

1. INTRODUCTION

The Secretary of State for Education has announced a major review of the National Curriculum. Led by the Department for Education (DfE), it will be supported by an advisory committee and an expert panel, and will, (in the government's own words):

- replace the current substandard curriculum with one based on the best school systems in the world, providing a world-class resource for teachers and children;
- consider what subjects should be compulsory at what age;
- consider what children should be taught in the main subjects at what age.

This Summary is based on the press notice released on the review's launch on 20 January 2011, and subsequently published material.

2. TIMETABLE

January 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review launched. • Call for Evidence (phase 1) begins.
April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for Evidence (phase 1) ends.
Early 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation on phase 1 recommendations (including new Programmes of Study (PoS) for English, mathematics, science and physical education). • Call for Evidence (phase 2) begins.
Spring 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministers announce decisions on <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) PoS for English, mathematics, science and physical education; 2) the other subjects to be included in the new National Curriculum (NC). • Call for Evidence (phase 2) ends.
September 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New PoS for English, mathematics, science and physical education made available to schools.
Early 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation on new PoS for all other subjects to be included in the NC.
Spring 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministers announce decisions about the PoS for all other subjects to be included in the NC.
September 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching of the new PoS for English, mathematics, science and physical education becomes statutory. • New PoS for all other subjects included in the new NC are made available to schools.
September 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching of the new PoS for all other subjects to be included in the NC becomes statutory.

3. AIMS

The review's launch notice says that the National Curriculum should have the following aims at heart:

- to embody rigour and high standards and create coherence in what is taught in schools;
- to ensure all children have the opportunity to acquire a core of essential knowledge in the key subject disciplines;
- beyond that core, to allow teachers the freedom to use their professionalism and expertise to help all children realise their potential.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE REVIEW

The principal objectives for the review are to:

- give teachers greater professional freedom over how they organise and teach the curriculum;
- develop a National Curriculum that acts as a benchmark for all schools and provides young people with the knowledge they need to move confidently and successfully through their education, taking into account the needs of different groups including the most able and pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND);
- ensure the content of our National Curriculum compares favourably with the most successful international curricula in the highest performing jurisdictions, reflecting the best collective wisdom we have about how children learn and what they should know;
- set rigorous requirements for pupil attainment that measure up to those in the highest performing jurisdictions in the world;
- enable parents to understand what their children should be learning throughout their school career and therefore to support their education.

5. REVIEW REMIT

The review (in two phases and following the timetable in Section 2 above) will consider all subjects that are currently part of the National Curriculum:

- art and design
- citizenship
- design and technology
- English
- geography
- history
- information and communication technology (ICT)
- mathematics
- modern foreign languages (MFL)
- music
- physical education (PE)
- science

The first phase of the review will focus on:

- the overall shape and nature of the National Curriculum, including which subjects beyond English, mathematics, science and physical education should have statutory or non-statutory programmes of study in the future;
- cross-cutting issues including the support needed by schools to enable effective implementation;
- the development of new Programmes of Study in English, mathematics, science and physical education.

The review will also provide advice on the following:

- the extent to which the content of the National Curriculum should be set out on a year-by-year basis, to ensure knowledge is built systematically and consistently;
- what, if anything, should replace existing attainment targets and level descriptors to better define the standards of attainment children should reach, and be assessed against, at various points throughout their education;
- what is needed to provide expectations for progression to support the least able and stretch the most able;
- how the National Curriculum can support the provision of more helpful advice and information to parents on their child's progress;
- how the content of the National Curriculum can support the embedding of equality and inclusion.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

The review will advise ministers on:

- how introduction of the new programmes of study in each subject should be phased in;
- what kind of support the school workforce will need to implement the new National Curriculum effectively, taking account, in particular, of the implications of introducing new programmes of study in some subjects in 2013 and others in 2014; and
- what issues need to be considered in relation to related policy areas such as assessment, accountability and inspection, to ensure all aspects of the education system are coherent and aligned behind the new National Curriculum.

7. CONSULTATION

A Call for Evidence has been launched, inviting all interested parties to contribute to the review and the development of the new National Curriculum. A further Call for Evidence will be issued in early 2012 for phase 2 of the review. The DfE will organise a series of consultation events for key stakeholders and work to ensure headteachers, classroom teachers, parents and others are able to contribute to the work of developing the new National Curriculum. Regular updates on the progress of the review will be provided via the Department's website.

8. PHASE 1 CALL FOR EVIDENCE

The deadline for responses in the phase 1 consultation is **14 April 2011**.

Full details, and downloadable consultation documents, are at:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/> > clicking on **National Curriculum Review – Call for Evidence** under 'All live consultations'.

Full details of the National Curriculum Review and related documents can be found at:
<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/nationalcurriculum>

This website includes a direct link to the Call for Evidence consultation webpage, as well as information about the review's Advisory Committee and Expert Panel, their memberships and remits.