



*Education*  
*Prime Minister*

*To be aware.*

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE  
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 FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

*MA*  
*8/4.*

M Pattison Esq  
 10 Downing Street  
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*ms.*

7 April 1982

*Dear Mike*

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND ARTS COMMITTEE: SECOND REPORT, SESSION  
 1981-82

You should be aware that my Secretary of State has consulted his colleagues in H Committee on the proposed Government reply to the Education, Science and Arts Committee's report on the Secondary School Curriculum and Examinations. I enclose a copy of my Secretary of State's letter and of the draft Government reply.

As you will see, it is proposed that the reply should be in 2 stages, the first as soon as possible after Easter and the second stage in the summer. The exact timing of publication will be cleared with your Press Office and others in the usual way.

*Yours ever.*

*Nick Cornwell*

N J CORNWELL  
 Private Secretary



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

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FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

The Rt Hon William Whitelaw CH MC MP  
Secretary of State for the Home Department  
Home Office  
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6 April 1982

*Dear Lizzie,*

The Education, Science and Arts Committee of the House of Commons published its Second Report, Session 1981-82, "The Secondary School Curriculum and Examinations: with special reference to the 14 to 16 year old age group" (HC 116-1) on 16 February. Their inquiry had ranged widely over policy in this area and this is reflected in the recommendations which the Committee make.

Some of the recommendations raise issues of policy of some complexity to which an early reply cannot be made, and on these I should wish to take up to the 6 months' maximum set for replies to Select Committee reports. On others it is possible to move more quickly. I propose, therefore, that the Government's reply should be in two stages. The first stage would comprise the more straightforward recommendations. These are addressed principally to my area of responsibility but my officials have consulted other Departments as necessary.

I attach the draft of a White Paper which I should like to see published as soon as possible as the first stage of the Government's reply. Unfortunately it will be impossible to publish this within the Procedure Committee's recommended timetable of two months, but I hope that it can nevertheless be issued shortly. It would be helpful if I could have any comments which you or colleagues would wish to make by Friday 16 April.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to our colleagues on H Committee, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Erin Keir*

DRAFT WHITE PAPER

INITIAL GOVERNMENT OBSERVATIONS ON THE SECOND REPORT FROM THE EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND ARTS COMMITTEE, SESSION 1981-82: THE SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND EXAMINATIONS

1. The Government attach great importance to the subject of the Committee's Second Report, Session 1981-82, "The Secondary School Curriculum and Examinations: with special reference to the 14 to 16 year old age group".

2. The Report contains 65 recommendations. Many of them raise issues of some complexity. The Government's reply to certain recommendations is set out below. The remaining recommendations are still under consideration and the Government will reply to these later.

Recommendation 1

"1. Courses should contain less emphasis on detail and should seek to bring together from each discipline the key concepts, skills and knowledge needed for the world of today."

Response: The Government share the Committee's concern that all pupils should be offered a broad curriculum up to 16. They agree with the Committee that such a curriculum is best achieved by the avoidance of premature or excessive specialisation which may limit subsequent educational and career opportunities. "The School Curriculum"\* notes that breadth is commonly defined in terms of subjects: it explains that the curriculum can, and desirably should, be analysed in several ways, but that subject titles are used in the document because secondary school timetables are almost always devised in subject terms, because they are readily recognised by parents and employers, and because most secondary school teachers are trained in subjects. The Government do not accept that the use of subject titles in "The School Curriculum" limits the value of this guidance, which draws schools' attention in particular to the analysis by areas of experience used in HM Inspectors' working papers on the 11-16 curriculum. They also

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\*The School Curriculum (Department of Education and Science and Welsh Office, 1981).

wish to emphasise that the absence of detailed discussion of the arts and humanities in "The School Curriculum" to which the Committee refers does not imply indifference to those areas of the curriculum.

