

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report**

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| Decision Maker: | Executive Lead Member for Children's Services |
| Date of Decision: | 17 December 2009 |
| Decision Title: | The future of the Primary Curriculum in Hampshire |
| Decision Reference: | 1021 |
| Report From: | The Director of Children's Services |

Contact name: Mrs Chris Jones, Senior Inspector/Adviser (Primary)

Tel: 01962 846338

Email: christine.1.jones@hants.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

1.1. Two key reports on Primary Education, The Independent Review of the National Curriculum, and The Cambridge Review have been published this year. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) commissioned the Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum led by Sir Jim Rose and the recommendations from this Review are currently being taken through the Parliamentary process with a view to a revised National Curriculum for the Primary Phase being implemented from September 2011.

1.2. This paper intends to:

- Inform the Executive Lead Member of the proposed changes to the Primary National Curriculum
- Seek the approval of the Executive Lead Member for the Hampshire response to the proposed changes
- Seek the approval of the Executive Lead Member for the steps that Hampshire is intending to take to support Headteachers with developments in relation to the National Curriculum.

2. Contextual information

2.1. The proposed new Primary Curriculum has three central overarching aims and values:

- To create successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve
- To develop confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives

- To foster responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

2.2 These aims and values sit well with Hampshire's published document *Education in Hampshire in the Primary Years* and with the Hampshire Children and Young People's Plan. These aims and values are also central to the new Secondary Curriculum which was introduced two years ago.

The key features of the proposed new Primary Curriculum are:

- The continuing importance of subjects and the essential knowledge within them
- The importance of the development of skills and understanding
- The strong focus on progression
- English, mathematics and Information, Communication Technology (ICT) as central to the curriculum
- Every child having an entitlement to a broad, rich and exciting curriculum which links learning to their experiences and is relevant to them
- Clear links across subject areas so that subjects are not taught in isolation
- An emphasis on children's personal development and well-being
- Clear links between the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and then linking to Key Stage 3
- A language opportunity for all 7-11 year olds.

2.3 The new curriculum being proposed has 6 areas of learning:

- Understanding English, communication and languages
- Mathematical understanding
- Scientific and technological understanding
- Historical, geographical and social understanding
- Understanding physical development, health and well-being
- Understanding the arts.

2.4 The curriculum is structured as follows:

- An importance statement which outlines why the area is essential for children to learn
- Essential knowledge to be covered which indicates what children need to know within an area of learning
- Key Skills to be taught to enable children to make progress in this area of learning
- Breadth of learning which is the range of content through which children will develop understanding
- Curriculum progression across the Primary years
- Opportunities for cross-curricular learning.

2.5 The proposed changes present a significant development in the way that the curriculum is structured. The revised curriculum is underpinned with an understanding of the interlocking way in which children learn and develop physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially, morally and spiritually. It recognises that children do not learn in subjects but it seeks to ensure that children enjoy the unique primary years of their development. We welcome these proposed developments in the curriculum as well as the renewed emphasis on a child's personal development and well-being. These are essential if children are to learn and make progress.

3. Key Issues

3.1. Hampshire County Council is already well-placed to respond to any proposed changes to the Primary National Curriculum. Whatever form statute takes, in Hampshire we are taking the opportunity to review planned learning in the primary school. This process should enrich the learning in all schools, enhance inclusion and lead to better outcomes for all children. The curriculum debate is already underway with schools and this has been supported by the second Primary Conference in September 2009 led by Professor Mick Waters which was attended by more than 500 delegates.

3.2. The intention is to build on the Hampshire documentation already in place in order to further define the entitlement for every child in a Hampshire School. Taking into account:

- The proposed changes to the National Curriculum
- The full Independent Review of the National Curriculum led by Jim Rose
- The Cambridge Review published in October, led by Robin Alexander
- Information from successful Hampshire Schools and schools across the country.

3.3. In "A Primary Curriculum for Learning", Hampshire proposed an approach to the development of the curriculum which ensures that the values of the school and community combined with the understanding of how our children make best progress are at the heart of the design and planning of the curriculum.

3.4. It is the intention of the primary team to promote this approach within the framework of understanding about the entitlement of every child within a Hampshire School. We will ensure that the support for leaders in schools is appropriately tailored to each school, thereby taking due account of their progress in developing their curriculum.

3.5. It is also intended that support for schools in developing their curriculum will be through existing networks and groups of schools. Opportunities for partnership working will be further developed and links between schools promoted in the context of the Hampshire Children's Trust. This will ensure that each school is able to respond positively to any new national arrangements.

4. Future direction

4.1. It is important to recognise that the introduction of a new Primary National Curriculum will challenge some schools and a report will be presented to the Executive Lead Member in the summer to enable him to review the progress that has been made and the implications of final outcomes from the Parliamentary process.

5. Finance

5.1. There are no direct financial implications from this report at this time. In the financial year 2009/10 £110,000 has already been earmarked to work with schools on developing areas of the curriculum. This is from the Targeted Primary Standards Fund grant 1.7. This work is being led by District Managers and includes the development of curriculum networks. It is intended the similar levels of funding will be made available for this purpose in 2010/11 from Targeted Primary Standards Fund grant 1.7. This will need to be agreed through the Primary Standing Committee.

6. Outline of Options

6.1. This report is intended to seek approval for the Council's response to the proposed changes in the Primary National Curriculum and no further options have been considered at this time.

7. Recommendation(s)

7.1. It is recommended the Executive Lead Member:

- Receive the information on the proposed changes to the Primary National Curriculum
- Comment and support the revision by Officers of the current Hampshire documentation based on the proposed changes and other reviews. Support the use of this revised documentation to aid Headteachers in the introduction of a new Primary National Curriculum
- Receive a further report in the Summer to update on the final outcomes from the Parliamentary process and update on the progress of any necessary changes in Primary Schools.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Corporate Strategy

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| Hampshire safer and more secure for all: | no |
| Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate): | |
| Maximising well-being: | Yes |
| Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate): | |
| Enhancing our quality of place: | no |
| Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate): | |
| OR | |
| This proposal does not link to the Corporate Strategy but, nevertheless, requires a decision because: | |

Other Significant Links

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

1.1. Equalities issues have been considered and no adverse impact identified

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1. These proposals will have no impact on crime and disorder.

3. Climate Change:

a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

These proposals will have no impact on our carbon footprint /energy.

b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

These proposals will have no impact on climate change