanding levels of attainment. Without this distinctiveness of the attainment targets and the proper sequencing of levels within them, accurate assessment and reporting of attainment becomes very difficult. The removal of information from its context renders it susceptible to only one judgement - is it or is it not known? It makes no sense, for example, to talk of levels of knowing in what year the Battle of Trafalgar was fought, or to assign knowing that date to any particular level. It is not possible to establish that knowing certain events or names presents greater difficulty for the learner than other items and therefore there is no basis for assigning particular items of information to specific levels. It is only when the information is placed in context and combined with understanding and skills that it becomes possible to establish a 1-10 developmental scale.

9. There are other difficulties involved in identifying a small number of key items of information for assessment purposes. Attempts by historians and others to develop a definitive list of key events or dates have highlighted the impossibility of agreement, the subjectivity of selection, the difficulty of separating what is indisputably fact from what is interpretation and the highly controversial nature of the whole exercise. There is also a political dimension which is effectively explained in 3.29 of the Report. The force of this particular argument should not be under-estimated.

10. A very significant consideration is the manageability of the History Working Group's proposals in terms of the general demands of National Curriculum Assessment. Any attempt to specify items of information in the attainment targets would have led to a very large and complex set of statements of attainment. By adopting its chosen model, the History Working Group has been able to keep the number of attainment targets and statements of attainment to a minimum. The model proposed by the History Working Group establishes 51 statements of attainment. This has to be compared with 413 in Science, 295 in Mathematics, 166 in Technology, 159 in English and the 269 proposed for Geography. The small number of statements of attainment that teachers have to cope with is further reduced when one considers the likely range of ability of the vast majority of pupils in each key stage:

Key Stage 1	(Levels 1 – 3)	15 statements of attainment apply
Key Stage 2	(Levels 2 – 5)	23 statements of attainment apply
Key Stage 3	(Levels 3 – 7)	28 statements of attainment apply
Key Stage 4	(Levels 4 – 10)	36 statements of attainment apply

The Council is particularly conscious of the need to work towards a sensible model of assessment across all subjects, particularly in the primary phase, and we recognise that the history proposals do make an important contribution in this area. For any assessment system to be feasible it must be manageable and, while there may be concerns about the wording of the actual statements (see below, para. 23), the proposals could provide an effective, economical and practicable basis for assessment.

11. The History Working Group's proposals also provide a flexible structure for the assessment of knowledge, understanding and skills which can be applied to <u>every</u> History Study Unit. The application of their proposed statements of attainment to each History Study Unit will involve in every case the need to identify those elements of historical knowledge that pupils will need to deploy, in the context of the particular assessment task, to demonstrate that they have reached the appropriate level in each of the attainment targets. In essence the attainment targets and statements of attainment can be regarded as templates which are not complete in themselves but which, when combined with each History Study Unit, produce a finished structure for assessment within that particular study unit. The History Working Group attempted to demonstrate this by including information from the History Study Units as exemplification for the statements of attainment. This attempt to indicate how the knowledge, skills and understanding combine together to create the basis for assessment tasks on the content areas is of only limited value and may actually lead to a misunderstanding that the statements of attainment are complete in themselves. In fact they will need to be related to the context of each particular History Study Unit. This will only be demonstrated effectively when schemes of work identifying assessment opportunities have been designed for each History Study Unit.

12. The flexibility of this structure is also appropriate for the unique circumstances surrounding history as a foundation subject. In no other subject is it proposed that there will be a different curriculum in England and Wales. If, as seems likely from the Initial Report of the History Committee for Wales, the Welsh history curriculum includes different information and additional History Study Units, it is important, for assessment and reporting purposes, that it is possible to make comparable

assessments on the two history curricula. The structure proposed by the History Working Group has the advantage of common statements of attainment assessed in different contexts. The result is a manageable system which allows a direct correlation of attainment and common form of reporting in England and Wales through the statements of attainment. Similar arguments would apply to history in Northern Ireland if the History Working Group's proposed structure were adopted as the basis for assessment in the Common Curriculum.

13. It is also the case that the use of a common set of attainment targets applicable to all History Study Units allows opportunities for choice and yet ensures that, whatever content is chosen, the same opportunities for attainment apply and reporting will be on a common basis. This is particularly important if School Designed History Study Units are to have both status and value. This model, applicable equally to a variety of contexts, has already been accepted for English and Technology and has been proposed for Modern Languages.

14. Finally, there are important elements of continuity between the proposals of the History Working Group and the format of current, and former, public examination syllabuses in history. In both, content is defined separately from those objectives which provide the basis for assessment of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills, but a knowledge of the content is the key to answering most questions. The effectiveness of this pattern of assessment is well attested by both HMI reports and evidence from scrutinies.

15. In the light of the various factors considered above, we conclude that the balance of the argument for locating historical content within the programmes of study is persuasive. There are valid reasons why the History Working Group should seek to avoid the problems and rigidity that would inevitably result from any attempt to define key items of information within the statutory attainment targets. The system the History Working Group proposes has the advantage of flexibility and manageability and will provide a feasible basis for the assessment of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills.

ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE WITHIN EACH STUDY UNIT

16. The Secretary of State particularly asked SEAC to consider whether assessment against the attainment targets, as recommended in the report, will reliably reflect a pupil's level of knowledge within each study unit. In order to address this issue, the three definitions of knowledge suggested by the History Working Group in para. 3.2 of its report have been carefully examined.

17. The History Working Group offers arguments for not specifying items of 'knowledge as information' and 'knowledge as content' within the attainment targets and for specifying that assessment should only be concerned with 'knowledge as understanding'. We have sympathy with the general thrust of these arguments and accept the History Working Group's position that information and content should only be specified in the programmes of study.

18. We would, however, wish to recognise and stress the distinction made by the History Working Group between content and information and would want to use that distinction more consistently than the History Working Group does. Information in history can be regarded, according to 3.2i of the report, as the basic data – events,

places, names and dates – whereas content is an area of study – a topic, theme or period – which encompasses an indeterminate amount of information. Much of what is described in the programmes of study as 'essential information' is more appropriately defined, on the History Working Group's own criteria, as 'essential content'. For example in HSU24, what is currently described as essential information includes 'The fall of the Bastille, 14 July 1789', which could be both information and content (because in treating this as a topic there would be a host of related information) and 'Social Structure in France before or after the revolution' which is a topic and thus, on the History Working Group's own definition, content. Careful study of the 40 History Study Units outlined in the report indicates that in most cases, (and in some, eg HSU19, all cases) the statements of 'essential information' are, in fact, statements of 'content'. This lack of clarity makes it difficult to accept some of the History Working Group's assertions about assessment of 'information'.

19. There are a number of such assertions in the History Working Group report. Each of these has been considered carefully and it is clear that some claim more than can reasonably be delivered by the assessment model proposed by the History Working Group. For example, in 6.4 of the report, the History Working Group suggests that 'assessment by the teacher and through SATs will demonstrate to what extent pupils know the essential historical information included in the programme of study'. Once it is recognised that what is described as essential information is, in fact, largely content, it becomes clear that no assessment system could effectively assess the extent to which a pupil had learned the indeterminate amount of information encompassed by the series of content statements. Tasks and schemes of work are traditionally based on particular areas of content, for example 'The Norman Conquest' (HSU 14). In responding to these tasks, pupils demonstrate their knowledge, on the areas of content that are assessed, by relevant recall, selection and deployment of information in order to fulfil the task/question set.

20. A number of schemes of work and a range of assessment tasks, related to the proposed attainment targets, currently employed by teachers and examiners for pupils in key stages 2, 3 and 4 have been analysed. Pupils' responses have also been scrutinised in order to ascertain the nature and amount of information which they had drawn upon to support their answers. This work effectively demonstrates that:

    i as the History Working Group recognises in 7.3 of the report, the more pupils know the greater their potential level of achievement. A large amount of factual knowledge is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for a high level of attainment. Pupils' level of understanding and/or skill and their ability to select the most appropriate and relevant information are the other crucial ingredients.

    ii within any History Study Unit assessment will enable the teacher to judge what and how much pupils know about the particular areas of content that are assessed.

    To assess all the proposed areas of content in every History Study Unit would, however, be unrealistic and would create an unacceptable burden of assessment. It has to be accepted, therefore, that it is not possible to guarantee that any particular item of information will necessarily be assessed.

21. Teachers will clearly need to select which areas of content are assessed. Greater guidance to teachers could be achieved by extending the focus section in each History Study Unit (see page 32 of the Report). At present the Focus section exemplifies particular ways in which each History Study Unit contributes to the attainment targets. One of the main roles of the programmes of study is to indicate 'the means of achieving the attainment targets'. This section could be developed to indicate those areas of content best suited to promoting pupils' attainment within each of the attainment targets. Establishing a clearer and more direct relationship between the attainment targets and the proposed content would serve to reinforce the interdependence of knowledge, understanding and skills. It would also provide a basis for a system which guaranteed that those areas of content which were particularly appropriate to the development of attainment were assessed. It has to be recognised however that it may be unreasonable to expect teachers to assess each attainment target in each History Study Unit.

ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS

22. SEAC has a specific remit to formulate assessment arrangements which ensure the effective assessment of the knowledge, skills and understanding in the attainment targets across the range of levels, key stages and abilities. Having concluded that the proposals do provide a feasible basis for assessment, the Council has considered what action it would need to take to ensure that the assessment was effective in this sense. A number of areas will require attention and these are outlined briefly below.

23. In the short term attention must be given to a detailed consideration of the attainment targets and statements of attainment. A number of points will need to be addressed. These include the clarity of the attainment target titles for teaching, assessment and reporting purposes, the allocation of strands to particular attainment targets, progression from one statement of attainment to another and the demands made at particular levels.

24. In the longer term, it will be necessary, as in all subjects, to collect examples of pupils' work which illustrate and give meaning to the various statements of attainment in order to achieve comparability in interpretations at a national level. These would effectively exemplify the kind and amount of knowledge, the skills and the understanding that pupils would need to display to achieve a particular level.

25. It will also be necessary to develop guidance for teacher assessment in key stages 1, 2 and 3 which take account of statements in Chapter 8 of the History Working Group's report and of our broader experience of National Curriculum Assessment. In particular it will be necessary to decide whether it is desirable and feasible to require teacher assessment in each attainment target in each History Study Unit or whether it is sufficient to require, as suggested by the History Working Group, para 8.19, that each attainment target is assessed at least once in the course of a year.

26. Furthermore, decisions will need to be made on whether such assessment should be tied only to the 'essential information'. The History Working Group in Fig 2 on page 32 of the report distinguishes between the 'essential information' which "offers a basis for assessment" and the 'exemplary information' which "is not part of the assessment process". This is an artificial distinction as much of the exemplary

information actually amplifies the statements of content which are included as 'essential information' (see above). In responding to tasks, pupils will draw information from both areas. The distinction, based on the perceived needs of assessment, is therefore not helpful for assessment purposes and may only lead to an unnecessary degree of prescription and a narrowing of the areas covered within each study unit.

27. Determining the factors that should shape the specification to SAT developers will be a further necessary task. SATs, whether statutory or non-statutory, must effectively demonstrate what pupils understand and can do, and show that they have appropriate knowledge. The comments of the History Working Group on SATs (paras 8.22 - 8.26) assume a model of SAT development that does not fit in easily with current developments in this area. They particularly need to be revised in the light of developments outlined in the Secretaries of States' letter of 9 April. Such issues will, of course, be addressed when the specifications for SATs in History are prepared. We are, however, confident that it would be possible to develop valid and reliable SATs within the broad structure outlined by the History Working Group.

28. There are also a number of issues concerning key stage 4 assessment. The Secretary of State's speech on 25 January 1990 has set in train development work by both SEAC and NCC. This will result in clear guidelines for foundation subjects, which in turn will require a serious reconsideration of the programmes of study for key stage 4 so that both the basic and GCSE models proposed by the History Working Group are viable courses which fit in with the proposed general requirements for this key stage.

29. Revised National Criteria for history within the context of the revised General Criteria will be prepared once orders are in place. These, reinforced by our approval procedures, will ensure that all syllabuses will be assessed by a combination of coursework and terminal examination, and that all pupils will be required to recall, select and deploy the knowledge they have acquired in response to a number of assessment tasks.

30. Finally it is recognised that important developmental work will need to be carried out in a number of areas. These include meeting the requirements of bilingual learners, of gifted pupils and of those with SEN.

31. There is clearly much work to be done to put effective assessment procedures in place. Nevertheless we are convinced that, within the structure proposed by the History Working Group, it will be possible to develop a valid assessment system which provides a sound assessment of all pupils' understanding, skills, and knowledge in history.

ASSESSMENT OF CORE AND FOUNDATION SUBJECTS

1. This note offers some general reflections about the application of the national curriculum assessment model, incorporating attainment targets calibrated across ten levels of attainment, to the various core and other foundation subjects. These reflections have been prompted by the Secretary of State's questions about history, but have more general implications for the development of the assessment system for the national curriculum.

2. The terms "attainment target" and "programme of study" are defined in very general terms in Section 2 of the Education Reform Act. It is becoming apparent from the subject working group reports, and the statutory attainment targets and programmes of study that follow them, that these terms are necessarily being applied somewhat differently to each of the various core and other foundation subjects of the national curriculum. Necessarily, because, while there is no doubt no one single right way of applying these terms to any one subject, many of these differences clearly have their origins in the distinctive natures of the individual subjects.

3. In Mathematics, ATs 1 and 9 are about the uses and applications of the knowledge, skills and understanding that comprise the other twelve ATs. There is much emphasis throughout on practical illustrations, applications and usefulness, while much of the content is concerned with abstract ideas and concepts and the language of mathematics.

4. In Science, AT 1 is mainly concerned with the skills associated with science and scientific activities; ATs 2–17 are largely concerned with the development and application of those skills together with the development of knowledge and understanding in specific science content areas; and the associated programmes of study set out appropriate requirements for teaching and learning experiences matching the attainment targets. One implication of this is that there is a particular range of knowledge and understanding which should be prescribed for all pupils, and in relation to which all pupils' attainments should be assessed. At Key Stage 4 this range is limited to Model B. Model A prescribes a wider range, strongly recommended but not required for all pupils.