One of the advantages of a broad curriculum is that it makes available to the pupil a wide range of skills and knowledge required for adult life and work in the modern world. Each discipline offers its own distinctive body of knowledge and encourages its own distinctive skills. Moreover the limits set by the school time-table mean that, if the curriculum is broad, each area of the curriculum is necessarily under pressure of time. This provides an incentive to concentrate on the essential elements in every course and to minimise detailed elaboration. Where a subject syllabus is overloaded or out of date, pruning is necessary. The Department of Education and Science intends to explore these aspects in its further work on curricular policy, for example in the forthcoming consultation paper on science and the follow-up to the Cockcroft report on mathematics.

### Recommendation 3

"3. The Curriculum in the last five years of compulsory schooling must take serious account of the wide variety of cultures to be found within any school."

Response: The Secretary of State for Education and Science has stated in "The School Curriculum" his belief that "what is taught in schools, and the way it is taught, must appropriately reflect fundamental values in our society ..... The work of the schools has to reflect many issues with which pupils will have to come to terms as they mature." One such issue identified in "The School Curriculum" is that "our society has become multi-cultural; and there is now among pupils and parents a greater diversity of personal values". These are matters which LEAs and schools should take into account when reviewing their curricular policies in pursuance of DES Circular 6/81.

#### Recommendation 5

"5. The Regulations relating to the information which schools are obliged to publish should be amended to include the requirement that schools should publish an explicit statement of curricular aims, and that full details of the curriculum offered should be given to parents of prospective pupils."

Response: The Education (School Information) Regulations 1981 give parents the right to much more information about their children's schools than has generally been made available hitherto. These regulations lay down minimum requirements which take into account the administrative and other burdens which requirements of this kind impose on local education authorities and schools. The regulations leave it open to schools to give a full account of the curriculum, including their curricular aims, in the information they provide for parents. The Government have no present intention to amend the regulations, which apply for the first time to arrangements in connection with the academic year beginning in the autumn of 1982. The content of the regulations will be kept under review in the light of their operation in practice.

#### Recommendation 6

"6. The model articles of government should be modified to allow for the inclusion of "principles" to which the governors shall have regard in exercising their oversight of the curriculum, that LEAs shall have the responsibility of ensuring that all schools should develop curriculum plans of this kind, and that the Secretary of State should embark upon the necessary consultations with a view to imposing duties on LEAs and governors in accordance with a general outline of what we have proposed."

Response: The statutory framework for responsibility for the curriculum in county and voluntary schools in England is defined in Section 23 of the Education Act 1944 and in the Articles of Government of individual schools. For secondary schools, these are approved by the Secretary of State (or, in the case of a voluntary school, made by him). The model Articles published by

the Secretary of State are intended to guide local education authorities and governors, but the Secretary of State exercises his powers in relation to school articles only after taking due account of local wishes.

The Secretary of State welcomes the principles for governing bodies which the Committee has outlined and these are reflected in "The School Curriculum". He has asked local education authorities and schools to review their curricular policies in the light of this document, which recommends inter alia that every school should state its curricular aims in writing. It would not, however, in the Secretary of State's view, be appropriate to incorporate any such statement of principles in a school's Articles of Government, partly because these are concerned with defining how the responsibilities of Governors, the staff and the local education authority relate to each other rather than with the nature of the curriculum, and partly because the principles offered by the Committee cannot be regarded as constituting a complete basis on which the Governors could exercise their curricular responsibilities. But if pursuant to the review requested in DES Circular 6/81 local education authorities or Governors of voluntary schools wish, after consultation, to propose a revision of a school's Articles with a view to clarifying or amending the distribution of responsibility for its curriculum, the Secretary of State will be ready to consider each such proposal on its merits.

#### Recommendation 7

"7. The DES should take on responsibility for the Foreign Language Assistants programme and should make arrangements for this to be funded centrally."

Response: The Department of Education and Science, jointly with the local authority associations, is now obtaining the views of local authorities and of university and polytechnic language departments on whether action should be taken nationally in relation to the number of foreign language assistants places in the schools. If these consultations reveal a general desire for changes in the

administrative and financial arrangements, the Government will consider the possibility of central funding or other national arrangements, having regard to the resource implications.

