THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM & THE TEACHERS' STANDARDS

FOREWORD BY DYLAN WILIAM

THE COMPLETE PROGRAMMES OF STUDY FOR KEY STAGES 1-3 & THE TEACHERS' STANDARDS IN FULL
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3 THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM IN ENGLAND

Aims

3.1 The national curriculum provides pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge that they need to be educated citizens. It introduces pupils to the best that has been thought and said; and helps engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.

3.2 The national curriculum is just one element in the education of every child. There is time and space in the school day and in each week, term and year to range beyond the national curriculum specifications. The national curriculum provides an outline of core knowledge around which teachers can develop exciting and stimulating lessons to promote the development of pupils’ knowledge, understanding and skills as part of the wider school curriculum.

Structure

3.3 Pupils of compulsory school age in community and foundation schools, including community special schools and foundation special schools, and in voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools, must follow the national curriculum. It is organised on the basis of four key stages and twelve subjects, classified in legal terms as ‘core’ and ‘other foundation’ subjects.

3.4 The Secretary of State for Education is required to publish programmes of study for each national curriculum subject, setting out the ‘matters, skills and processes’ to be taught at each key stage. Schools are free to choose how they organise their school day, as long as the content of the national curriculum programmes of study is taught to all pupils.

3.5 The structure of the national curriculum, in terms of which subjects are compulsory at each key stage, is set out in the table below:
3.6 All schools are also required to teach religious education at all key stages. Secondary schools must provide sex and relationship education.

Key stage 4 entitlement areas

3.7 The arts (comprising art and design, music, dance, drama and media arts), design and technology, the humanities (comprising geography and history) and modern foreign language are not compulsory national curriculum subjects after the age of 14, but all pupils in maintained schools have a statutory entitlement to be able to study a subject in each of those four areas.
3.8 The statutory requirements in relation to the entitlement areas are:

- schools must provide access to a minimum of one course in each of the four entitlement areas
- schools must provide the opportunity for pupils to take a course in all four areas, should they wish to do so
- a course that meets the entitlement requirements must give pupils the opportunity to obtain an approved qualification.