5. In both Mathematics and Science there are relatively large numbers of attainment targets, and two profile components. In Mathematics each profile component comprises a group of ATs including the AT concerned with the use and application of the relevant knowledge, skills and understanding. In Science one profile component, comprising just AT1, is mainly concerned with skills; while the other profile component covers all the other ATs and science content. In English the terms profile component and attainment target are brought close together in that ATs 1 and 2 each constitute a whole PC and so does AT 3 in Key Stage 4. While AT 2, at the higher levels in particular, requires a substantial knowledge of literature, all three profile components are relatively content–free and skill–dependent.

6. In History the proposed four attainment targets are expressed in terms of understanding the concepts and interpretations of history,, and in terms of acquiring and evaluating historical information and communicating the results of historical study. The nature of these four ATs, taken together, has something in common with Science AT 1. They also comprise a single profile component. The programmes of study for each History Study Unit set out requirements for teaching and learning experiences. These correspond in some ways to the subject content of Science AT 2-17. There are also important differences. In particular, the Science AT 2-17 (or some of them for Model B in key stage 4) are for all pupils; while among the History Study Units there are various options - to this extent there is less emphasis on a single body of knowledge which all pupils should acquire.

7. In Technology, the four ATs for design and technology capability are all effectively content free. In each case they take the form of statements of what pupils should be able to do in terms of skills rather than statements of things they should know or understand. The non-statutory examples of related content areas and technological activities are not part of the attainment targets. The skills can be developed through work in a variety of content areas, and it is not considered necessary to prescribe any particular areas for pupils. The programmes of study require pupils to explore, to appraise and to design and make, rather than to acquire factual knowledge. As with Science and History, however, the programmes of study require teaching and learning experiences matching the attainment targets. Again the ATs have some features similar in kind to Science AT 1.

8. These differences of treatment seem reasonable to us. On the one hand they reflect intrinsic differences among the subjects and the ways in which they are and should be taught and learned. On the other we consider they are not so great as to make it inappropriate to use a single scale of ten levels to describe pupils' attainments in each of them across the age range 5-16. It does mean, however, that it would be wrong to look for exact equivalences between the attainments required for any specific level in one subject and another. Nevertheless, it will be important to provide for a reasonable approximation to such equivalence, especially where AT in different subjects relate to similar skills.

9. Across these subjects it seems to us that the emphasis in determining "levels" of attainment lies, and should lie, more in skills and understanding and the ability to use skill and understanding, together with relevant knowledge, rather than principally in the particular factual knowledge acquired. As pupils mature, their level of skill and understanding increases in degree and complexity. This increase both rests on, and requires, an increase in the total and range of knowledge they possess and can bring to bear on a particular question, issue or problem. It is the combined outcome of features of this kind that should be reflected in the scale of levels for the national curriculum.

The consultation exercise

1. Comments on the final report of the History Working Group (HWG) were invited from local education authorities (LEAs), and organisations with a particular interest in school history. These included the Historical Association, the Royal Historical Society, and the History Curriculum Association, representative bodies of teachers and advisors, Museum Officers and archivists. Copies were also sent to schools. Over 500 responses were received.

2. The overwhelming majority of responses welcomed the final report. Few did so without qualification, but most applauded its philosophy and the framework - the attainment targets and programmes of study - that it provided for the teaching and assessment of history.

Attainment targets and assessment

3. Support for the attainment targets was very widespread. All but a small minority supported the Working Group's position on knowledge. The Royal Historical Society was typical of many in its congratulations to the Group on the arguments in Chapter 3 of its report. Only three organisations, the History Curriculum Association, the Campaign for Real Education, and the Centre for Policy Studies, wanted a separate attainment target of some kind for knowledge.

4. A minority had detailed criticisms or suggestions : for example to merge AT2 and AT3. Several respondents commented on the difference between AT4 and the other three targets. The Historical Association, the Campaign for History in the Public Sector, and several LEAs suggested that AT 4 was redundant and could be combined with the other targets.

5. There was, however, significant concern about the statements of attainment. A number of respondents questioned the application of the ten TGAT levels to history - a subject not, they claimed, 'progressive' in the same way as science or mathematics. The Primary History Association was typical of those unconvinced by the Group's attempts to differentiate requirements at all ten levels. Others found the progression through levels unclear. Several commented that expectations at the highest levels were unrealistic : eg, that Level 10 of AT4 represented Ph D standard. A criticism was that the Group's work was not grounded in any reliable research on development and progression in the learning of history.

6. The Group's recommendation that all four attainment targets should carry the same weighting for assessment purposes generally went without comment or challenge, where it was not explicitly approved. But a very few critics - most notably the Curriculum Council for Wales - proposed that AT1 should carry a higher weighting than the other targets.

Structure of the History Course

7. The overall structure of core, optional and school-designed history study units (HSU,) was welcomed by almost all respondents. There was, however, criticism of the balance between the three kinds of unit, and the constraints on choice implied by the specified balance in each key stage. Several respondents favoured a smaller core, either with the general object of enlarging the scope for choice, or from dissatisfaction with the proportion of British History in the course : see paras. 20 and 21 below.

8. A significant number of respondents expressed concern over the number of HSUs from key stage 2 onwards, and especially in KS 2 and KS 3. There was equal concern - often from the same respondents - about the prescriptive nature of the structure. The NAHT was typical of a fairly wide school of thought in running the two themes together, it argued that 'this degree of prescription creates a rigidity which will impose unrealistic

constraints on the methods and approaches which teachers consider to be most appropriate' and went on to suggest that 'the way forward is to reduce the number of HSUs'.

9. A significant number of respondents, including the Historical Association, thought there was insufficient flexibility in the proposed framework, especially in KS 2 and KS 3. Flexibility was needed to match content to pupils' level of ability and maturity, exploit teachers' existing expertise, and take advantage of existing teaching resources.

10. The need for flexibility was also emphasised by many respondents concerned to place history within broader curricular frameworks, such as topic work or integrated courses. Primary schools in particular feared that the HSU structure was incompatible with the topic work which they claimed to represent best practice in KS 1 and KS 2. But the Northampton LEA spoke with a different voice representative of a minority :

> 'It is unfortunate that the layout of the report conveys the impression of a rigid model when closer examination reveals flexibility, particularly at key stage 2, which would permit schools to explore structures which reflect their particular curriculum philosophy, their expertise, and the interests and needs of their pupils.'

Detail within the HSUs

11. The great majority of respondents were concerned at the degree of detail within programmes of study. This concern was often related to a pessimistic assessment of the timetable space likely to be available for school history. A frequent comment was that the Wording Group's assumption of 10 per cent, or 3 or 4 periods, was quite unrealistic ; one hour or two periods was all that their LEA or school allowed, and no change could be expected.

12. Many respondents, especially teachers, were clearly alarmed that the HSUs included a whole page specifying both 'essential

information' and 'exemplary information', under the four PESC headings. A number made criticisms of the distinction between the two, along the lines of SEAC's critique : that it was arbitrary, and not related to any realistic model of assessment. There was a frequent complaint that if all the prescribed content had to be covered, teaching and learning would suffer ; there would be no time for work in depth and the development of historical skills. Some went on to argue therefore that the 'content' should be taken out of the realm of statutory prescription and indicated in non-statutory guidance.

PESC as a structural principle

13. The PESC categories were approved in principle by almost all respondents, in all categories, as a safeguard of breadth and balance in the teaching of history. Nevertheless, many had reservations about the rigid application of the formula to all HSUs, as a device for structuring prescribed content. Many - particularly among secondary school teachers - thought that it had contributed substantially to content overload and over-prescription. There were suggestions that the Working Group had felt obliged to fill in the columns, regardless of the HSU theme, and often with contrived results - for example unconvincing content under the 'culture' heading. The Historical Association urged the adoption of the Working Group's own caveat : that PESC should not be seen as a 'definite, rigid categorisation'. There was a strong LEA school of argument that the formula should be applied to a key stage as a whole - with the object of securing proper balance between the aspects or dimensions of history - rather than to the individual HSU.

Allocation of HSUs to each key stage

14. There was substantial criticism of the way in which HSUs were allocated by the Working Group to individual key stages, in terms of appropriateness, volume and specific content. Part of this reflected a view that the chronological structure of the course was over-rigid, with KS 3 pupils denied any induction into 20th Century history, for example - or KS 4 pupils a backward

look to the 19th Century.

15. HSU 1, for key stage 1, was generally welcomed as an admirable reflection of existing best practice, consistent with topic teaching methods. But there was widespread criticism of the 'change of gear', with all its implications for teaching style and approach, between KS 1 and KS 2. Many considered the HSUs for this key stage too intellectually demanding for the age range.

16. There was heavy criticism by the great majority of teacher respondents of the volume of content in both key stages 2 and 3. There was also much debate about the merits of the history study units allocated to each of these key stages. Many respondents expressed the view that the units for key stage 3 were dull and uninspiring.

17. Various concerns were expressed about key stage 4. The most significant of these concerned the perceived muddle over 'whole' GCSEs and 'reduced' courses. The Professional Association of Teachers described this as an 'impenetrable jungle'. The National Association of Head Teachers commented on the difficulties of planning within the overall framework of key stage 4. Some teachers expressed a fear that the availability of 'half GCSEs' would enable curriculum planners to resolve whole-school problems by not offering full GCSE history courses.

18. A significant number of respondents criticised the inflexibility of key stage 4, and the loss of expertise and resources built up in teaching courses such as Social and Economic history and Schools History Project. The two core units in this key stage also came under criticism. Several respondents commented on the significant gaps left in HSU 32 by the identification of three 10-year periods for study.

19. A variety of suggestions were made for the transfer of specific history study units between key stages. Several primary schools expressed a wish to continue teaching 'the Normans', for example. Others asked for the introduction of additional units.

Some of these requests originated from organisations such as English Heritage which wanted guaranteed emphasis on particular topics, in this case, prehistory.

Balance between British and other history

20. Opinions were divided on the balance between British, European and World history. Few argued that the final report gave insufficient weight to British history. Many thought that the balance was about right, but there was a school of about equal weight who thought that British history had been given too much prominence. This included a number of LEAs who criticised the balance as incompatible with their anti-racist or multi-cultural policies.

21. The critique of British bias extended in some cases to the individual HSUs, and the prescribed content within them. HSU 20, 'The British Empire at its zenith', came in for particular criticism, partly because its title was seen as value-loaded. Most of these criticisms focussed on the need to give more emphasis to the study of non-European cultures in their own right. They included complaints about the absence of HSUs that would have taught pupils from ethnic minority communities about their roots: eg, pre-colonial Africa.

22. The Historical Association and some LEA responses singled out the emphasis in key stages 2 and 4 on British history, and urged greater flexibility and choice.

<u>Chronology</u>

23. Many respondents entered the debate about how children gain an understanding of chronology. Most, however, were satisfied with the flexible approach offered by the History Working Group. Some urged that there should be more opportunities for revisiting earlier periods, especially for pupils in key stage 4.

24. There was a very widespread anxiety, especially from shire LEAs and their primary schools, about the problem of chronology

for schools with mixed age groups. Many made the point that schools in such a situation simply could not comply with a statutory injunction to teach HSUs in chronological order in KS2. Several individual schools described their own vertical grouping arrangements to illustrate the point.

Other issues

Resources

25. The most significant concern expressed by the great majority of respondents was about resources, echoing the view of the History Working Group (9.3). The CBI stated the commonly held view that 'resourcing is crucial to the success of these proposals'.

26. This concern was matched by a general appeal for sufficient and appropriate in-service training.

Special Educational Needs

27. Most LEAs commented on provision for pupils with special educational needs. They urged greater exemplification of how history can be made accessible to all pupils. Some also questiond a contradiction in the final report over assessment arrangements (8.36 and 8.38 urging a range of methods, 8.9 urging increasing written demands). One Language Support Service spoke for many respondents in supporting non-written assessments which would allow pupils with special needs and bilingual pupils to achieve their full potential.

Equal Opportunities: Gender

28. Several respondents expressed the view that the report gave insufficient weight to the place of women in history.

The whole curriculum

29. A small number of respondents were critical of the

circumstances under which the History Working Group operated in isolation from other curricular areas.

cc Prof. Griffiths
13/6

From: Mrs. Angela Rumbold, CBE, MP
Member for Mitcham and Morden

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON, SW1A 0AA
Tel: 01-399 9728

13/6

NOT GR

Prime Minister (1)

This makes some very good points: but it also might be recast to indicate the limits to change within the existing structure.

Content for a copy to go to Brian G. - bearing in mind his work on returning vets?

BHP 15/6 Yes please

Our Ref ACR/PP

12th June 1990

STRICTLY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Rt Hon Mrs Margaret Thatcher MP
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1

Dear Prime Minister

When we met on Monday you asked me why it is that we are receiving a poor Press on Education and what was the cause of this.

The answer is quite simple. The Educational establishment believe that they have made significant in-roads into Departmental thinking to reverse the thrust of the National Curriculum and the Education Reform Act. They, especially, believe that the delivery of testing and reporting has been undermined and that there is, on the horizon, a return to what they would call 'the good old days'. This, in turn, leads both the public and many of the good teachers to think that we have lost momentum and are incapable of reversing the poor standards in our maintained schools.

The solution is equally simple. In my view we should establish clearly that we want straightforward testing at relevant ages to give parents and the wider public the information about the standards in our schools.

Instead of the elaborate paraphernalia of Attainment Targets and Standard Assessment Tests, we should ask independent trusted people to design simple one hour or two hour written tests in each subject at points in the Curriculum when children are supposed to have covered specific ground. The results must be known to the parents.

The second message is that we should concentrate on the set subjects in the National Curriculum and stop giving credence to the 'cross curriculum' school of thought. This is yet another device to obscure the clear, and for the most part, well set out Curriculum programmes which have been designed for each of the subjects so far.

The third message is that we should press ahead with appraisal of teachers and also accelerate devolution of responsibility of the management of schools to the schools themselves. This gives Heads and Governors the opportunity to employ good teachers on a proper foundation of information about their capabilities and, at the same time, the schools the freedom to pay what they can afford and get value for money.