Recommendation 8

"8. The DES should explore means of funding exchanges with pupils from other countries."

Response: The Department agrees that it is desirable that more pupils should have an opportunity to go on an exchange to another country. It already provides, through the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges, a large range of information and advice services to help local authorities, schools, teachers and parents take full advantage of all possible opportunities at the minimum cost.

The Bureau is also able to provide some financial help for experimental schemes of exchange eg to help the disabled; and the British Council offers grants for youth group exchanges with some countries. But it is not Government policy that exchanges generally should be financially assisted from public expenditure. The member states of the European Community have not so far been able to agree on a basis for Community action designed to fund pupil exchanges or similar arrangements.

Recommendation 10

"10. HMI should monitor the provision of craft, design and technology in schools, with particular reference to the take-up by girls, and make the results available on an individual basis to LEAs."

Response: HMI seek to gain a national picture of the provision and take-up of Craft, Design and Technology through individual inspections and surveys of schools. Their findings are made known to the schools and LEAs concerned. Publications such as "Craft, Design and Technology: some successful examples", which was published in 1980, make specific reference to the needs of girls and boys and give examples of schools that have developed appropriate curricula.

Recommendation 14

"14. The phrase "religious instruction" should be replaced by "religious education" in the 1944 Act."

Response: The Education Act 1944 distinguishes religious instruction and the act of worship under the general heading of "religious education in county and voluntary schools". "Religious education" has long been the term generally used in schools and in Agreed Syllabuses. The Government have noted the views expressed to the Committee. The Government would not wish to amend this or any other provision of the Act which relates to religious education unless they were convinced that such amendment was generally regarded as essential. The Government are not at present satisfied that an amendment is desirable.

Recommendations 15 and 16

"15. The Secretary of State should now begin discussions with all interested bodies, including the church authorities, about guidance to schools on the school act of worship. These discussions should include the possibility that legislative changes may be necessary."

"16. HMI should survey current practice in schools regarding acts of worship as an aid to furthering the discussions recommended above."

Response: The Government recognise that a variety of practice has grown up in the form and content of the act of worship. The Government believe that this reflects the complexity and variety of present-day society and differences in the organisation of schools. They do not believe that it would be helpful to seek to standardise practice in this respect, but they are ready to receive representations about the act of worship from the Churches and others at any time. HMI frequently attend assemblies in the course of their inspection of schools. They are aware of current practice regarding the act of worship in secondary schools, and they are in a position to contribute information to any discussion about the collective act of worship.



Recommendation 17

"17. More properly qualified Religious Education teachers and inspectors should be appointed."

Response: Local education authorities are responsible for the appointment of their advisers and inspectors, and local education authorities and the governing bodies of schools for the appointment of teachers to maintained schools. It is for them to decide, having regard to the statutory provisions, to their policies for the curriculum and to the resources available, how many religious education teachers and advisers and inspectors to appoint. It is also for local authorities to consider among the priorities for in-service training the need for some of those currently teaching the subject to improve their qualifications. The Secretary of State has a responsibility for the supply of teachers. At present the number of specialist religious education teachers available appears to be broadly sufficient to meet the demands of appointing bodies.

Recommendation 18

"18. Those authorities which have not already done so should prepare revised religious education syllabuses in consultation with the religious leaders in their communities."

Response: In "The School Curriculum" the Secretary of State for Education and Science called on local education authorities to "reconsider from time to time the appropriateness of the Agreed Syllabus for their area in the light of the needs of particular groups of pupils and changes in the society in which the pupils are growing up". A substantial number of revised Agreed Syllabuses have been brought into use: over one-third of local education authorities in England are using syllabuses adopted since 1970 or are currently revising their syllabuses. The Government hope that this process will continue.

Recommendation 19

"19. The continued existence of voluntary denominational schools within the maintained sector should be guaranteed."

