

## Secondary Curriculum Local Authority Newsletter

### Phase 3

Edition 14 – September 2009

#### Introduction to September Newsletter

#### Welcome to Phase Three support for the Secondary Curriculum.

We hope you had an enjoyable summer despite the weather.

This e-newsletter is at the start of Phase Three support for the further development and implementation of the Secondary Curriculum in schools and colleges. It contains up to date information on the support available from the partners. Phase Three will clearly be a time to take stock and evaluate the impact of these developments on young people's learning and to plan for further improvement. A key aid to this process will be the new Ofsted Framework and the accompanying Self Evaluation Form which encourages schools and colleges to evaluate the impact of the curriculum on learners within the context of the Every Child Matters outcomes.

The Aspect regional advisers are looking forward to working with you on further developments and evaluation of impact over the next seven months. A particular feature of this work will be sharing practice. To enable this to happen, QCDA together with Aspect will be organising regional conferences in the Spring to facilitate this and to consider approaches to evaluation.

We look forward to meeting Local Authority representatives at the QCDA/Aspect Conference in London on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

**Judith Hibbert**

ASPECT National Adviser New Secondary Curriculum

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## What are the partners doing?

### Aspect

Aspect regional advisers will be renewing contacts with all Local Authorities in their region to ensure that The Named Link;

- is still the appropriate person to contact
- has up to date information about developments
- is aware of the full range of support available from partners, in order to encourage schools to access this.

Aspect is available to support Local Authorities in the following ways:

- one to one support for new and existing Named Link people
- presentations to Local Authority teams

We can provide support and materials in the following areas:

- The 'big picture' context for curriculum development – joining initiatives up
- Implications for the curriculum of the new Ofsted framework
- Developing a coherent curriculum
- Increasing student commitment to learning
- Disciplined innovation
- Outcomes based accountability in relation to the curriculum
- Developing governors' capacity to understand the implications of the Secondary Curriculum

These will be formally published over the Autumn Term through CfBT.

#### Aspect Regional Advisers

REGION	Associate	Email
South East & South West (part)	Martin Baxter	<a href="mailto:martin.baxter@sageinterim.co.uk">martin.baxter@sageinterim.co.uk</a>
North West	Maxine Froggatt	<a href="mailto:maxinefroggatt@yahoo.co.uk">maxinefroggatt@yahoo.co.uk</a>
Yorks & Humberside	Judith Hibbert	<a href="mailto:judith.hibbert@ntlworld.com">judith.hibbert@ntlworld.com</a>
West Midlands	Pat Lockett	<a href="mailto:patricia.lockett@orange.fr">patricia.lockett@orange.fr</a>
Eastern & South West (part)	Bill Miller	<a href="mailto:bill@csnconsultancy.co.uk">bill@csnconsultancy.co.uk</a>
East Midlands	John Pearce	<a href="mailto:johnpearce@ntlworld.com">johnpearce@ntlworld.com</a>
London	Vicki Pite	<a href="mailto:victoria@pites.globalnet.co.uk">victoria@pites.globalnet.co.uk</a>
North East	John Smith	<a href="mailto:etc@smoaklands.com">etc@smoaklands.com</a>

## QCDA



### **The 11-19 Curriculum, from Implementation to Development**

With the implementation phase of the 11-19 education and qualification reforms well underway, it is now time to ensure the changes are secure and that they really can make a difference for learners.

This month we will be launching a new publication: *The 11-19 curriculum, from implementation to development*, which sets out the next steps for the reforms. As well as offering valuable support it provides links to further guidance so that schools can select and focus on their own priorities and access the support and guidance they need to take the next steps.

*From implementation to development* is being launched at QCDA and Aspect's Conference for Local Authority advisers on 22 September in London. The conference is designed to help staff from Local Authority advisory services reflect on earlier phases of the New Secondary Curriculum implementation, consider implications for Phase 3 and the proposed primary curriculum reform. A series of workshops led by Aspect and QCDA will enable delegates to share effective strategies for curriculum change to support curriculum implementation.

## NCSL

### **NCSL is changing**



NCSL's remit now includes leaders of schools, children's centres and children's services. To reflect this we're changing our name. From September 2009 our new name will be [National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services](#)

### **NCSL has launched the Developing Senior Leadership Teams programme**

It is targeted at secondary school senior leadership teams. It offers tailored support for participating schools over six to nine months, to help senior leadership teams constructively think about how to address key challenges. For further details please visit [www.ncsl.org.uk/dslt](http://www.ncsl.org.uk/dslt).