Constituency Office: 353 London Road, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 4BE Telephone: 01-648 4323

From: Mrs. Angela Rumbold, CBE, MP
Member for Mitcham and Morden

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON, SW1A 0AA
Tel: 01-399 9728

The final message is some statement of conviction about the importance of encouraging very high achievements from our cleverest children. Until the State schools are mature enough to be proud of their most able pupils they will not be a threat to even the most weakest Independent schools. Examination results and accelerated courses and entry into Higher Education remain the most persuasive evidence of high standards. Since thirty years of trying to change that attitude has, not only, failed, but actually ~~has~~ perversely reduced achievement, I believe we should abandon it immediately.

I regard it as imperative that we re-establish a very firm hand on the destiny of Education in this country. We have got all the cards at the present time to effectively remould State Education and the one fear that I have is that losing momentum will result in our opponents grabbing initiatives as and when they see the opportunity. I have discussed this matter briefly with the Secretary of State but more particularly with one or two people who are very closely connected with the delivery of the Curriculum and who are beginning to despair that we shall actually win the battle unless there is a much tougher try to achieve the goals that we all believed were the right ones in 1987. Forgive me for writing at such length, but I feel that it is very important to put solutions as well as problems to you.

Yours ever

Angela

ANGELA RUMBOLD CBE MP

Constituency Office: 353 London Road, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 4BE Telephone: 01-648 4323

2(A-B)

A very good and constructive paper. Will discuss

PRIME MINISTER

REFORMING LEAs

I attach a most interesting note from Brian Griffiths on reforming LEAs. The material is presumably mainly for the Manifesto; but as Brian points out, it links in with the wider reform of local authorities.

The note suggests two ways forward: further steps to erode the power of LEAs; and a "clean break" option, which would involve taking schools away from LEAs and putting them into various independent trusts.

I discussed these ideas with Brian, because of the link with local authority reform and the Community Charge. The second option is interesting: it would wholly replace LEAs; and it would thus facilitate the restructuring of local government. Further work on the options would need to consider the following:

(i) The trusts have to be formula funded: that will swap the present controversy about SSAs into new concerns about the formula to be applied for education.

(ii) Even with the radical option, one might want to question the residual role for LEAs (renamed as Special Schools Trusts). The idea of DES carrying out this role should not be rejected out of hand.

(iii) The section on capital expenditure needs to be considered further. With properly structured balance sheets, each of these trusts might attract part of their capital requirements from private sources rather than wholly from central government.

You will want to discuss these ideas with Professor Griffiths. He has some thought that DES officials would need to be brought

into the picture at some stage. (This could only be done on a named official basis.) In the meantime, it will be relevant to consideration of local government structure and any links to the community charge reforms.

BHP

Barry H. Potter
11 June 1990

a:\LEAs.dsg

1 (A-C)

PRIME MINISTER

8 June 1990

REFORMING LEAS

The education reforms which were proposed in the last Manifesto and embodied in the 1988 Act are beginning to show results.

- The national curriculum, especially in English, maths and science is a distinct improvement on the previous curricula of individual LEAs and individual schools.

- GM schools and CTCs are increasing in number and proving very popular.

- Local Management of Schools (LMS) is being introduced on a step-by-step basis and is popular with heads. They value the extra freedom and the increased transparency in funding arrangements.

Problems with LEAs

But problems are also beginning to emerge. All of these reforms weaken the traditional role of the LEA. Increased parental choice, new kinds of non-LEA schools and local management for LEA schools strike at the very heart of LEA control. LEAs have consistently opposed the formation of GM schools and CTCs - but especially GM schools - and sometimes in the most crude and vicious way. Teachers, parents and governors have been threatened by the LEA regarding future jobs, much greater funding to neighbouring schools etc. They have also attempted to frustrate LMS

B

by retaining as much as 50% of the schools budget for their own activities!

LEAs have effectively become mini-Soviets in the field of education - 'owning' schools, FE colleges and polytechnics; appointing and employing all teaching staff; planning education in their areas; providing directly most additional educational services in their areas; and setting standards in academic and other areas.

More than this LEAs have effectively become a major vehicle to express and further the interests of the 'producers' of education. Extending choice for parents therefore cuts right across the grain of their perceived raison d'etre.

If our reforms are to be carried further and show results the problem of LEAs need to be tackled. At present LEAs perform four major tasks:

- they 'own' county maintained schools;
- on the back of this they plan education provisions, including that of special needs;
- they provide advisory services to schools (curriculum advisers, psychological service etc) and other services such as school meals, sports facilities etc.
- they perform regulatory functions such as inspection, dealing with truancy etc.

Two Ways Forward

There are two ways forward:

(a) either we keep LEAs as at present but continue to

erode their areas of control;

(b) or we transfer the 'ownership' of county maintained schools from LEAs to trusts, transfer their other functions such as inspection to a national body and transform what remains into a different kind of body which is a local provider of special needs schools.

Alternative I: Eroding power of LEAs

This would involve such things as:

1. Providing independence for FE colleges either in a way similar to the polytechnics or by making them self-standing bodies in which 16+ students can cash vouchers.

2. Allowing all voluntary-controlled schools to change their status to voluntary-aided.

3. Creating further incentives for existing LEA schools to change to GM status (eg GM schools to own their sites, extension of GM status to primary schools with less than 300 pupils, direct establishment of GM schools through parental vote, change of character of school in less than 5 years).

4. Encouraging the growth of voluntary-aided CTCs.

5. Changing the law so that the Secretary of State has greater discretion in the decision over whether a school can switch to voluntary-aided status.

6. Giving LMS schools the right to be funded by a national formula, so that the LEA would not be able to retain

D

50% of funding if schools opted to provide certain of these services themselves.

Alternative II : Unbundling the LEA's

Ownership of Schools

This is the key to successful change.

Parents of existing county-maintained schools would be given the choice either to opt for GM status or to opt for independent legal status but within the domain of a schools trust.

The Trusts would be small and of different kinds. Some for example may be all the schools in a small town which at present are just part of a much larger LEA. Others may be existing C of E or RC voluntary schools within a diocese or part of a diocese which would have common interests. Others may be attracted to joining a Trust which was linked to voluntary aided CTCs and which wished to provide first class technical and vocational education.

Those schools which wished to be independent would opt for GM status.

Establishment of Trust Schools

The legislation would offer parents the right to opt for GM or Trust status. Governors of existing schools and those involved in existing educational foundations and with special interests in education would be invited to submit to the Secretary of State proposals for Trusts.

Alternatively the Secretary of State could announce that

he would be prepared to consider the foundation or extension of schools Trusts based on certain criteria, for example:

- schools within a geographical area;

- schools aspiring for example to a CTC type curriculum, music speciality;

- existing education foundations which would be prepared to invite other schools to be under their aegis (eg livery companies, churches, universities and colleges, companies - such as Woolfson Schools, Wellcome Schools etc).

Function of Trusts

The function of the Trusts would be to provide certain services to the schools - legal and accounting advice, help in developing good management practice, arrange training for teachers, governors etc - as well as providing a forum in which colleagues could discuss mutual concern.

Funding Arrangements

The funding formula for all schools would be determined nationally, though the formula would take account of local issues. Individual schools would pay the cost of the services provided by the Trusts. This would give the schools much greater freedom and cut out the current bureaucracy which has grown up in LEAs. The G.P.D.S. Trust involves a very small central staff who manage 25 excellent schools.

Provision of Special Needs

This would involve two problems:

F

(a) traditional special needs - physically and mentally handicapped, emotionally disturbed children and truants;

(b) due to sharp movements in population, some body would have to be a provider of last resort - to deal with those children in an area who had not been admitted to other schools.

These would both be best carried out by the remaining rump of the LEA. But to signal the complete change of emphasis which had taken place it should have a changed name such as the Special Schools Trust.

Alternatively these could be carried out by the DES - but such a move would invite an enormous growth in bureaucracy.

Capital Expenditure

One particular issue following the break-up of LEAs would be the determination of capital expenditure by individual schools and trusts.

Schools and trusts could be relied on to put forward individual proposals and the DES would then have to allocate funding after ranking them. The problem however is that the present structure of DES is not well suited to doing this. This might best be done by a Next Steps agency, at arms length from the existing department - formed from Whitehall highflyers - and with a skeleton staff in some regions. This would need very careful thinking, otherwise the whole venture could be effectively hi-jacked by DES. Alternatively DES could simply deal with the Trusts themselves.

Inspection of School

One remaining function of LEAs would be inspection of schools which might be transferred to HMI. This would again need careful thought in view of the HMI's track record.

Conclusions

These reforms would be very far reaching. The main results would be:

(a) local parents would be given a greater say in the kind of schools in their areas;

(b) all schools would have much greater freedom to manage their own affairs;

(c) we would get much better value for money as we would have struck at the heart of LEA bureaucracy.

(d) almost certainly some schools would return to being grammar schools, others to specialising in technical education, and church schools may find themselves strengthened with appropriate support from bishops;

(e) but no one could make the charge that funding was based in favour of any kind of school.

In addition these reforms would also have major implications for:

(f) the future of the Community Charge;

(g) the structure of local government.

Brian Griffiths

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

6-24YC

cc Press
P.O.



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n.b. P.M.
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12/6

Barry Potter
Private Secretary
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LONDON
SW1

8 JUN 1990

Dear Barry

JUDICIAL REVIEW OF DERBY CTC

I attach a briefing note on this issue which is likely to hit the press over the weekend.

The key point is that the Secretary of State has decided to consult Derbyshire, and 3 other local education authorities, on proposals to establish city technology colleges, even though he has no legal obligation to do so. He has taken his decision in the light of legal advice that a challenge brought by Derbyshire against his earlier decision not to consult, would be likely to result in victory for the LEA.

While the issue is immediately about a small part - 3 projects - of the CTC programme, it clearly raises a major issue of principle and I am therefore giving this letter and the attachment a wide circulation.

Copies go to the Private Secretaries to the Secretary of State for the Environment, the Secretary of State for Wales, the Secretary of State for Scotland, the Chief Secretary, the Solicitor General and to Sir Robin Butler.

Yours sincerely

Stephen

S T CROWNE
Private Secretary

6-23

JUDICIAL REVIEW OF DERBY CTC
NOTE FOR NO 10

1. The Derbyshire Local Education Authority has been granted leave to apply for an order to quash the Secretary of State's decision to support the establishment by the Landau Foundation of a City Technology College (CTC) in Derby. The essence of the case is that the Secretary of State ought to have consulted the LEA before reaching his decision upon the CTC, since it so closely affects them as the main providers of education in the city.

2. The advice of Treasury Counsel, endorsed by the Solicitor General, is that a Court would most likely find that the Secretary of State should have consulted. The Secretary of State has therefore decided to concede the case and to proceed immediately to consultation with the LEA and with others with an interest. In the light of this he will take a fresh decision. The consultation exercise will be launched today (Friday 8 June) and will be the subject of a press release.

3. The case would not have been decided before October and meanwhile the LEA would almost certainly have obtained a stay of action to be effective until then. Such a delay would have meant the loss of the proposed 1991 opening of the CTC, which is to be purpose built. While there is no legal obligation to consult before entering into an agreement to establish a CTC, by conceding now, and allowing 6 weeks for consultation and consideration, the Secretary of State retains the potential to adhere to the original timetable should he take a decision in favour of the CTC.

4. Counsel's advice is that other CTC proposals at the same or an earlier stage as Derby should be subject to the same consultation process. The Secretary of State has therefore decided to consult the LEAs and others on proposals for CTCs in Telford (sponsored by the Mercers Company and Tarmac plc) and

Wandsworth (sponsored by ADT plc). The timetable for consultation and decision will be identical to that for Derby. In each case the sponsors have been kept fully informed and support the line adopted.

5. The issue does not affect other parts of the CTC programme which continues to make excellent progress.

3

10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

Following your meeting with Mr Waldegrave, I commissioned the attached notes on three issues:

(i) Local management of Schools

(ii) Assessment of 7 year olds

(iii) Effect of charge capping

DT 4/6

LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS

FORMULA FUNDING

Local Management of Schools (LMS) requires an objective, open and fair basis for the allocation of funds to schools; historical patterns of spending and subjective judgements are being eliminated. The bulk of funds are to be allocated in relation to pupil numbers and ages.

This is fairer: similar schools with similar numbers of pupils should receive similar funding. Pupil-led funding also provides schools with a clear incentive to attract and retain pupils by offering the best possible education.

With pupil-led funding, the individual pupil unit of resource will reflect the average costs of staff for that pupil age group in that particular authority.

The other side of the equation is the costs that are charged to school budgets. Some are arguing that, given pupil-led funding, schools should only have to meet a notional or average salary bill for their teachers rather than the actual costs. But to do so would be to abandon the accountability which is at the heart of good budget management. Governors and headteachers should be aware of the cost implications of taking decisions, thereby giving them an incentive to manage their budgets more effectively. Governors will increasingly have discretion over individual teachers' salaries - for example over awarding incentive allowances, accelerated increments, and the use of local scale extensions. Governors should be financially responsible for these decisions, so schools should therefore be charged their actual costs, including actual salary costs.

TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

But there are strong transitional arrangements, and room for flexibility for LEAs to take advantage of if they wish to do so. First there is a general four year transitional period to smooth the introduction of formula funding. The transition period can also be extended in the case of individual larger schools, not eligible for the small school protection, which are facing particular difficulties because of high inherited salary costs. Second, the Government has recognised that small schools may lack flexibility to cope with high staff costs. Consequently LEAs were allowed in their formulae to adjust the budgets of small schools - with less than ten teachers - to take account of their actual staff costs. This would mean that up to 75% of all schools would be eligible for some salary protection if the LEA chose to take advantage of it - by no means are all of them doing so.

TEACHER REDUNDANCIES

Press articles have suggested that the Government's policy on salary costs is causing schools difficulties with their budgets and giving rise to teacher redundancies. Many schools and most

unions have a vested interest in stoking this up. The effect of this aspect of LMS policy has been greatly exaggerated and some of the examples given have been grossly misleading.