Response: Voluntary schools play an essential part in the dual system of county and voluntary schools established by the 1944 Education Act and reinforced in subsequent legislation. The Education Acts already provide a full guarantee for the place of voluntary schools in this system, and the Government are firmly committed to sustaining that guarantee. They agree with the Committee that voluntary schools contribute an important measure of diversity within the maintained system and offer choice to parents who wish to educate their children in schools which reflect their own religious beliefs. The present numbers of voluntary schools and the number of pupils educated in them is an indication of their significance: there are over 8,000 voluntary schools (about one-third of all maintained schools in England) and 1.1 million pupils are educated in them.

In the light of falling school rolls, the Secretary of State has asked in Circular 2/81 that the governors of voluntary schools should co-operate fully with local education authorities in reviewing how they might best rationalise their primary and secondary schools in the light of the staffing and curricular needs of their school population and in the interest of good education. Any resultant statutory proposals in respect of voluntary schools made under Sections 12-16 of the Education Act 1980 require the approval of the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State will continue to exercise his powers under those Sections within the broad objective of sustaining a balance between voluntary and county provision appropriate to the needs and circumstances of each area.

Recommendation 21

"21. The Schools Council should take the lead in developing "criterion referencing" in conjunction with the examination boards, the National Foundation for Education Research and representatives of industry."

Response: The Secretary of State for Education and Science has invited the Joint Council of GCE and CSE boards to include in the draft national criteria for assessment procedures in examinations at 16+, which they are now preparing, proposals for grade descriptions which would indicate to users of examination certificates the likely levels of competence and knowledge that might be expected from those who obtain a particular grade. The Secretary of State is also giving the examination boards the longer-term objective of making the award of all grades conditional on evidence of attainment in specific aspects of a subject. This longer-term objective of introducing "criterion referencing" would represent a radical departure from present procedure and the Secretary of State will play his part in ensuring that the necessary research and development is undertaken. In his view it would be appropriate for the examination boards to take the lead in a task which is closely linked to the development of national criteria for assessment procedures, but other bodies are likely to contribute to the work. The Secretary of State has undertaken to consider detailed proposals from the Joint Matriculation Board for financial assistance towards the cost of a feasibility study of criterion referencing.

Recommendation 23

"23. Once the detailed proposals for the new examination system have been drawn up by the Examining Boards' Joint Council, they should be the subject of very wide public discussion."

Response: The preparation of draft national criteria for examinations at 16+ is providing an opportunity for public debate. Many organisations and individuals, including a large number who have not previously been associated with the work of the examination boards, have taken an opportunity to comment on the preliminary proposals from the working parties of the Joint Council. The Secretary of State will take the views of these organisations and individuals into account when the Joint Council submits the draft criteria for his approval.

Recommendation 24

"24. The use of profiles for all levels of ability and achievement should be encouraged by the DES; a national, standardised form of presentation should be developed; and steps should be taken to make employers and further education aware of their content and purpose."

Response: The Secretary of State shares the Committee's belief in the value of introducing a record of achievement for all school leavers, including those who do not obtain examination certificates. Many benefits could be secured if such a record could be successfully established. Records of achievement could, for example, serve as an aid to selection for employment or further education and as a means of recognising and recording achievements and qualities which cannot be assessed in formal examinations. Records of achievement should not replace examinations: they should provide evidence of educational attainments (including those which take the form of examination qualifications) and other achievements, including those which reflect personal qualities. Further study and development work are required before detailed plans could be formulated for the general introduction of such records. The Secretary of State is now considering the way in which the necessary preparatory work should be taken forward.

Recommendation 40

"40. The annual rate of reduction of teachers allowed for in Cmnd 8175 should be preserved, and their actual over-provision in 1980-81 should be written off."

Response: The Government have accepted the spirit of this recommendation. In framing their new expenditure plans (Cmnd 8494), The Government took into account the actual number of teachers employed in 1980-81 as well as the estimated number for 1981-82. As the table below indicates, despite the higher 1980-81 total, the new plans provide for broadly the same reduction in total numbers as in Cmnd 8175 by 1982-83 as well as 1983-84.