## Specialist Schools and Academies Trust

### Curriculum Design Events

#### Who we are?

Since January 2008 the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust has been providing support and guidance for curriculum managers as part of the New Secondary Curriculum implementation programme. Throughout the programme we have worked closely with national partners in order to ensure schools receive consistent and useful support.

September 2009 sees the programme enter its third phase of support culminating in March 2010. During this period, SSAT will be working, in conjunction with the National College for School Leadership (National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services from September 2009), to provide opportunities for schools to explore and develop their curriculum as well as continuing to share current exemplars of school curriculum development.

#### How can we help you?

In order to enable you and your colleagues to take advantage of the support in an environment of 'rarely cover', we are offering a variety of opportunities for schools and local authorities.

- **Two series of FREE events per year** plus development of further resources and opportunities to support curriculum design.
- **Face-to-face support** via Local Authority contact/INSET day activities.
- **A new publication: 'Curriculum design in action'** bringing together all previous publications and with new sections on important elements of the 11-19 reforms.
- **A think tank event** taking place in October looking at transition and coherence between all sectors of education through to primary, Further Education and Higher Education.
- **Curriculum exchanges** - Providing an opportunity to see an innovative school's curriculum model live and in depth. Delegates will have the opportunity to see curriculum design in action, as well as speaking to the Lead Practitioner, staff and students and observing (and indeed joining in) learning.
- **Curriculum residential** – A two day professional development residential for new curriculum designers. Numbers will be restricted to ensure individual needs will be met.

For further information about taking full advantage of any of these opportunities and to book, please visit [www.ssatrust.org.uk/curriculumdesign](http://www.ssatrust.org.uk/curriculumdesign)

## CfBT

### Regional Cross Curriculum Conferences

In the last newsletter we mentioned the forthcoming events that the Subject Associations are delivering. The newsletter mentioned the subject who was leading at each event. Please note that this is purely for administration purposes. The events will be covered by different groups of Subject Associations all inputting equally into the events. This series of 18 events are designed to help subject leaders to understand how subject areas can work together effectively to deliver the New Secondary Curriculum. Each event will showcase ways of working together across a range of different subject areas.

Please find below details and the link to book your free place on-line at the event of your choice.

<http://dom.cfbt.com/NSC/NSCDeIMgmt.nsf/nscmap?openpage>

### Art & Design, Citizenship, Design & Technology, Geography and Physical Education

Eastern	Friday 9 October 09	Huntingdon Marriott
North West	Thursday 15 October 09	Manchester United FC
East Midlands	Thursday 22 October 09	Leicester Tigers
South West	Wednesday 4 November 09	Taunton Racecourse Ltd
North East	Tuesday 26 January 2010	Life Conference & Banqueting
Yorkshire & Humberside	Wednesday 10 February 2010	Metropole Leeds
West Midlands	Monday 1 March 2010	Holiday Inn Birmingham City
South East	Thursday 11 March 2010	Wooton House, Dorking
London	Wednesday 17 March 2010	Marriott Maida Vale

**Music, Languages, History, PSHEe and Religious Education**

<b>North East</b>	<b>Monday 9 November 09</b>	<b>Marriott Gosforth</b>
<b>West Midlands</b>	<b>Thursday 19 November 09</b>	<b>Warwick Conference</b>
<b>South East</b>	<b>Monday 23 November 09</b>	<b>Wooton House, Dorking</b>
<b>Yorkshire &amp; Humberside</b>	<b>Wednesday 25 November 09</b>	<b>Metropole Leeds</b>
<b>London</b>	<b>Thursday 3 December 09</b>	<b>Hilton Kensington</b>
<b>Eastern</b>	<b>Monday 8 February 2010</b>	<b>Huntingdon Marriott</b>
<b>North West</b>	<b>Tuesday 2 March 2010</b>	<b>Manchester United FC</b>
<b>East Midlands</b>	<b>Monday 8 March 2010</b>	<b>Leicester Tigers</b>
<b>South West</b>	<b>Tuesday 16 March 2010</b>	<b>Taunton Racecourse Ltd</b>