In fact there are a number of reasons why a school might be facing a budget shortfall - in particular declining pupil numbers - and it is far from clear that meeting actual salary costs will be the dominant factor. Formula funding is intended to correct anomalies in resourcing which stem from the past. Schools which have been more generously staffed for given age groups than others will find themselves having to make reductions. Others will make equivalent gains.

Governors of schools with delegated budgets make staff appointment and dismissal decisions. In the past, LEAs have dealt with staff surpluses at one school by compulsorily redeploying those staff to other schools with vacancies. This is how they have been able to have "no redundancy" policies. Now, LEAs will not be able to redeploy staff to schools with delegated budgets unless the governors agree. In 1990-91, only 1 in 8 schools have delegated budgets, so LEAs can still compulsorily redeploy staff in the remainder. But the number of delegated budgets will increase sharply over the next two years as LMS is phased in.

One of the reasons for giving governors more staffing powers is to let them choose the best candidates in the market. It would not be right to deny schools which are taking on teachers the choice between a redeployed teacher and a recruit. Consequently there may be some redundancies. But what counts is the total number of posts available and the quality of those who will fill them.

Ministers have made a public commitment to monitor the practical outworking of LMS and see if the policy does need any changes in the light of experience.

PRESENTATION

Ministers' reasons for pupil led funding are now widely understood. The public argument has now shifted to criticism of schools having to meet their actual salary costs. Fears of redundancy are expressed.

In none of the cases of teacher redundancies reported in the press so far has the actual salary costs policy been relevant though it has often been blamed. Ministerial articles and speeches and ~~in~~ letters to national education figures have reinforced the true position.

The most notable success in terms of gaining coverage has been for Ministers' views on the proportion of resources retained by LEAs for central management and therefore withheld from schools: the Daily Telegraph printed an article by the Minister of State on this in late March, and it was followed up by reference in the Secretary of State's speech to the Secondary Heads Association in April.

The Secretary of State's speech to the National Association of Head Teachers on 1 June continues the strategy and goes into some depth in explaining the reasons why budgets may not be as large as every school would wish. It goes on to make a plea for an informed debate on these issues, with a promise to review the policy and make changes if necessary.

There is now some encouraging evidence that the message is beginning to get through. The Times Educational Supplement carries two articles on 1 June (copies attached) which include some useful points. The leader article states that the policy on actual salary costs is "now serving as a convenient whipping boy for those unwilling to face up to the realities of falling rolls and surplus places." The front page article carries the same sentiment, although under an unhelpful headline.

Some lines to take follow.

LINE TO TAKE

Q. Will the Government admit that some [or many] teachers will be made compulsorily redundant this term?

A. In the state system there are over 400,000 teachers in about 24,000 schools. Inevitably in a system so large and diverse some schools have too few teachers, others too many. I cannot rule out the prospect of redundancies this summer, but demand for teachers remains strong. Predictions of large numbers of redundancies have never proved true in the past.

Q. Has not LMS made redundancies more likely by preventing compulsory redeployment?

A. I do not think it is right to deny schools which are taking on teachers the choice between a redeployed teacher and a recruit. What counts is the total number of posts available and the quality of those who will fill them. There is no necessary virtue in protecting teachers available for redeployment at the expense of others seeking work.

Q. Isn't the policy of charging school budgets actual salary costs leading to teacher redundancies?

A. There are many reasons why a school's budget may not be as large as the governors and head wishes. There is the proportion of money held back by the LEA on its own spending; there is the balance between primary and secondary sectors; there is changing pupil numbers; and then there is the correction of historic inequities where some schools have been unfairly supported at the expense of others. Those schools may have to make budget reductions - this has nothing to do with charging real or notional costs against school budgets.

THE TIMES
EDUCATIONAL
Supplement
Pr House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX. Tel 071-253 3000

rents and children. The chance to experi-ent with ideas and organization has brought some dedicated educationists, and some ieprints are being put into practice that uld soon be worth a transfer.

The CTC initiative has failed as an industrial oney-spinner and it is too soon to know iether it will prove an educational winner for e students. All the same, there is now enough idence to look at both sides of the profit-and-s account, and News Focus does that this ek (pages A14–17).

There are few generalizations to be made, cause so far each new CTC has had to hack t its own lonely path. That flowed from the litical imperative. The priorities were to emble site and sponsors, and leave the ucational details in Mr Baker's glossy design be filled in by the people on the spot. At lihull, it was the principal, Ms Valerie agg, who created Kingshurst CTC alone, m scratch, while a curious world looked er her shoulder. At Nottingham, it was the oject director, Mr John Ramsden, who set Djanogly, well before Mr Matt Andrews s appointed principal. Only now are the neers finding time to share experiences with h other, let alone outsiders who do not want know.

Some of the first lessons may be taught by businessmen involved to the Department Education itself. It has been deemed politic, example, to try to prove that the CTCs ild be built and equipped for the same cost ny ordinary school (except that no one else uld have built a new school where they did t need the places). But DES accounting thods shocked the businessmen (no built-in preciation on building budgets – no wonder window-frames rot after two years), and bottom line on equipment was also met h disbelief. The information technology pate centred on whether computer systems uld be chosen for their educational soft-re, or their business compatibility. All these uments ought to have useful repercussions oughout the system.

One principle which the CTCs so far have ck to is mixed-ability. There is little evi-ice to justify the creaming suspicions. They at the bottom 80 per cent of the ability ge (on the assumption that the top 20 per t is already taken care of) with ethnic and graphical, as well as ability, quotas. Both nisters and the colleges themselves insist t the only valid educational measure of cess will be on value-added scales, rather than raw examination results. The one experiment already closely watched is Valerie Bragg's post-16 qualification revolution. We have yet to see whether students or teachers will adjust to the longer days and terms designed to cram in extra technology beside a national curriculum diet. But, as our News Focus report shows, many teachers have been sufficiently drawn by the open options to brave opprobrium (and non-union terms) to try out a different climate.

Sir Cyril Taylor has been driven by Treasury and industrial indifference to try the voluntary-aided route where he can find local authority blessing. The irony is that CTCs were launched without that blessing, in direct opposition to those now begged to supply it.

The CTC venture is built on such gross financial inequity, whatever the subsequent funding, that it could hardly fail to cause bitterness in the neighbours it was designed to show up. That does not mean that we should not look carefully at what it is achieving, if only to make best use of the experience in any subsequent phase, on a more level footing with locally-managed schools.

TRANSFER BLUES

There is a grim irony about a rising tide of teacher redundancy (page 1) alongside the desperate scramble going on elsewhere to secure sufficient staff. This paradox was underlined in Kent this week. The news that experienced teachers in the county pool have been declared surplus to requirements coincides with the announcement that the authority is seeking 50 untrained entrants to the profession to embark upon the licensed learn-as-you-teach scheme to plug staffroom gaps.

Of course, the experience or specialisms of those about to be dispensed with may not match up with the vacancies. Mobility may be a factor. Nor are governors in LMS schools bound any longer to give preference to those up for redeployment.

No complete picture of the total number of redundancy notices issued at the end of the first half of the term can yet be assembled. But forced redundancies anyway are only the tip of an iceberg of reluctant resignations, unsought redeployment and early retirement. While these do not carry the opprobrium of a sacking, they still represent reductions in the total teaching force. Even a redeployment means a non-replacement.

Local management of schools is widely indicted for this wastage of scarce talent. And the Government's doctrinaire insistence on a funding formula based on actual, rather than average, salary costs is frequently held to be the main offender.

What formula funding has done is to reduce an authority's ability to cushion schools from the financial consequences of overstaffing. Where authorities have fudged and dithered or bought their way out of conflicts with the unions over redundancies, governors now find it left to them to take the tough decisions necessary to balance staff and pupil numbers and curriculum requirements. In such circumstances, what may be the marginal effects of higher-than-average salaries in stable staff-rooms are now serving as a convenient whipping boy for those unwilling to face up to the realities of falling rolls and surplus places.

But whether or not the average salary bill formula has cost experienced teachers their jobs, it may well put them at a disadvantage when it comes to finding another in competition with probationers and those lower down the scale. And some authorities' LMS schemes have made the conservation of their teaching force by redeployment more difficult than it might have been; something teacher unions locally should have picked up during last year's consultation period.

The Department of Education and Science's rules for formula funding allowed authorities to protect the additional salary costs of staff redeployed after April 1 this year for an indefinite period. Kent, for instance, is one of the authorities which opted to taper off that protection over five years; some others apparently offer no protection at all.

It remains to be seen now whether individual heads and governing bodies will be any better at managing the teaching force. Will they be willing or able to give priority to those up for redeployment when appointing? Will the winners under the formula see any mutual interest in job security as some unions suggest, as an investment, perhaps, against the day when they too may become losers and wish to see staff redeployed? Will a strike at the unlucky school down the road do the trick, or would combined pressure from local unions and authority work better? Or will they prefer to use financial flexibility to reward and retain those deserving teachers they already have on their staff?



be solved by making science and maths more manageable in the primary phase.

The national curriculum is not for clever undergraduates with A-level history. The bulk of national curriculum history is for the 5 to 11 age group and will be delivered for the most part by teachers who are not history specialists and who also have to teach science, maths, technology, English, PE, RE, geography, art and music.

The History Curriculum Association talks as if historical knowledge is fixed, like a star in the firmament. This is not true. Evidence is always coming to light to suggest new perspectives on the past. Supposing it was discovered that in 1605 the Government had planned the Gunpowder Plot in order to discredit Catholics and that one of the conspirators had been paid? This would show how vital the second attainment target was for the achievement of true knowledge.

Much of what historians write is interpretation



Window of opportunity: the exam season is underway at the 130-year-old Cheltenham Ladies College. Story and more pictures, page B2

Drastic LMS job cuts confirmed by councils

Almost 1,000 teaching jobs are to be shed in 15 local education authorities this summer. The figure for the whole country is likely to be much higher but the number of compulsory redundancies will be far lower than was feared.

A sample survey conducted by *The TES* this week suggests that the cuts will fall hardest on full-time supply teachers, with at least two councils planning big reductions in their permanent supply pools.

Many l.e.a.s blame the Government's local management of schools initiative for forcing them to speed up their plans to take out surplus school places created by falling rolls.

But *TES* inquiries also appear to show that there will be far fewer compulsory redundancies as a result of LMS than predicted by the teacher unions, who claimed last year that thousands of teachers would lose their jobs.

Forty-two teachers were expected to be issued with compulsory redundancy notices in the 15 authorities surveyed. But teacher unions in the five l.e.a.s concerned (Barnsley, Kent, Nottinghamshire, Oldham and Surrey) put the figure at 95.

Part of the uncertainty over precise numbers may be due to the fact that it is for the governors of locally managed schools to decide if a teacher is surplus to requirements.

Teacher leaders in Nottinghamshire, where 200 jobs are threatened, said they had negotiated the number of compulsory redundancies down to the "high 20s".

Some l.e.a. officers admitted privately that they were "putting off the evil day" by avoiding compulsory redundancies in the hope that the cuts they wanted would be mopped up

by Ian Nash

through more voluntary redundacies, redeployment and early retirement.

Sunderland is abolishing its supply pool of 50 teachers. More than half have been redeployed but 20 have been served with protective redundancy notices, giving the l.e.a. the option of sacking them if they cannot be redeployed.

Special schools must also shed the equivalent of 10.5 full-time equivalent teachers. Mr Alan Butterworth, deputy director of education for Sunderland, said: "The authority is using its best endeavours to re-allocate teachers, but it cannot require other schools to take them on."

Kent intends to cut 140 posts and will reduce its supply pool from 50 to 25. In theory, there should be no problems in redeploying staff since it has 300 vacancies to fill and is in fact advertising for 50 licensed teachers. Education director Mr Roy Pryke said a "clearing house" was being set up for anyone out of work due to closures, local management and reorganization.

Northumberland will shed 60 posts through early retirement, rather than the 40–50 it was expecting to lose, because of LMS. Cumbria too had agreed 70 early retirements but is likely to increase the number under the pressure of local management.

Surrey announced that it had whittled down the number of compulsory redundancies from 10 to 8 and a spokesman confirmed that "these are due to LMS, there are no other major factors in play". It expects to lose a maximum of 55 posts, but 42 of the teachers involved are to take voluntary redundancy.

Comment A21

Techno out the

Teachers and pupils have sv technology colleges with for jobs and places.

School staff have been w prospect of better wages, bu equipment. The CTCs app weathered criticism from ions and opposition politici

More than 800 teachers 12 posts at the Bradford CT due to open in Septembe

The Labour-controlled having to shed 230 teachers cash cuts made by the pre servative administration.

Mr John Ryan, the city's chairman, said: "If the CT offer extra pay then tea naturally want to apply, optimistic that most would w in the state system."

It is up to the CTCs the decide whether to offer abo salaries. The Macmillan Middlesbrough pays only th rates but it has not impos strike" rule – unlike the N and Bradford colleges.

According to the City T College Trust there were 40 tions for 17 jobs at Macmilla 13 teaching posts at Djanog tingham and 125 for the 28 hurst in Solihull.

They appear to be popula

TES opinion pages

Opinion; Comment; Platform; Personal A20, 21



Brassed off in Barnsley A6



Etonian values in state schools A8

Taking stock: Inside the CTCs A14-17



Opting out: Odd one out

ASSESSMENT OF 7 YEAR OLDS

1. Assessment is integral to the National Curriculum. The Secretary of State is required by law to establish arrangements for assessing pupils in each of the foundation subjects at 7, 11, 14 and 16.

2. The first national assessments of 7 year olds in English, mathematics and science will be in Summer 1991. Standard national tests will contribute substantially to these assessments. Three different prototypes of the tests have been tried out in a sample of 2% of primary schools nationally this Summer specifically to find out whether they are manageable for teachers and rigorous as tests.

3. The exercise is currently being evaluated by the School Examinations and Assessment Council which will report its findings to Ministers. First indications are that the tests were successfully completed in most schools, although some teachers have found them too demanding in the time available. The tests developed for 1991 will take on board the lessons of the pilot and be slimmed down as necessary to ensure manageability. The Secretary of State has made it clear that Ministers will be examining the results of the pilots with great care' including consulting teachers' representatives as appropriate.