ENGLAND, as at January in each year

Nursery, primary and secondary teachers thousands (full-time equivalents)

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
Cmnd 8175	438	*/424	411	398	383	-
Cmnd 8494	438	<u>429/</u>	418	405	390	380

\* Numbers to the left of the stepped line are actual; to the right projected.

Recommendation 44

"44. The arrangements for the probation of teachers should be considerably more thorough than they are at present and the existing one-year probationary period should be extended to two or three years."

Response: The Government agree with the need to improve arrangements for the assessment of probationers. To this end the Department of Education and Science is already consulting the local authority and teacher associations about the terms of a code of guidance for authorities on the handling of probationary teachers. The Education (Teachers) Regulations 1981 (SI 1982/106) provide in Schedule 6 for clearer definition of the probationary period and the timescales within which probation procedures should be operated.

All teachers trained in England and Wales undergo supervised teaching practice as part of their training, and training undertaken abroad is accepted only if it includes comparable teaching practice. The probationary period is one year for teachers trained in England and Wales (those trained in Scotland and Northern Ireland are similarly treated) and two years for untrained graduates or those trained overseas. There is provision, however, for these periods to be extended in cases where a local education authority is not satisfied with a probationer's progress, or shortened or waived in the light of a probationer's previous teaching experience (usually in an independent school).

In the Government's view, provided that a satisfactory code of guidance can be established, this together with the powers available to local education authorities to extend or waive probation where necessary should enable all probationers to serve the term appropriate to their own abilities as teachers. This is preferable to a general lengthening of the probation period.

Recommendation 48

"48. The DES should prepare a set of proposals for the restructuring of teachers' salaries as a matter of urgency."

Response: The Department is already involved in a review of the teachers' salary structure. Under the Remuneration of Teachers Act 1965 it is the Burnham Committee which is responsible for considering pay matters. That responsibility covers salary structures as well as levels, and the 1981 pay settlement included an agreement to consider salary structures. A review is now being undertaken by a joint working party made up of representatives appointed by both panels of the main Burnham Committee. The Department is in membership of the working party; it is to and through the management panel of that working party that the Department's views on salary structure matters are most appropriately expressed. The Department has played a full part in discussions to date and expects to continue to do so in the future.

A discussion paper has been offered by the management side. That suggested a new career scale for teachers, with provision for faster than average progression for the most able teachers. It also envisaged arrangements for entry to that career scale which would require teachers to show long-term career potential before admission. Teachers who undertook heavier responsibilities would be paid at levels above the career scale. The teachers' side has yet to respond to those suggestions. Complex issues arise, particularly over the assessment of professional and classroom performance and the identification of levels and kinds of responsibility which would merit above-scale salaries. It would be unrealistic to expect agreement to be reached quickly, but the Government have expressed general support for the proposals and the hope that agreement can be reached in due course on a salary structure which will fairly reward the best and most committed teachers.

Recommendation 53

"53. HMI should monitor in-service provision and initiate regular surveys of good practice in in-service training and publish the results."

Response: Priorities for in-service training are largely determined at LEA level, through authorities' own provision and through their policies for teacher release. The annual programme of DES/Regional courses reflects the agreed priorities of several LEAs in one region. HMI provide a programme of short courses and invitation conferences for those in the education service each year, and these often reflect national issues and policies.

HMI regularly review the level, quality and nature of in-service training provision and report their findings in occasional publications and conferences.

Special surveys of the volume and cost of in-service training in the maintained sector of education and of local authorities' policies towards in-service training have been carried out by the Department in 1978 and 1979. Results published in DES Statistical Bulletins 8/78 (for the 1978 survey) and 9/80 (for the 1979 survey) gave volume and cost figures for different types of local authority and summaries of local authority policies. These have assisted the Department and local authorities in recognising good practice in this area and in agreeing the appropriate levels of resources required. The Department and the local authorities have agreed that comprehensive annual surveys would not be justifiable. A survey of local authorities' policies towards in-service training is being held in 1982, and it is expected that there will be a survey of the volume and cost of local authority in-service training provision in 1983. The Department will continue to review, in consultation with the local authorities, the need for data in later years.