## Subject Associations

### The Subject Association National Subject Leads are as follows:

Art & Design	John Bowden	johnxbowden@btinternet.com
Citizenship	Pete Pattisson	pete@petepattisson.com
Design & Technology	Andy Mitchell	info@data.org.uk
Geography	David Rayner	david.rayner@blueyonder.co.uk
History	Alf Wilkinson	alf.wilkinson@history.org.uk
Languages	Kathy Wicksteed	kathywicksteed@tiscali.co.uk
Music	Jonathan Savage	j.savage@mmu.ac.uk
Physical Education	Andrew Frapwell	a.frapwell@btopenworld.com
PSHE	Nick Boddington	gnboddington@gmail.com
Religious Education	Dave Francis	nsl@natre.org.uk

## National Society for Education in Art & Design

Website : [www.nsead.org](http://www.nsead.org)

e-mail : [nscsupport@nsead.org](mailto:nscsupport@nsead.org)

### Art and design free New Secondary Curriculum support - NSEAD working in partnership with Local Authorities

The NSEAD art and design team responsible for the support programme for the Secondary Curriculum in art and design is available to work flexibly with Local Authorities and local networks of schools to provide FREE art and design training as a partnership activity. The team is able to plan and provide a half day session for secondary art and design teachers within a Local Authority or for teachers from adjacent Local Authorities who are working together.

The half day session consists of a presentation by a National Subject Lead covering Art and Design Programme of Study and its implications, together with a follow up audit activity which establishes development areas for each school attending. Some of the extensive support material that has now been developed includes: web based case studies and DVDs. These show cross curricular approaches that integrate art and design with other disciplines and also feature a possible cross curricular planning activity.

It would be the responsibility of the Local Authority network co-ordinator to send out publicity to their schools, provide the venue and meet any catering requirements. NSEAD would plan and deliver the programme content and interactive workshop activities for the event with local Regional Subject Adviser(s) in attendance who could subsequently contribute to any network that might develop from the event.

If there is someone in the Local Authority who would like to follow up this offer of free support please contact John Bowden, joint National Subject Leader for art and design in the Secondary Curriculum, by e mail at [nscsupport@nsead.org](mailto:nscsupport@nsead.org), or by telephone on 07947582012.

If you wish to discuss an alternative programme content and duration of the event, or any other ways in which the team might work with art and design teachers in Local Authorities, please do not hesitate to make contact.



## Geographical Association

Website : [www.geography.org.uk](http://www.geography.org.uk) e-mail : [info@geography.org.uk](mailto:info@geography.org.uk)

### Geographical Association

The Geographical Association continues to offer support for Key Stage 3 for another two terms as part of the DCSF/CfBT Project. As teachers begin the second year of implementing the Secondary Curriculum, alongside all the other changes at Key Stage and Key Stage 5, we are trying to ensure that Geography Departments create a coherent Key Stage 3 Scheme of Learning with clear lines of progression. We believe that Geography has the potential to, not only deliver a real, relevant and topical geography curriculum, but also has the potential to make a significant contribution to the broader curriculum – the Personal Learning and Thinking Skills, the Cross-Curriculum Dimensions and cross-curriculum working. The eighteen cross-curriculum Regional Events planned for the next two terms will provide innovative ideas for doing some of this work and we would encourage geographers to sign up for them.

We are also looking for a large group of schools to participate in the **BBC News School Report** project which provides an ideal opportunity for Geography Departments to showcase the excellent Key Stage 3 work that they are doing to a wider public audience and to raise the profile of the subject in the school. Further details are available from:

<http://api.ning.com/files/W4dR49UTA3IEwYvgQpYzP0GaH0XipShpzSo8pv60pV3CmxCkmQJqFE22UTLLwKi9WcBGG-5R4H4D8FyiwjCnpJLh00IHFIyw/BBCNewsSchoolReportProjectGA.doc>

or please e-mail me directly if you are interested in getting involved in the **BBC News School Report Project**.

There are 20 Regional Subject Advisers [RSAs] available to work with small networks of schools across each of the nine government regions. They can offer a range of free Continuous Professional Development sessions from full day to twilight plus support via email. The team of Geography Regional Subject Advisers is currently involved in developing sessions on using GIS in lessons and increasing the use of Learning outside the Classroom. However, the focus for these Continuous Professional Development sessions is completely negotiable and therefore dependent on you – please get in touch to discuss your needs.