<u>What should the Government's line be?</u>

4. Assessment in all the other foundation subjects for 7 year olds comes later and will be less onerous on teachers. They will not involve standard national tests but be based on teachers' assessment. This decision by the Secretary of State has done much to reduce teachers' concern about overload.

5. The National Curriculum assessment provides the key to better teaching and higher standards by:

- enabling teachers to identify the strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils in relation to clearly defined national standards and to act on them;

- providing the basis for reporting to parents on their children's attainments and for monitoring the performance of schools and education service more generally.

6. We need also to get across that the assessment arrangements themselves are being phased in over a number of years and only after extensive trials in schools to find out what works and what is manageable for teachers.

7. A "line to take" for PM's Questions is annexed.

<u>Getting the message across</u>

8. Ministers have made National Curriculum assessment a central theme of a sequence of recent major speeches, most notably the

Secretary of State's address to the annual conference of the Assistant Masters and Mistresses Association in April. There are plans to publish this speech and to send it to all primary and secondary schools.

9. Opportunities will be taken to get across assessment messages in future Ministerial speeches. And publicity material for parents is planned to coincide with next Summer's first assessments of 7 year olds in English, mathematics and science.

8

ANNEX

TESTING OF 7 YEAR OLDS: LINE TO TAKE

Assessment is the key to raising standards in schools. Without assessment teachers cannot gear their teaching to the needs of individual pupils and schools cannot report on children's progress to their parents. That is why it is absolutely right to test 7 year olds in English, maths and science.

[If pressed on the burden of testing for teachers]

Of course assessment must be manageable. That is exactly why we are being so careful to try out different approaches in schools. The whole point is to develop assessment methods which support teaching and learning.

AM-7.PLN

3

Chargecapping and Teacher Reductions

1. 19 of the 21 capped authorities are LEAs. Mr Patten is currently considering appeals by authorities for alleviation of caps. Teacher post losses and teacher redundancies will depend wholly on how the authorities decide to adjust their spending to their caps.

2. Some authorities have referred specifically in their appeals to likely teacher redundancies. That total is around 1,500. This figure would increase, however, if allowance was made for authorities who had only referred to redundancies generally and for the long lead-times involved in achieving teacher redundancies. On the other hand there must be a certain amount of "worst scenarios" in the cases being put by the authorities at this stage; it is not clear that authorities have allowed fully for scope for reductions in numbers without redundancies, and experience with ratecapping suggests that actual redundancies are likely to be lower than the sum total predicted by the authorities at this stage. But it seems likely that there will be some, which ~~is~~ are bound to be given a high media profile.

3. DOE advise that for legal reasons it is not possible for Ministers to indicate how authorities might achieve their caps and thus criticise the figures for likely redundancies being paraded. Some of the authorities involved are not high spenders on education, but again Ministers cannot say that in those LEAs cuts should come from other spending. Teachers cannot be compulsorily redeployed from one LEA to another, but in any case some of the LEAs involved, eg the London boroughs, have teacher recruitment problems.

4. Bull points on the education implications of capping have been agreed with DOE. These are attached. Ministers are taking every opportunity to get across these positive points.

5. DOE's strong advice is that Ministers should not be drawn into commenting further on any specific hypothetical service implications of capping.

Chargecapping

Bull Points (Education Implications)

1. The Government made it quite clear when the local government grant settlement was announced earlier this year that it would not hesitate to cap authorities which budgeted to spend excessively.

2. Authorities have only been selected for capping if they are planning to spend in total very considerably more than the level set as appropriate by Government (the SSA).

3. The education component for each authority's SSA is its share of a total for education spending for 1990-91 of some £15 billion. That figure represents an increase of over 9% on the comparable grant related expenditure (GRE) based total for 1989-90.

4. The method of distributing this £15bn total of education spending between authorities was only decided after thorough and detailed discussions with the local authority associations.

5. The Secretary of State for the Environment has made clear that on the basis of the information before him the proposed caps are reasonable and appropriate in all the circumstances of the authorities concerned, and will enable the authorities to run their services at a reasonable level.

6. The authorities concerned have had the opportunity to make representations to Mr Patten about their caps and he is considering these very carefully.

7. Capping decisions are taken on the basis of an authority's spending on all services together, not its spending on individual services. It is a matter for authorities themselves to decide how to adjust their planned expenditure in response to the

capping proposals. They will of course wish to look very carefully at their spending priorities in relation to the services they provide.

8. There was capping under the previous rating system. At the time of ratecapping scare stories were promulgated about the anticipated disastrous effects on services. When in practice ratecapping was imposed on individual authorities and they had to take and implement decisions as a result, these scare stories were shown to be groundless.

BRIEFING FOR PRIME MINISTER: EDUCATION GUARDIAN ARTICLE ON JOHN SPENCE HIGH SCHOOL, NORTH TYNESIDE

EFFECTS OF THE INTRODUCTION OF LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS

Line to take

The purpose of local management of schools is to fund schools fairly, principally according to the numbers and ages of their pupils, and to give them more scope to make their own decisions about spending. Many schools are enthusiastic about this. But there may be some difficult choices because resources are not unlimited. Local authorities need to look very carefully to see if they could be delegating more to their schools.

Background note

1. The John Spence school loses under the pupil driven effects of North Tyneside's LMS formula, but only slightly. The indicative figures in the LEA's scheme submission last Autumn suggested that the school would lose about £3,500 overall - or around 0.3%. However since then the LEA took a decision to reduce its schools' budget by about 3% in real terms. Consequently a small loss under level funding became a large loss under reducing resources.

2. The article states that the school is having to shed 9.3 teachers from a staffing force of 49.7. But on the LEA's own figures for 1990-91, the loss due to LMS is about £11,600 - or around 1% of the school's budget. So even if there were no LMS formula, the school would be just £11,600 better off - equivalent to less than one teacher.

3. The Authority is subject to charge capping but their overspending is not heavily on education. The budget for 1989-90 was about 9% above the GRE assessment, against an average overspend of 5%. Seperate briefing on capping issues accompanies this.

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4 June 1990

Dear Andrew

GOVERNMENT'S EDUCATION POLICIES

Your letter of 1 June asked for a note on three issues in the field of education where the Government has recently come in for particular criticism.

The attached Annexes cover the issues in the order you raised them. I also enclose copies of speeches made by the Secretary of State to the Annual Conferences of the AMMA in April, and of the NAHT last Friday.

Yours sincerely

JOHN RATCLIFF
Private Secretary

SPEECH TO NAHT CONFERENCE: 1 JUNE 1990

NATIONAL CURRICULUM IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Pleased to be here. Thanks for inviting me.

Many different ingredients go to make up a good school. But it is no coincidence that in charge of the best schools you always find a very effective Headteacher. Of course it is not the only factor, but it is a vital one. The point has been emphasised in a number of HMI documents - such as Ten Good Schools, Aspects of Secondary Education and the ILEA Junior School Report.

The importance of the Headteacher and of Deputy Heads has been reinforced by our reforms. The devolution of responsibility and autonomy to individual schools, coupled with the requirement to introduce the National Curriculum, gives your role a prominence even greater than in the past.

I should like today to look particularly at progress with two of our reforms - the introduction of the National Curriculum in primary schools, and the introduction of Local Management of schools. I make no apology to this Association for focussing my remarks about the National Curriculum on the primary phase, but I believe that many of you who work in secondary schools will recognise the common principles which inform our approach to the National Curriculum throughout the school system.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM

I know that Heads and Deputies, including many of your members, are concerned to get the best out of the National Curriculum. I respect that concern. It is a mark of your professionalism and determination to do your best for your pupils. And no one would deny that implementation of the National Curriculum will require effort and commitment from everyone for some years to come.

So I have taken very seriously the representations that your Association and others have made about burdens on teachers. I am clear that the demands we make must be realistic, reasonable, and supportive of effective teaching. They must not overload or unduly confine teachers. I hope that my recent announcement about assessment will have reassured you that it is not to be the vast burden weighing down on primary schools that some had feared. Statutory standard assessment tasks will be confined to the core subjects for 7 year olds and almost certainly for 11 year olds as well. Children's progress in other foundation subjects will be based on teachers' own assessments within broad guidance from the School Examinations and Assessment Council and supported by non-statutory standard tasks, which will be available to teachers to use as they judge appropriate in assessing their pupils.

My intention is to ensure that the National Curriculum is manageable and flexible. I am keeping implementation closely under review to ensure this. That is, for example, why I decided to simplify the Annual Curriculum Return and to halve the number of returns which schools will have to make. I estimate that this initiative alone will save some 150,000 sheets of paper each year.

But the underlying principles of the National Curriculum are not in question. As I go around the country, I am impressed that primary heads and teachers are keen to follow the model of good practice which the National Curriculum represents. I meet many who welcome the attainment targets and programmes of study that are being introduced in the core subjects this school year. They see them as a valuable framework which will help teachers to make the best of their own professional approaches, styles and expertise. Their enthusiasm and industry in incorporating the requirements into their current programmes of work are very encouraging. And the evidence from the regular progress reports I am receiving from HMI are encouraging too, such as the recently published HMI report based on visits to 100 primary schools last autumn. It shows that primary schools have made a good start.

It tells of the considerable time and effort that teachers are putting into ensuring the success of the National Curriculum and of their resulting achievements. Two thirds of primary schools were making satisfactory or better progress with teaching the core subjects in Year 1. In English, more appropriate and challenging opportunities were being provided for speaking and listening. And there were welcome signs of improvement in the range of work and the time and attention given to science. In three out of four classes in year 1 the content was suitably chosen to act as a starting point for the development of scientific skills, knowledge and understanding.

Of course more remains to be done. That always will be the case. The National Curriculum is a long-term venture that gives a structure for the education of our children for the 21st century and will take most of the 1990s to implement. But, though there is much more to be done, we have cause to congratulate schools on the good start they have made. And as successive elements of the National Curriculum come into force and as governing bodies get closer and closer to their schools in response to their now greater responsibilities, I believe that public understanding and recognition of the work of teachers and schools will grow.

Further recent evidence reinforces these messages. HMI tell me that the spring term saw more evidence of collaborative planning in primary schools. Most schools inspected were relating the National Curriculum requirements to current practice, identifying the gaps in existing provision and adjusting their curricula accordingly. In addition, many of the first year maths lessons seen by HMI in the spring were better than those they saw in the autumn and in some primary schools there was significantly good progress in getting children to consolidate their understanding of number, shape and space by applying these in a variety of ways.

And there is another important point. Far from robbing teachers of their professionalism, the National Curriculum is helping them to reinforce, indeed enhance, it. For instance, successful

schools are those where the staff cooperate effectively as a team - on planning, managing and evaluating the work. HMI report that more clusters of schools, primary and secondary, are meeting to discuss curriculum matters. This is a particularly welcome development which members of this Association are well-placed to foster.

LMS

Much of the credit for the successful implementation so far of the National Curriculum is due to teachers in the classroom, and to the leadership of head teachers. Greater autonomy for schools means more scope for heads and governing bodies to exercise leadership. The National Curriculum provides the framework, and local management of schools enables individual schools to decide how best to use their resources within that framework.

Many of you, particularly the heads of secondary schools, will already be managing delegated budgets. Many others will be involved in piloting work. 87 LEAs now have statutory LMS schemes up and running, and nationally about 12% of schools have delegated budgets this year. That proportion will substantially increase over the next few years, as delegated budgeting is phased in.

Those who have been managing their own budgets regularly tell me about the advantages of added flexibility: quicker decision-taking without constant reference back to town or county-hall; the opportunity for the school to create its own development plan; opportunities for making spending decisions within <u>your</u> priorities; and the involvement of the whole staff as a management team. All this has been welcomed; the experience of pilot LMS work is that local management <u>enhances</u> the role of professional leadership. A headteacher has always been a manager - of human as well as financial resources, and of the education process in the school.

But I recognise that your powers of management are constrained to some extent by the amount of money at your disposal. There will always be a demand for more money. I do understand how frustrating it can be to feel that if only someone would give you more money, you could do so much more for our children. Of course I understand that.

But it has always been, and it will always be, a fact of life that there is never enough money to do everything we would like to do in terms of public expenditure. Any Government, every local authority, has to balance the demands of spending priorities against the effect on those who have to pay - the tax payer and the community charge payer. And certainly there is nothing in the new Labour policy document to suggest otherwise. There is at least lip-service to their errors of the past - making spending pledges way beyond the capacity of the economy or the ability and willingness of the tax payer to deliver. Now there is constant reference to the catch-all phrase - "as resources allow".

But if you look at the record over the past 10 years, our spending on education has increased substantially. Between 1979 and 1988 spending per pupil rose in real terms by some 40%. The pupil-teacher ratio fell from 18.7:1 in 1979 to 17:1. And this year's grant settlement allows for very nearly 15 thousand million pounds to be spent on education.

So we are investing huge and increasing amounts in our schools. I know there are still gaps. Some of them could be filled by better management of existing resources. All those working in the public services have a duty to the taxpayer and the children to get the best possible value for the funds allocated to them. But yes, there is too a continuing requirement for as much investment in education as we can achieve.

I cannot tell you what next year's grant settlement will bring. It is no secret that it will be a tough round. All I can say at this stage is that I hear what is being said about resources, and I understand the pressures you face.

There have, in particular, recently been some well-publicised scare stories associating the launch of LMS with thousands of teacher redundancies. For instance, the NAS/UWT originally suggested that the introduction of LMS would bring 30,000 teacher redundancies - but that has proved to be untrue. Even though the NAS/UWT acknowledge on the basis of their most recent survey that any redundancies will be no more than a fraction of this figure, it is still far from clear that even these can be wholly attributed to LMS. Some particular cases have, for instance, been falsely attributed in the press to the Government's requirement that school budgets are charged actual salary costs - for example, the Nottinghamshire stories. But that LEA's formula gives schools 100% of their historic costs this year. So if there are to be redundancies there, charging actual salaries has nothing to do with it.

In reality there are a number of reasons why an individual school's budget may not be as large as the head and governors might wish. Let me look at the variety of elements which influence school budgets.