Recommendation 54

"54. The 1944 Education Act should be amended in such way as

to give the Secretary of State powers to intervene in circumstances where a nationally agreed guaranteed provision appears to be at risk."

Response: The Government have considered this recommendation in the light of Section 9 of the Committee's report, and particularly the views expressed in paragraphs 9.16 and 9.17. The Government note that the Committee has based the recommendation on a particular interpretation of the relevant provisions of the Education Act 1944. The Government do not believe that the provisions have the effect suggested by the Committee, and consider that provisions having that effect would be an undesirable arrangement.

In the Government's view, the provisions of the 1944 Act on schools are based on a carefully judged division of powers and duties between the Secretary of State; the local education authorities; school governors, heads and teachers; and parents; and the Government believe that the terms of this recommendation conflict with that allocation of responsibilities. The Committee appears to take "a nationally agreed guaranteed provision" as embracing a national minimum standard both for the provision of educational facilities, and for coverage of the curriculum. That concept seems to the Government to be alien to the variety of locally-determined provision which Parliament envisaged in the 1944 Act; and to give the Secretary of State additional powers to prescribe curricular provision in detail would be an undesirable shift in a well-tried and well-understood distribution of functions.

The Government believe that the present statutory framework, which in this context includes Sections 1, 7, 8, 17 and 23 of the 1944 Act, has proved itself since that Act came into force. The Committee recognises in Section 2 of its report that "The system envisages that the Secretary of State would in general only have influence over the curriculum, and that this influence should be mediated by a series of mechanisms, each of



which enjoys a measure of independence from political control". That formulation seems to the Government to be consistent with the stance taken in "The School Curriculum", and in DES Circular 6/81, where, having regard to the statutory functions of all the parties concerned, primary responsibility for defining curricular policy and reviewing progress in carrying out that policy is placed on the local education authorities, in the light of policies and objectives defined by the Secretary of State, and in consultation with governors, teachers, and others concerned. It should be noted that the powers conferred on the Secretary of State by Section 27 of the Education Act 1980 do not extend to the curriculum.

The Committee has devoted attention to the circumstances in which the Secretary of State might use his powers under Section 99 or (possibly) Section 68 of the 1944 Act when a local education authority was in breach of its statutory duty under Section 8 of the 1944 Act. The DES evidence on this issue made it clear that authoritative decisions on the interpretation of the relevant sections of the 1944 Act could be made only by the Courts, and that any individual case would have to be judged on its own facts. For those reasons it did not seek to set out an exhaustive set of circumstances in which the Secretary of State might be expected to use his powers, nor would it be possible to do so. The minimum standard of provision in England is prescribed by the Education Acts only in general terms, and the meaning of "education" is nowhere defined in these Acts: the interpretation of the Acts involves a substantial element of judgement, and requires also the consideration of general factors, including the spectrum of current educational practice in England.

The Secretary of State will continue to consider any complaint made to him of unreasonable action, or of a breach of statutory duty, on the part of a local education authority or a school governing body in accordance with the Education Acts and in the light of all the relevant factors. The Secretary of State has powers to act under Section 68 and 99 in relation to the circumstances of one or more individual schools and institutions,

the treatment of an individual pupil or student, or a local authority's provision as a whole. Section 68 allows the Secretary of State to give directions where an action of a local education authority or of a governing body is unreasonable; a Court decision in 1976 made it clear that the Secretary of State's powers to intervene are very limited (to cases where, for example, an authority's decision was perverse or taken in bad faith), and the section does not allow him to substitute his own view of the matter for that taken by the authority or governing body. Section 99 is a power to be used only in cases of breaches of the law: the Government believe that local education authorities and governors seek to work within the framework of the law, and therefore expect the use of the Secretary of State's powers under Section 99 to be rare.