**David Rayner** ([david.rayner@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:david.rayner@blueyonder.co.uk))

**National Subject Lead** for Geography working on behalf of The Geographical Association



## The Historical Association

Website : [www.history.org.uk](http://www.history.org.uk) e-mail : [alf.wilkinson@history.org.uk](mailto:alf.wilkinson@history.org.uk)

All History Regional Subject Advisers are keen to continue to support existing networks, where they are able, until the end of the contract in March 2010. We are also trying, specifically, to reach those 'schools in challenging circumstances,' especially those who have not previously taken up our offer of support. The other aspect of the contract we are working on is a series of cross-curricular days where History is working with Music, Languages, PSHE and RE to deliver a conference in each Government region over the next two terms (see page 7 for details). We are also working, on request, with various Local Authorities to develop materials that show how history can contribute to the whole school curriculum without losing the distinctive contribution history makes to a rounded education.

Please do contact us and make use of this free support for history teachers.

### History Lead Regional Subject Advisers 2009-2010

Govt region	RSA
North West	Rachael Povey
North East	Maggie Wilson
Yorkshire	Joanne Pearson
East Midlands	Eleanor-Langston-Jones
West Midlands	Rachael Povey
East Anglia	Joanne Philpott
South East	Dave Martin
South West	Dean Smart
London	Dave Martin

All Regional Subject Advisers can be contacted as usual via me: [e] [alf.wilkinson@history.org.uk](mailto:alf.wilkinson@history.org.uk) [t] 01529 460553 or via their Historical Association email: [region]@history.org.uk.

Don't forget that there is an ever-increasing range of materials specifically designed to support the implementation of the Secondary Curriculum on the Historical Association website at: [www.history.org.uk/resources/secondary\\_resource\\_1215\\_45.html](http://www.history.org.uk/resources/secondary_resource_1215_45.html).



## Association for Language Learning

Website : [www.all-nsc.org.uk](http://www.all-nsc.org.uk)

e-mail : [kathywicksteed@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:kathywicksteed@tiscali.co.uk)

### Please get in touch

The Regional Subject Advisers for languages will be continuing to run workshops in each region over the next two terms and we would be glad to discuss how we can work with you. The workshops will continue to share a wide range of creative ideas for the new curriculum, and will also engage with the renewed Key Stage 3 Framework as a key element to support planning.

### Contacts

The contacts for Secondary Curriculum support from September are:

National Subject Lead: Kathy Wicksteed

Assistant National Subject Lead: Liz Fotheringham

#### Regional Co-ordinators:

North West and Yorkshire-Humberside – Wendy Adeniji

North East – Claire Dodd

West Midlands – John Connor

East Midlands – Sarah Brooks

Eastern Region – Rachel Hawkes

London – Liz Fotheringham

South East – Sara Vaughan

South West – Kathy Wicksteed

The Co-ordinators can be reached through Kathy at [kathyw@all-languages.org.uk](mailto:kathyw@all-languages.org.uk).

### **Curriculum Now!**

Later this month, the Association is publishing a new curriculum guide written by Rachel Hawkes, entitled *Curriculum Now!* It is a lively and detailed account of the changes that Rachel and her colleagues have made to the curriculum at Comberton Village College. It focuses on the links they have made with other subjects and the development of their work on thinking skills, memory and phonics. These changes have led to significant increases in pupils' speaking skills, confidence and enjoyment of language lessons. The publication will be accompanied by online resources. More details and an order form can be downloaded from [www.all-nsc.org.uk](http://www.all-nsc.org.uk).

### **Linked Up Award Scheme**

The Association for Language Learning is managing a new award scheme which will fund over 100 curriculum development projects up to March 2011.

Funded by the DCSF as part of the Links into Languages programme, Linked Up offers financial support for innovative projects run by groups of schools and colleges, including primary, secondary and Further Education institutions. Projects, which are supported by a mentor, must reflect current priorities for languages and produce dissemination materials for other teachers. The amount of funding will normally be in the region of £3,000, with a few larger projects receiving up to £10,000.

Linked Up is also working with the Business Language Champions programme led by CILT, the National Centre for Languages, to fund a further 18 project networks aimed at bringing together employers and young people to make the case for language learning.