Retention of resources by the LEA

Within the overall level of resources which each LEA is making available for schools, a proportion is being retained by the LEA for central services such as central administration, and for LEA-wide services. The amount varies between LEAs and naturally this figure influences the size of school budgets. I expect LEAs to act as quickly as possible to see that a larger proportion of funds is passed down to school level. I shall look keenly at their performance in this respect.

There are two issues here. The first is the delegation of particular functions. Where an LEA concludes that certain services - for example transport to swimming or sports facilities - could be arranged better by schools, it will delegate the service and pass the funds down. For the school this

means a larger budget, together with a corresponding increase in the school's responsibilities. That implies a further increase in flexibility and in the ability to vire between budget headings.

The second issue is the reduction in central bureaucracy. One of the consequences of LMS should certainly be to reduce expenditure on central bureaucracy before long. There will also be increasing pressure on LEAs to reduce their central costs, as financial statements are published. These statements have to be sent to every school and must be freely available to the public. Schools and parents will start doing the simple sums which show how much more money they would get in their budgets if central costs were reduced and the resources so released passed down to schools.

There appears to be a very wide variety across the country, particularly in the proportion of money held back for the unlimited discretionary exceptions: principally central administration, advice and inspection, and home to school transport. I shall be looking very carefully at this aspect of LMS in the near future as we analyse those first budget statements. No doubt you and your schools will also be most interested to see the statements. I expect to see many LEAs being put under considerable pressure over the coming months by local people - governors and parents in particular - to explain why they are not passing a higher proportion of funds down to schools.

Formula funding

The next area which affects the level of budgets is the operation of the formula. The exact values given to the age-weightings will have a critical effect on school budgets. They will reflect, amongst other things, the balance of resources to be devoted to the primary and secondary sectors and to sixth forms. There may be a shift of funds between sectors, and this may be either for strategic reasons - a deliberate decision to change the balance - or it may be because of demographic trends. Then there is the

operation of the various special factors in the formula. Schools will be checking whether the LEA has got these right, properly reflecting schools' objective needs: premises costs, additional costs of curriculum support in small schools, costs associated with special educational need and social deprivation, and so on. All these are policy decisions of the LEA made within the framework of the statute.

Historical starting points

An obvious reason why a school might find itself on the losing end of the LEA's formula is its historical starting position. There have been cases where this alone has caused a great deal of confusion, with some LEAs quite simply not knowing how much they spent in individual schools last year or the year before. One of the reasons that we introduced formula funding was to bring clarity and openness to this area, to encourage proper quantification of costs and to establish clear and fair ground rules for resourcing schools. Instead of reflecting historic spending patterns, which may bear little relationship to today's needs, formula funding should allocate resources with reference to an objective assessment of real need. This is not easy to get right first time. It is one of the intentions of LMS to correct those anomalies in funding which stem from the past. Schools which have been more generously staffed for given age groups than others may find that the effect of the formula is to bring them nearer to the LEA's staffing norms - PTRs and contact ratios - for that age group. In these cases some schools will find themselves having to make reductions. But in all cases there will be others which make equivalent gains.

Salary costs

I do recognise that our treatment of salary costs may also be a factor - although the transitional arrangements mean that it is unlikely to have an immediate effect. Our view about this is quite clear. It is a key aspect of LMS that governors and headteachers should be aware of the cost implications of taking

decisions. Governors will increasingly have discretion over individual teachers' salaries - for example over awarding incentive allowances, accelerated increments, and now over the use of local scale extensions and awarding individual enhancements. Since governors have the financial responsibility for these decisions, it must be right that schools should be charged their actual costs, including actual salary costs. Otherwise governors could make financial decisions without having to work within their budget. It would be a negation of delegated budgetting.

But in moving from one system to another, there are always transitional issues to be faced and worked out. That is why we have taken some steps to mitigate the effects of charging actual costs. For example, we have allowed LEAs to offer protection to small schools, with less than 10 teachers, by permitting them to adjust their budgets to reflect the actual salary costs of the teaching staff. Setting the protection at this level means that some 90% of the country's primary schools, and 75% of schools overall, are eligible for some sort of salary protection.

Transitional arrangements

That is why also we have introduced particular transitional arrangements. As you know, we are allowing a general four year transition period for schools to adjust to formula budgets; and a longer transition time selectively for individual schools which would face large losses. Now I know that some of you think that we should extend the general transition period. We are reluctant to do this because we think that it would be unfair to those very many schools which stand to gain from formula funding - the ones I have just described which have been unfairly treated in the past, in comparison with their neighbours. Those schools should not have to wait longer than 4 years to realise those gains. But we are allowing LEAs to offer longer transition to larger schools - not eligible for the permanent salary protection - which may face difficulties because of high average staff costs.

I have deliberately gone into these issues of funding in some depth, in the interests of stimulating an informed commentary and analysis of LMS. We are monitoring carefully the effects of LMS on schools and on teaching and learning, and I will be prepared to make changes if, after some experience of the new system, our monitoring shows that to be desirable. Your Association will be helping us with our monitoring and, as I have already demonstrated on other issues, I am keen to work constructively with you.

I turn now to other subjects. When I discussed earlier with David Hart what you would like me to talk about, he gave me enough to fill an old-style Soviet Praesidium speech of several hours. I will not inflict that on you. But it means that I shall now have to touch on some important subjects comparatively briefly.

So next, teacher supply.

TEACHER SUPPLY

With teacher supply no less than with LMS we need an informed discussion based on facts. I want to try to get a sense of proportion about the situation, based on the facts as they are now. I hope next month to be able to say rather more about the prospects over the next decade, when I reply to the recent House of Commons Select Committee report.

There are three broad measures of teacher supply which are relevant: the vacancy rate (the number of unfilled teaching posts); the wastage rate (the numbers leaving teaching); and recruitment to teaching (the numbers coming in).

VACANCIES

First the vacancy rates. We are still collecting the figures from local authorities based on the usual survey in January of

this year, checking to get them on a consistent basis. I hope to announce them shortly, just as soon as the work is completed.

The vacancy rate provides a snapshot of how things stand on a particular day in the year. As Head and Deputy Head teachers you will know the process. A teacher resigns and leaves - normally to take up another post - and there is a hiatus before a replacement is appointed. Although we use the vacancy rates as a simple measure of teacher supply problem, they do not tell the whole story. For example, you know the real problem is not so much that of the vacancy which is an inevitable part of any system, but the uneven distribution of vacancies and the consequent need in some schools for a number of stand-in teachers. These problems obviously become worse if vacancies take longer to fill. Vacancies in some parts of inner London are endemic, and exceptionally difficult to fill. The same is also true of some subject specialisms - maths, the sciences, technology and modern languages. The point here of course is that these are the skills which are now in high demand in the economy as a whole, exceeding supply; and hence commanding a premium in the market place.

WASTAGE

The wastage rate is a measure of those leaving teaching. Wastage can be defined in different ways, for example either including or excluding retirements and maternity breaks. The Department's definition encompasses all those leaving teaching whatever the reason and is about as wide as is possible. The most recent rate is around 7½% a year. It has fluctuated within one percentage point throughout the last decade, and the stability and level of wastage has been confirmed by other independent sources. But as in the case of vacancies, the incidence is uneven. Teachers tend not to remain in inner London. Many of those leaving their jobs there remain in teaching, moving to other parts of the country. But the frequent need to replace teachers in inner London does have a cost, in that pupils suffer from the loss of stability and continuity in their education. We all understand the acute

difficulty of the inner London infants class, which had 10 different teachers in a single year. The new pay supplement for the inner London area will, I hope, help schools like this to retain more of their experienced teachers, as will the steps being taken to help with housing of teachers in inner London, perhaps one of the biggest difficulties of all.

RECRUITMENT TO TEACHING

The final indicator of teacher supply is the level of recruitment to teaching. Broadly there are two sources of recruitment - first time entrants coming through initial training, and returners - people having previously taught who have taken a career break, normally on maternity. The level of recruitment to teaching gives the lie to the suggestion that it is not a popular career. There has been steadily increasing recruitment to initial teacher training throughout the last decade. The number coming into teacher training in September 1989 is ahead of target (in primary schools by some 15%) except again in some of the crucial shortage subjects in secondary schools. And alongside this, the number of returners coming back into teaching has increased from around 30% of the total number of entrants in the early 1980s to over 50% at the end of the decade.

GOVERNMENT ACTION

With this background I turn now to the precisely targeted action to meet real and known needs which we are taking.

GEOGRAPHIC DIFFICULTY

First, we are taking action to counter specific geographic difficulties. The new Education Support Grant to help the recruitment of returners and mature entrants is targeted in particular on areas with recruitment difficulties. One of the criteria we used in deciding how to allocate money was the vacancy rate of the LEAs concerned. Of the 45 LEAs which are

being supported this year, 27 are in London, including all the inner London LEAs which bid.

The need for pay to be differentiated in response to local circumstances has been recognised. The new pay arrangements resulting from this year's report of the Interim Advisory Committee will enable the system to respond more to the market.

We are also tackling subject shortages, and trying new ways of attracting recruits. The Bursary Scheme, which provides a cash bonus on top of the student maintenance award for students in the eligible subjects, began in 1986 with maths, physics and CDT; was extended last year to include chemistry and is being extended again from September to include modern languages.

Bursaries are not a magic cure. The pattern has been that the number of recruits in eligible subjects increases significantly after the introduction of the bursary, but has subsequently levelled off. Nevertheless the evaluation carried out for us by Bath University show that bursaries have had an important beneficial effect: a significant number of students receiving bursaries would not have undertaken the course without the incentive of the bursary. And more of these students subsequently remain in teaching than the average across all teacher training.

This year we have launched a Work Experience Scheme to give students in higher education a taste of teaching before they make up their minds about their careers. Industry has long viewed this as a means of attracting recruits. The idea originally of extending it to teaching came from the Independent Schools Joint Council, with funds from industrial sponsors. We need to show the positive side of everything that is happening in our schools, so I am delighted that this idea has been taken up and enthusiastically supported by your Association and the Secondary Heads Association, with funds from Government. This shows what can be done by constructive cooperation between Government,

schools and industry - which increasingly recognises the wider interests of the community in having good teachers.

DIVERSIFYING THE SUPPLY OF TEACHERS

While we should do all we can to promote entry to teaching of new graduates through conventional training, we need also to exploit other possible sources of good teachers. To start with, we are funding taster courses for potential mature entrants into the profession. These have proved extremely successful. We have so far this year run 45 courses with 800 students on them, and another 8 courses are in the pipeline.

Then we have established new types of course better suited to their circumstances, needs and experience - the 2 year BEd and the part-time PGCE in particular. Finally we have established the articled and the licensed teacher routes. The Articled Teacher Scheme has been designed to attract graduates who want to train in the classroom, gaining practical skills and responsibility from the first day in school. They will still take a PGCE, but over two years instead of the usual one year, and four fifths or more of the time will be spent in school. They will be paid a bursary which will reflect the progressively increasing real teaching load which they take on over the two year period. This is an exciting experiment which has been welcomed by LEAS and by initial teacher training institutions and by those seeking teacher training places.

Our aim with the licensed teacher route is to provide a high quality way into teaching for those who are unable or unwilling to sacrifice a year of salary to go back to college and live on student grant. I recognise the need to ensure that adequate training is given and that standards are maintained.

We have known for a long time that there are large numbers of people who would like to switch careers into teaching. What we did not know was whether there was a matching demand for such people from LEAS and schools. We now have the answer to this

too. More than 50 LEAs applied for and received funding under the LEA Training Grants Scheme for licensed teachers, and I expect a significant body of licensed teachers to have been appointed next year.

But returners are undoubtedly the most important resource of all. In recent years up to about 16,000 teachers per year have returned to the classroom. Returners represent rather more than half all entrants. We shall all have to work hard to maintain these numbers and proportions, but with some 400,000 teachers out of service there is no doubt the potential is there. Some LEAs have well established and imaginative schemes to support such teachers while on maternity leave and then to ease their path back into the classroom. The best such schemes make teachers feel that they have never left teaching. In Kent, for example, all teachers taking a career break for domestic reasons are given the chance to return within 7 years to full or part-time employment. During each year of the break the teacher works for at least 10 days as a supply teacher - with full pay. The new Education Support Grant announced this year is intended to enable more authorities to take the steps already taken by the best, and to increase the number of returners.

The increasing diversity in the recruits to teaching means that we have to be <u>flexible</u> in the <u>training arrangements</u> which are available. With this in mind we are also funding the development of a number of new distance learning courses which will help teachers, whether already qualified or not, to learn on the job. <u>Distance learning</u> has already proved its worth in teacher education with the successful development and widespread use of the Open University's Physics for Science Teachers Course. We are funding the Open University to develop a similar chemistry course, and York University are developing an in-service training course for French, which we are funding jointly with the French Government. I want to extend this approach still further.

Underlying all our activities is the need to maintain a high profile and positive image for teaching. The <u>Teaching as a Career</u>

Unit has a single remit - to publicise teaching as a career and stimulate teacher recruitment. They have established themselves very firmly in the employment market. Whereas previously teaching was often a career which was chosen by default and in the absence of advertising and information aimed at new recruits, this is no longer the case.

Last month I launched my department's biggest-ever teacher recruitment advertising campaign. For the first time, television is being used as well as national newspapers and the specialist and student journals.

The campaign, which uses what I believe to be the very accurate slogan, "Teaching brings out the best in people", is in two waves, the first lasting four weeks up to 17 June and the second starting in September.

Although this is first and foremost a recruitment campaign, it also aims to improve the image of teaching in the eyes of the general public, something which I have been striving to do in speech after speech since I took office.

I am well aware that the campaign has its critics. There have been snide remarks from a few people - there always are to constructive initiatives such as this - but they are far outweighed by the positive responses.

With two weeks of the first phase of the campaign still to run, the number of requests for further information from prospective teachers totalled 7,000 up to last night. Requests for information packs are presently arriving at the rate of about 1000 a day.

This is a very encouraging start. There are many, many people out there who see teaching as a worthwhile career.