The Government believe that it is instructive to look back at the passage of the 1944 Act through Parliament. Section 99 was largely a repetition of existing powers; and Section 68 was added at a late stage to replace a provision withdrawn in the House of Lords which would have given the Minister much more sweeping powers to substitute his judgement for that of local education authorities in determining how they should carry out their duties. The Government believe that the balance of function which resulted has proved both sensible and workable, and should not be changed.

#### Recommendation 59

"59. The DES should publish as soon as is practicable a summary of the major findings of the 1977 Secondary Staffing Survey, and should make available to the local authorities the full set of data on which these were based."

Response: Selected results from the 1977 Secondary Staffing Survey have already been published in a statistical bulletin in 1980 (DES Statistical Bulletin 6/80) and a further bulletin completing the summaries of the main topics covered by the survey was published in March 1982 (5/82). One of the purposes of such a detailed survey is to serve as a quarry for illuminating particularly policy issues. The survey has been used extensively for this purpose: for example, the statistical appendix to the

Cockcroft Report includes the results of special analyses prepared for that committee. Other analyses are available. In the Government's view it is preferable, and in accordance with the White Paper on Government Statistical Service (Cmnd 8236), to make information available in response to particular clearly directed requests rather than to publish extensive reference documents. The Department is ready to respond to such requests on the basis of its revised procedures for the dissemination of statistics outlined in Statistical Bulletin 10/81.

Recommendations 60 and 51

"60. The DES should have a much greater involvement than we deduce they have at present in the decisions about the national level of educational Grant Related Expenditures, and should have full control over the formulation of individual GREs."

"51. The DES should begin feasibility studies aimed at converting the calculation of education GRE to a method based on a curriculum-led system."

Response: The Government endorse the view of the Committee (paragraph 9.26) that the "sheer complexity of the education service requires an exceptionally high level of involvement on the part of the specialist department in the forming of expenditure plans". The national total of the education grant-related expenditure (GRE) is derived from the Government's plans for local authority expenditure on the education service. The methodology for calculating the education GRE for each LEA has been developed by the Government in consultation with representatives of the local authority associations and continues to be refined by that process. The major part of the development work on the methodology for calculating education GREs is done within the DES in consultation with representatives of central government departments and the local authority associations through the Grants Working Group which operates under the auspices of the Consultative Council on Local Government Finance. Final decisions about the methodology for calculating education and other components of GRE assessments are taken by Ministers collectively.

The existence of clearly defined client groups for the main sectors of the education service has facilitated the development of a better founded methodology for education GREs than is possible for the GREs for some other services. The present method of calculating education GREs seeks to take account of differences between LEAs arising from such factors as the higher costs of providing school education in sparsely populated areas, and the proportion of children with additional educational needs. Insofar as curriculum-led staffing would lead to differences in relative staffing needs between authorities, the differences are likely to be reflected through these factors. Converting the calculation of GRE nationally to a basis of curriculum-led staffing would presuppose the adoption for this purpose of a particular national curriculum pattern, and this seems neither desirable nor necessary at this stage in the development of GRE.

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*Oddi wrth Ysgrifennydd Gwladol Cymru*



Rt Hon Nicholas Edwards MP

*Wm 2/4*

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*From The Secretary of State for Wales*

*20<sup>th</sup>* April 1982

*De Reile*

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter dated 6 April addressed to the Home Secretary, about the Second Report of the Education, Science and Arts Committee, "The Secondary School Curriculum and Examinations: with special reference to the 14-16 year old age group".

I note that the report is essentially concerned with education in England and I am content with the draft White Paper which represents the first stage of the response to its recommendations. However, I would like a sentence included in the foreword to the White Paper to indicate that the Select Committee addressed its inquiry to the situation in England and that its recommendations are not directed to Education Ministers collectively.

I am copying this letter to colleagues on H Committee and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*over*  
*Ned*

The Rt Hon Sir Keith Joseph  
Secretary of State for Education and Science  
Department of Education and Science  
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20 APR 1982



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