The scheme will fund a range of different kinds of partnerships, and we hope to work closely with local authorities and initial teacher training institutions.

Full details, an application form and application guidelines are available from [www.linksintolanguages.ac.uk/linkedup](http://www.linksintolanguages.ac.uk/linkedup).

Kathy Wicksteed

[kathyw@all-languages.org.uk](mailto:kathyw@all-languages.org.uk)

Tel: 01858 575 864

## The PSHE Association

Website; [www.pshe-association](http://www.pshe-association)

Email: [gnboddington@gmail.com](mailto:gnboddington@gmail.com)

### 'Meeting the opportunities and challenges for statutory PSHE Education in schools'

#### ***Regional PSHE Education Conferences for Schools' PSHE Education Co-ordinators and Healthy Schools Co-ordinators, PSHE and Healthy Schools Advisers***

This is a critical time for PSHE Education and it is vital that colleagues are up-to-date on the implications and management of current developments in this subject.

In Summer 2009 Sir Alasdair Macdonald's review called for PSHE education to move to statutory status as a foundation subject in Key Stages 3 and 4.

The White Paper, 'Your Child, Your School, Our Future; building a 21<sup>st</sup> century school system' confirms, that subject to the consultation, every student will receive personal social health and economic education as part of their curriculum entitlement. This new legislation also states that they will be taught in a way that meets their needs and where progress is regularly checked, addressing concerns raised in previous Ofsted reports.

A comprehensive assessed PSHE education provision will make a significant contribution to generating the data required to demonstrate the impact of the provision schools offer to improving students' wellbeing rather than a simple description of this provision. This is impact data essential if schools are to evidence they meet the higher-grade descriptors contained within the 2009 Ofsted schedule of judgements.

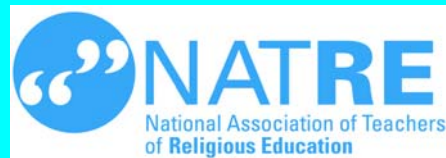
In Spring 2010 the DCSF, CfBT and the PSHE Association will be hosting a series of regional conferences to support: schools' PSHE education co-ordinators; Healthy Schools Co-ordinators; and Local Authority PSHE education and Healthy Schools Advisers in preparing for the change to statutory status.

The conferences will launch and distribute a comprehensive tool-kit to assist colleagues;

- Evaluate their current practice and provision against benchmarks.
- Share a collective vision for the future of PSHE education
- Make explicit the links between the programmes of study for PSHE education, the 3 statutory aims of the national curriculum and the Every Child Matters outcomes
- Reconfirm research-evidenced principles of effective practice in PSHE education
- Comprehensively assess attainment and progress in PSHE education
- Make explicit the essential contribution an assessed PSHE education provision contributes to Ofsted self-review of the impact schools' make to student wellbeing and evidencing the higher-grade descriptors contained within the 2009 Ofsted evaluation schedule of judgements.

The dates of these conferences are detailed below and venues are currently being confirmed.

Eastern	5th March 2010
North West	9th February 2010
East Midlands	2nd February 2010
South West	12th February 2010
North East	17th March 2010
Yorkshire and Humberside	5th February 2010
West Midlands	9th March 2010
South East	19th March 2010
London	12th March 2010



## The National Association of Teachers of RE

Website: <http://www.natre.org.uk>

e-mail: [info@natre.org.uk](mailto:info@natre.org.uk)

In the Autumn term 2009 and Spring term 2010, there will be 18 **free regional conferences** (see page 7) on the theme of cross-curricular working. Nine of these conferences will include specific support for Religious Education Subject Leaders.

For these events, Regional Subject Advisers for Religious Education will work alongside those for Music, Languages, History, and PSHE education and demonstrate models of cross-curricular planning that enable effective subject learning to take place.

Examples of 'compelling learning' will also be a feature of the day and delegates will have the opportunity to engage in their own guided planning of cross-curricular approaches that reflect the requirements of the Secondary Curriculum.