MORALE

A campaign such as ours has a number of aims. The most obvious is to recruit teachers. But another important aim is to improve the image and status of teaching, and so help teacher morale. Pay is of course one aspect of this, and I will say something about that in a moment. Image - both the self image and the public image of teachers is another. I greatly value the work, dedication and commitment of the vast majority of teachers, and I want to see that work more widely recognised and appreciated than it has sometimes been in recent years. I want more people to recognise the enormous progress teachers have made in implementing our reforms. I would like to see a lot more media focus on the many excellent things that are happening in our schools, the progress being made in increasing numbers staying on at school, stimulated by the teaching, and going on to further and higher education; all this so that due credit is given to teachers for what they are achieving rather than as so often getting criticism and blame for what has still to be put right.

PAY

Pay too is a key element in securing the proper staffing of our schools. When I gave the IAC their remit for this year's pay settlement I asked the Committee to look particularly at ways of further increasing flexibility within the pay system and improving the career structure.

The IAC addressed these issues very fully in their excellent report. The Committee endorsed the thinking underlying the present pay structure and made recommendations intended to carry it even further into practice. They concluded that the current pay structure did not provide LEAs and governing bodies with sufficient flexibility to tackle the particular needs of individual schools, to reward responsibility and high performance, to respond to changing circumstances and to provide attractive career prospects for able and ambitious teachers whether they want to stay in the classroom or progress to the highest level.

So the IAC made far-reaching proposals for changes. They reaffirmed the value and importance of incentive allowances and boosted their number and value. But in addition they proposed that it should in future be open to LEAs and governing bodies to enhance the standard incremental pay of individual teachers on the main scale on an annual basis and that it should be possible to adopt and use a local extension of the main scale to enhance the pay of teachers on the top of the scale.

These are by themselves important new innovations. But the Committee went further. I asked them particularly to look at Heads and Deputies. In response, they recognised that the roles of Heads and Deputies were steadily becoming more onerous and marked this by recommending for the second year running bigger increases for Heads and Deputies than for main scale teachers. They also recognised a need for greater recognition of differences in the circumstances of schools and the performance of individuals. They therefore proposed that the present system of spot salaries should be replaced by a system of range pay. I have welcomed these recommendations and accepted them in full. They will come into effect from 1 January. By that time the pay of a typical Headteacher will be 18-19% higher than it was in March 1989.

Taken together, the Committee's recommendations mean:

- better career prospects for good teachers;

- greatly enhanced scope for flexible local decision taking to meet local circumstances;

- greater pay differentiation;

- better matching of rewards with contributions;

- greater competitiveness in the graduate labour market.

I am sure that the Committee's recommendations will substantially enhance the attractiveness of teaching as a career.

I recognise, as did the IAC, that the introduction of a more flexible pay system places particular responsibilities on local decision takers. There will undoubtedly be some difficult choices to be made. But if local management is about anything it is about the targeting of resources where they are most needed and will do most good. The new pay flexibilities will greatly increase the capacity for local management to manage and I hope you will ensure that they are used well and to the full. They represent a real step forward in our ability to create and sustain the kind of teaching force we need for the future.

I published on 26 April my proposals for new pay machinery for teachers. I am now in the process of discussing them with the teacher unions and the employers. Indeed, I met some of those who share this platform only last week. I have included in our proposals safeguards for the special interests of headteachers and their deputies, which I fully recognise and support. I understand the significance which the teaching profession attaches to the restoration of a direct role in the settlement of its own pay. I am determined to put new machinery in place as quickly as possible. My aim is to be in a position to introduce the necessary legislation during the next Session of Parliament.

PERORATION

I have spoken today about the introduction of the National Curriculum, about the management of the schools and about the supply of teachers. How do these three themes interact with one another? What will they mean for the teachers and headteachers of tomorrow?

- The National Curriculum offers the prospect of a broad and relevant curriculum for every pupil. It should raise the expectations of parents and

employers, their understanding of what schools do and their appreciation of what they achieve.

- Improvements in the supply of teachers are needed to make the National Curriculum the success which it should be, everywhere and in all the key and foundation subjects. The Government is fully committed to measures to improve the supply, and to working with the employers and the profession to the same end.

- To meet the challenges of the 90s schools will need to be able to take their own decisions and to deploy their resources skillfully. Delegated budgeting gives governors and heads new freedoms.

In any organisation it's tough being a manager at a time of major change. People have to learn new approaches to their work, they are uncertain about their roles and how to retain the confidence of their clients. If that is true of a business it is all the more true of a school where every child matters, and each has his or her own needs, expectations and experience. But the schools are making good headway with the management of change. That is a finding for which headteachers and the deputies who work with them deserve great credit. We must all work together to sustain that progress. As the changes work through, I am determined to see a rise in the standing of teaching as a profession and in the esteem in which the schools are held. Most important of all, the nation's pupils will get a still better education.

EDUCATION : POLICY

SECRETARY OF STATE'S SPEECH TO AMMA, 9 APRIL 1990

Introduction

Yesterday, speaking to the annual conference of the Secondary Heads Association, I paid tribute to the very great contribution which heads and teachers have already made to implementing the new framework of delegated responsibility for schools provided for in the Education Reform Act, and to meeting the challenges of the other great reforms to our educational system which we are all carrying through now - GCSE and the National Curriculum in particular.

I would like to repeat that tribute here today, and to thank you all for the dedication and commitment which you are showing to implementing the Government's reforms and securing the best possible education for our children.

I would like today to ask the question - why do these reforms merit that commitment; next to deal with some key issues relating to the implementation of the National Curriculum; and then to touch on one or two other subjects.

First, why the commitment to the reforms? One answer is simply that the reforms are needed, to ensure that standards throughout the country are brought up to the level of the best; that curricular changes bring about a broad curriculum fitted for the educational needs of the 1990s; and that we make the most of the creativity of schools, bringing together even more strongly the energies and commitment of parents, employers and local communities.

But there is a further answer: those reforms not only depend on the professional skills of teachers. They should positively foster them. What the reforms do is establish a clear framework within which teachers' crucially important professional contribution can be securely recognised - and developed.

The Government's reforms are designed to address both points in three ways:

- first, by establishing clear and widely agreed national objectives for the curriculum;

- second, by providing teachers, through the assessment of their pupils, with a means of monitoring how well those objectives are being met; and,

- third, by enabling schools to decide for themselves how to achieve those objectives.

I should like to spend a little time on each of these aspects of our reforms and to explain how, exactly, they support the role of the teacher.

Setting curricular objectives: the National Curriculum

I have, of course, the National Curriculum in mind when I refer to the setting of curricular objectives. It may seem odd to some for me to describe the prescription of attainment targets and programmes of study as reinforcing teachers' professionalism. At the beginning there were some who feared that they would do precisely the reverse. Before people saw what the targets and programmes of study were going to look like, they feared a mass of detailed prescription about what was to go on at classroom level. But that was never our intention.

Rather, we are aiming to set a broad framework within which questions of detail and methods of delivery are left, very deliberately, for local decision. It is now up to individual schools and teachers to work with it and get everything they can out of it. It is a flexible model: you can put together the attainment targets and programmes of study in a variety of ways, as long as you teach and assess your pupils' work in relation to them. And it is a living model: the targets and programmes are

not set in concrete for all time, but will evolve as the demands of education evolve. They are not, of course, being plucked out of the sky in the first place. They represent a synthesis of existing best practice - the product of extremely hard and effective work by the various National Curriculum subject working groups. And they are being settled through extensive consultation. They are moreover designed to be subject to continuing feedback and review.

In short, the thrust of our policy is towards decentralisation and, in that, we are applying a philosophy which is well-recognised in other fields of employment. In both service and manufacturing industry, the trend in large firms is for the centre to provide a framework of clear objectives and to give its local bases freedom to meet those objectives as they see fit. The experience is that this approach gets the best out of everyone. That is precisely our aim, in the National Curriculum and in Local Management of Schools - which are two sides of the same coin - and in many of our other reforms.

Let me say a brief word about the implementation so far of the National Curriculum <u>in primary schools</u>.

I know that this has meant a challenging time for primary school teachers. There are new demands particularly on subjects to be taught comprehensively - but they are necessary. Standard Assessment Tasks are new - but they are desirable.

However, after the initial and inevitable worries about what many feared as something <u>totally</u> new, the evidence is that implementation is working, and as so many teachers tell me as I go round the country, they are finding the curriculum in the core subjects not something frighteningly novel but as a confirmation and distillation of best practice. And HMI are finding the same.
Based on visits to 100 primary schools last Autumn, they report to me that a substantial majority of schools - two-thirds - are making satisfactory or good progress with the implementation of

the core subjects of the National Curriculum for children in Year 1. That progress is largely down to the dedication of teachers who have set about taking on board the requirements of the National Curriculum with great determination and to obvious good effect. HMI tell me for example that:

- the planning of topic work has significantly improved and is leading to better curricular breadth and balance;

- schools are increasing the time and attention given to science and are ensuring that, within topic work, the scientific components are given distinctive emphasis;

- they are using the statutory attainment targets to identify where changes in emphasis in current practice are required, so that, for example, more challenging opportunities are being provided for children in Year 1 in speaking and listening;

- many are planning their work in mathematics more thoroughly and effectively, particularly for children in key stage 1.

All this is most encouraging and I thoroughly commend HMI's report on their Autumn term visits; it will be published this week.

As for the implementation of the National Curriculum in secondary schools, they face similar planning and organisational challenges. As in primary schools, there is welcome evidence from HMI that many schools are already successfully delivering National Curriculum attainment targets to 12 year olds - year 7 in our new jargon - in mathematics and science. But looking beyond that, HMI have highlighted the need for schools to develop coherent policies for the whole curriculum, particularly for the 14-16 year olds, as soon as practicable, and certainly well

before the timetabled implementation of the curriculum for these age groups so that advance planning can take place.

It was against that background that in January I addressed the question of planning at key stage 4 in a speech to the Society of Education Officers which I hope many of you will have read. My message then was that schools must be given a substantial measure of flexibility. All pupils will take a full course leading to GCSEs in each of the core subjects. But I have announced that it is my objective that there should in addition be a range of choices open to pupils:

- courses with less content than a GCSE, but also complying with statutory requirements, will be available in the other foundation subjects and in religious education;

- there will be scope for these less broad options to be combined together, or with subjects outside the National Curriculum, in courses leading to GCSE certification; and

- courses complying with National Curriculum requirements but leading to vocational qualifications will also be available.

I have invited the NCC and SEAC to advise on how these objectives can be achieved.

The future agenda

In both primary and secondary schools, the length of the agenda and the pace of change may seem formidable. I have made quite clear my determination that we should go at a manageable rate. One clear example of this are my decisions to abolish one of the Annual Curriculum returns we were proposing, and to simplify the other. The work for schools will as a result be substantially

reduced, while nevertheless preserving the usefulness of the Returns as a planning tool.

The worries about pace of change are understandable. But the speed and effectiveness with which that change has been handled so far gives me every reason for confidence in the ability of schools to cope with the published timetable for introducing of the National Curriculum. I am glad that this is so. For, as I said to the SHA yesterday, the raising of standards that it promises is too important to permit delay. But I repeat the assurance I have frequently given, that I intend to keep the flow of material and development to a pace with which you can cope, that I will implement other changes, such as statutory teacher appraisal, to a timetable which takes full account of the pressures of the introduction of the National Curriculum in schools, and that I and my colleagues aim to keep to a minimum other requirements upon you.

Let me remind you briefly of where we stand on a number of key forthcoming events:

- I have just made the final Orders for English for key Stages 2-4 and for Technology. Copies should by now have reached you direct from the Department, leaving good time to prepare for implementation in the next academic year;

- as to the other foundation subjects:

    * I recently published for consultation the initial advice of the Modern Languages Working Group;

    * last week I published the final report of the History Working Group: I am consulting on the recommendations as widely as possible before proceeding to make statutory

proposals for attainment targets and programmes of study;

* the final recommendations of the Geography Working Group are due later this month; and

* I intend to make an announcement before too long about art, music and PE.

Monitoring objectives: the assessment system

We are also of course nearing the first assessments under the National Curriculum. All 7 year olds will be assessed in the core subjects nationally for the first time in Summer 1991; the next year - 1992 - will see the first national assessments of 14 year olds in mathematics and science and the first assessment of 7 year olds in technology. Other assessments will be phased in after that until, by 1997, all subjects will be assessed at all key stages. In all cases, the aggregate results of the first assessments will be unreported.

Let me then turn my attention now to the assessment arrangements themselves. There are perhaps some people who see them as an unnecessary add-on - as something extraneous to the National Curriculum. Something which the Government wants more for ideological than educational reasons. Something which is likely to take up a great deal of teachers' time with results that will only rebound against them. All these claims have been made and repeated often enough, but they are quite wrong. And they are also troubling, because if people do not grasp the power of assessment - when properly integrated with the curriculum - to raise standards, they are missing half the point of the National Curriculum.

Assessment is intrinsic to the National Curriculum. It is nothing less than the means by which we can all keep track of

what pupils have learned - as distinct from merely what they have been taught. As such, it is a key part of the teacher's professional equipment. It is the means by which the teacher recognises the strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils, and is enabled to adapt his or her teaching to meet those needs so that strengths can be fostered and weaknesses tackled.

As such, you will very rightly say, it is nothing new. I could not agree more. I am well aware that teachers have used a wide range of assessment techniques including tests of different kinds. But there has also been widespread evidence that these assessments have too often been ill-coordinated, divorced from the curriculum and not used to inform teaching. What is new is the systematic framework afforded by the framework of targets for teaching. This demands a systematic framework for assessing achievement against them. It binds assessment to the curriculum. A National Curriculum without it would have been lop-sided and incomplete. It would have lacked the dynamism - the potential to lever up standards - that assessment provides.

If assessment is to fulfil this function, it must both relate to what goes on in the classroom itself and be capable of integration with normal teaching practice. In other words, it must be manageable for teachers, because if it is unmanageable it will defeat its own purpose.

Assessment of 7 and 11 year olds

With that in mind, I am today writing to SEAC to say that, when it comes to assessing 7 and 11 year olds in technology, history and geography, it would be right to simplify arrangements in order to ease the burden on primary school teachers. I am indicating in particular that, in the case of 7 year olds certainly, my provisional view is that it should not be a statutory requirement for schools to administer Standard Assessment Tasks when settling the end-of-key-stage statutory assessments in these subjects. Similar principles might also

apply to the assessment of pupils at the age of 11 in these subjects. But there is more time, and the need for more experience of the assessment system as it develops, before we finalise arrangements for 11 year olds.

I have asked SEAC instead to develop a range of simple, non-statutory assessment tasks which teachers will be able to use as and when they judge fit to inform their <u>own</u> assessments of their pupils' attainments in technology, history and geography. It will be these assessments - teacher assessments - which will then provide the basis for establishing what pupils have achieved in these subjects at the end of the key stage. Dispensing with the need to work through Standard Assesment Tasks at the end of each key stage in these subjects will give teachers valuable flexibility in planning their statutory assessment programmes. At the same time, the supply of non-statutory assessment tasks, which have been nationally-developed, will help teachers to foster their own assessment skills and relate their standards to the national ones.

I emphasise this point about standards because I am quite clear that simplifying the assessment arrangements must not entail any sacrifice of rigour. I am also conscious that technology is, in effect, a new subject in primary schools and that, as HMI has recently reported, history and geography are taught, if at all, only in a very skeletal form. Teachers will need support and the non-statutory assessment tasks will provide just that. Each task might individually be a good deal lighter than the Standard Assessment Tasks now under development for the core subjects and might assess attainment by focussing on a narrower range of attainment targets and by means of a more limited number of observations. Teachers will be able to use them to provide a simple check that their teaching of the programmes of study has indeed addressed the attainment targets and that their judgements of the level of pupils' attainments are soundly-based. National guidance from SEAC will further underpin these arrangements. And the rigour of the assessments made by teachers will be

monitored, at local level, by LEAs and, at national level, by SEAC itself.

My decision to simplify the arrangements for technology, history and geography arises partly because I am convinced of the need to push ahead with the existing arrangements now being developed for the core subjects. For these subjects I believe that it is right to combine both teachers' own assessments and statutory standard assessment tasks administered by them. Primary schools teachers are already addressing the implications of assessing 6 and 7 year olds against the statutory attainment targets in the core subjects and I know that they are concerned with how they will manage the arrangements.

My simple message to those teachers is: "Please, don't be panicked by some of the dire predictions of how assessment will turn out." We are still some way off settling the final shape of the statutory assessment arrangements for the core subjects. We shall not do so until we have seen, and had a chance to evaluate, the results of the pilot assessments going on in 2% of primary schools this Summer. Among other things, that evaluation will focus on the manageability of the arrangements for teachers. You have a direct input to make on the shaping of arrangements for 1991 which are still being developed.

But let us not get hang-ups about 1991. I know a lot of teachers are anxious about the scrutiny they will come under concerning their assessments that year. They feel under pressure to have things working to perfection from the start. I applaud the professional scrupulousness which gives rise to this. But let me say clearly that the Government is not in any way looking on 1991 as the year of do or die. It is simply the first national-scale exercise in a project which is designed to be evolutionary. Everyone will get better as they go along. That is what it is about.

It is because the first year of statutory assessments - in any subject, and at any key stage - is itself something of a trial

run that we are not going to require schools to publish statistics on the results. We will, under draft Regulations on which the period of consultation has just closed, give parents the right to see their own child's results from that first year onwards: that is only fair. But publication of statistics for the school as a whole will not be required until the following year - for 11 and 14 year olds. For 7 year olds, I confirm, there will be no requirement to publish at all.

All of this should take a lot of the perceived pressure off schools for 1991. But a great deal of work is nevertheless in hand to make sure the first national assessments that year go as smoothly as possible:

- first, the agencies commissioned to develop SATs have been trialling different approaches in schools across the country. SEAC unveiled the results last week. They should have been quite reassuring for teachers: you will have seen quite a lot of Press coverage on the way that Standard Assessment Tasks are turning out. The tasks themselves have been designed to be indistinguishable from the kinds of work that most 7 year old pupils are used to. They will be delivered and assessed by pupils' classroom teachers. I am told that pupils and teachers involved in the trials of the Standard Assessment Tasks have found them rewarding and enjoyable;

- second, the Department will publish for consultation soon after Easter a draft of the statutory Order and accompanying circular prescribing the arrangements for assessing 7 year olds in the core subjects. This will be an opportunity for schools and the education service generally to feed in views direct about what will be manageable and what will not. We shall not finalise the final Order until we have had a chance to reflect on the views expressed and until we have seen the

outcome of the pilot assessments taking place in 2% of primary schools nationally this Summer;

- third, I have asked SEAC to look at what teacher assessment will involve. I cannot predict what advice the Council will offer. But I will say clearly now that there can be no question of requiring teachers to keep detailed records of their pupils' attainments against every single one of over 200 statements of attainment. Nor should they feel under any pressure to hoard large amounts of evidence to support their assessments. After all, the gradations in the 10-point scale are very broad ones, and the criteria defining them pretty clear. All we are asking is that pupils' performance in each attainment target should be attributed with reasonable confidence to one or other of the levels; and the attribution reviewed as often as it is likely to change (which for the average child is likely to be about once every two years). Recording must support assessment, not become a substitute for it. That means, in my view, that teachers must be free to develop whatever approach to recording suits their own teaching style and best enables them - at the end of the key stage - to form a judgement of each pupil's level of attainment;

- fourth, there is increasing support available to teachers. SEAC published an initial guide to teacher assessment in January and has more material planned. For their part, LEAs have been making great strides with their in-service training programmes to help schools with the introduction of National Curriculum assessment. I have undertaken that the Government will promote this re-direction of LEA effort by setting aside specific grant in 1991/92 and later years to support expenditure on assessment. I shall also require authorities, as a condition of grant, to work

up coherent National Curriculum Assessment Implementation plans.

In other words you, as teachers, may have the first-line professional responsibility for assessment. But there is a formidable supporting cast to back you up.

Assessment of 14 year olds

You will expect me also to say a little about the assessment of fourteen year olds. I have indicated to SEAC that I shall expect the arrangements for assessing technology, history and geography and modern foreign languages - as well as the core subjects - to combine both teacher assessment and statutory standard assessment tasks. That reflects two facts. First, that teaching in secondary schools is very largely subject-based so that the assessment requirements falling on any one teacher are that much less. And, second, that both continuous assessment and end of year examinations are much more generally established in secondary schools, so that the new arrangements should be able to grow that much more readily out of existing practice. But let me reaffirm that - just as in primary schools - we shall want thoroughly to test out the assessment arrangements before laying down statutory requirements.

Administration of assessment

Finally, before turning to other matters, I should like to say a brief word about the local administration of assessments. This embraces a number of different, though inter-related functions: from coordinating the assessment arrangements themselves, to the provision of training for teachers and the monitoring of quality. I believe that it is right for LEAs to take on all these responsibilities in relation to primary schools: they fit naturally with the authorities' general duty to secure implementation of the National Curriculum in their schools, and with the wider role of their advisory and inspection service. I

am not however convinced that it follows that the same arrangements should apply to the assessment of 14 year olds. LEAs will certainly continue to have a role - supporting the professional development of teachers, for example. But in the matter of quality control there are equally arguments for looking to the examining bodies to play a part. I shall want to think about this further and I have written today to seek the advice of SEAC.

Self-management for schools

The information generated by the statutory assessments will, in aggregate, permit the performance of the education service as a whole, and that of individual schools to be evaluated on a common basis. It will, in other words, be an important source of management information. That brings me to my third theme - the management of schools. As I said at the beginning, our philosophy is to provide a clear framework of objectives and criteria - the National Curriculum and its associated assessment system - and then leave to local discretion - principally, to individual schools - to determine how to organise themselves to deliver those objectives.

Local Management of Schools

That is what LMS is about. In my address to the SHA yesterday, I reviewed the progress of LMS. It has been impressive. Over 87 statutory schemes are already in force in England. I recognise the constructive contribution made by AMMA members and teachers generally to the task of producing these schemes.

One result of LMS will be to build on the professional skills of teachers by making management truly local. All schools will now have a cash-limited budget - calculated by applying a formula - and a large proportion will already have fully-delegated budgets. The final responsibility for managing the budget belongs of

course to the governing body. But in practice the governors will not able to discharge that responsibility in isolation from the everyday life of the school. They, after all, are not, in the main, in the classroom teaching pupils and dealing with books, furniture and equipment.

That is where teachers come in. I expect to see local management spreading within schools. Now that schools themselves have their own budgets, there is a real opportunity to delegate responsibility for spending decisions to the teachers. And the piloting of LMS has proved how well that can work. Naturally this will need to be within a framework agreed by the headteacher and governors. School development plans will work best where they are not top-down affairs but have been worked out with the active participation and involvement of staff. Where delegation can be spread within a school - and I hope it will become commonplace - teachers who perceive a need will be able to take practical action to meet it.

The basic principle is that decisions, including direct spending decisions within the budget as given, should be taken by those who are closest to the needs and who have the immediate job of tackling them. That is why, when I spoke to the SHA yesterday, I noted the disparities between LEAs in the amount of the General Schools Budget held back centrally and stressed the desirability of maximum delegation. The more money delegated, the greater the flexibility available to governing bodies and the more opportunity for teachers to participate in decisions about the deployment of money.

Appraisal

Another aspect of school management is, of course, the appraisal of teachers. I recognise and value the constructive role which the Association played throughout the Pilot Study at national and local level. This reflects the Association's recognition of the potential support which appraisal can offer to teachers.

Appraisal provides, after all, a mechanism by which teachers can review their achievements, set targets for their current work, and be guided in their professional development. It helps teachers to clarify what they are expected to do and to develop strategies for dealing with problems. It can enhance the quality of the management decisions I was talking about a moment ago.

The current consultation on the National Steering Group's recommendations ends shortly. I shall be considering the responses very carefully, including your own Association's. My aim is to issue guidance this Summer to help LEAs and schools to draw up schemes. I made clear, as you know, when I announced the consultation process last Autumn that I did not want to impose additional compulsory burdens on schools at a time when the introduction of the National Curriculum was requiring a demanding priority. But I equally made clear that I hoped that those schools which were already developing teacher appraisal would go on doing so, and that those who felt most able to embark on them would be encouraged to do so.

NDPM AF 6/6

CONFIDENTIAL

2 MARSHAM STREET
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01-276 3000

My ref:

Your ref:

A Turnbull Esq
Private Secretary to
The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1A 2AA

4 June 1990

Dear Andrew

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My Secretary of State has seen a copy of your letter of 1 June to John Ratcliff seeking advice on three issues in the education field where the Government position is being criticised.

On the third issue about the effect of charge capping, my Secretary of State thought that the Prime Minister would wish to know that he will be minuting her and other E(LG) colleagues shortly with his proposals for the final caps for the local authorities which did not accept the caps he originally proposed. He expects that his proposals will be regarded as tough and many of the authorities are likely to argue that they will require redundancies, almost certainly including teachers. Whether teacher redundancies are necessary in practice will depend on a number of factors - not least the priorities which the council concerned set for themselves in responding to the caps. In view of the possibility of further litigation once the final caps have been set, my Secretary of State considers that it is very important that Ministers should continue to avoid being drawn on:

(i) how authorities should meet the cuts implied by the caps;

(ii) on what the consequences of the caps might be;

(iii) on what factors were taken into account in setting the caps.

For the present, my Secretary of State suggests that the Prime Minister and other colleagues should take the line that the caps he proposed represent his view on the basis of the information available to him of what is reasonable and appropriate in all the circumstances of the authorities concerned. Authorities have had the opportunity to suggest to him an alternative figure, together with the reasons for it, and he is now carefully considerng the represenations which they have made.

I am copying this leter to John Ratcliff (Department of Education and Science) and to John Neilson (Department of Energy).

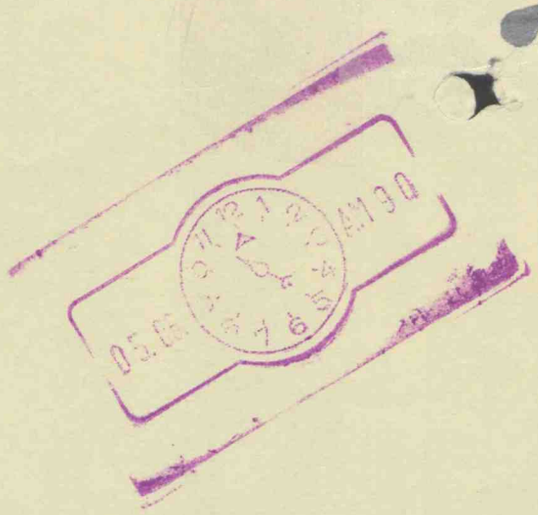
Yours
Phillip

PHILLIP WARD
Private Secretary

EDUCATION

Policy

Pt 26



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Ag: EDUCATION

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

1 June 1990

GOVERNMENT'S EDUCATION POLICIES

During a discussion of the presentation of Government policies with Mr. Wakeham, the Prime Minister drew attention to three issues in the education field where the Government position is being criticised.

First, on local management of schools, the benefit which schools should perceive from this is being swamped by criticism of the funding formula. The argument is that those schools with teachers higher up the scale are being under-funded which is seen as a penalty on well-run schools with a settled staff room. The Prime Minister asked whether there were any transitional safe-guards in this scheme, e.g. arrangements under which schools get at least as much as in the previous year.

Secondly, there has been a lot of coverage in the media on the testing of 7-year olds which is portrayed as too bureaucratic and preventing teachers from getting on with the job of teaching.

Thirdly, it is argued that the financial pressures on local authorities, in particular community charge capping, are forcing teacher redundancies at a time when there are vacancies elsewhere.

The Prime Minister would be grateful for a note on these issues, setting out the facts on each, what the Government's line should be, and what is being done to get that line across. (With respect to the latter, you might want to draw the Prime Minister's attention to the speech your Secretary of State is making today.) As some of these issues could come up at Questions on Tuesday, could this note reach me by close of play on Monday, 4 June.

I am copying this letter to Phillip Ward (Department of the Environment) and John Neilson (Department of Energy).

ANDREW TURNBULL

John Ratcliff, Esq.,
Department of Education and Science.

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PART 25 ends:-

DES to BP 29.5.90

PART 26 begins:-

IAT to DES 1.6.90



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