The events that feature Religious Education are scheduled as follows:

EVENT	VENUE	DATE
North East	Marriott Gosforth	Mon 09/11/2009
West Midlands	Warwick Conferences	Thur 19/11/2009
South East	Wotton House, Dorking	Mon 23/11/2009
Yorkshire & Humberside	Metropole, Leeds	Wed 25/11/2009
London	Kensington Hilton	Thur 03/12/2009
East	Huntingdon Marriott	Mon 08/02/2010
North West	Manchester United FC	Tues 02/03/2010
East Midlands	Leicester Tigers	Mon 08/03/2010
South West	Taunton Racecourse Ltd	Tues 16/03/2010

For details of how teachers can book places on these conferences, see page 7 of this newsletter.

Dave Francis

e: [nsl@natre.org](mailto:nsl@natre.org)

## Case Study

### Case Study from Darlington -

#### A Local Authority's approach to gaining a view on the development of the secondary curriculum.

#### What were you trying to achieve?

Darlington is a relatively small unitary Local Authority that maintains eight secondary schools.

The Local Authority developed an approach to inform the view of secondary curriculum development across the Borough. The underlying rationale was to understand the issues surrounding curriculum transition and continuity at the Key Stage 2/3 interface and consider themes such as:

- Personal Learning and Thinking Skills
- Functional skills components of English, maths and ICT
- Programmes such as 'Opening Minds' on pedagogy in other year groups and in other subjects
- The effects of SATs removal at Key Stage 3
- The rigour and impact of Assessment for Learning processes including Assessing Pupils Progress
- Transition and progression. How is the school working to improve progression transition? What do the Personal Learning and Thinking Skills look like in relation to transition?
- What impact in terms of planning and delivery have the new Key Stage 3 frameworks had on pedagogy and progression?
- Lengths & timings of Key Stages.

As the project has evolved, since December 2008, the importance of commissioning within the Local Authority has increased and this work will also be used to inform priorities in this area of work.

The original paper proposing a review of the curriculum received a mixed reception from Headteachers who expressed some concern about the intentions of the project. The Local Authority promoted the project by emphasising the opportunities for schools to work together and with the Local Authority in a collaborative venture to meet the local vision of "schools @ onedarlington". Six of the eight schools have been involved and the remaining two engaged.

#### How did you organise the work to achieve your aims?

The original model involved interviews with:

- Curriculum developers
- Transition leaders
- Pupils in Key Stage 3
- Subject Leaders

Followed by an analysis based on an action research model that uses the following structure:

- Surfacing of knowledge & understanding
- Analysis and action
- Constructive criticism

However, responding to feedback from schools the Local Authority adapted its approach to involve:

- a structured conversation dialogue with the school's curriculum leader (member of the school's leadership team) to gain a whole school view
- discussions with learners
- taking contributions from school teaching and learning reviews (conducted by schools and the local authority in partnership)
- drawing upon the experiences of Local Authority lead officers

No feedback has yet been provided to individual schools as this work is being undertaken in parallel with a piece of work at Key Stage 4. It is anticipated to produce feedback for the town to provide a strategic overview for schools.

### **How well have you achieved your aims?**

The implementation of new programmes of study is well underway, with extensive and innovative delivery methods being used to ensure that the Personal Learning and Thinking Skills have been addressed. All schools involved in the process had a clear view and assessment of where they were with Key Stage 3 development in relation to implementation.

Impact on pedagogy has been widespread. In those schools involved in the Opening Minds work this impact has already been greater. What is not clear yet (from a Local Authority perspective) is the implications of the change in pedagogical styles when pupils experience the Opening Minds curriculum alongside "normal" lesson delivery. The norm, in terms of lesson delivery and structure is evolving at a fast rate. Schools are far more orientated to exploring different ranges of learning styles, without being hung up on 'VAK' or aiming to deliver "preferred" learning styles. There appears to be an expanding and deepening debate about the idea of transferable skills or competences in the context of "real transfer". That is, the underpinning philosophy that competences such as those engendered via the Personal Learning and Thinking Skills are important not just in school, but in everyday life.

As an interesting point the "deskilling" reference was made in 4/6 schools. This has, in the past, been a reference made to one of the impacts of the national curriculum implementation in the 80s and then again with reference to QCA schemes of work. In this context this was used in connection with the new Frameworks at Key Stage 3. Frameworks have been used more as a reference point rather than as a key driver for curriculum design and development. The Personal Learning and Thinking Skills were seen as an opportunity for teachers to be far more creative and innovative in curriculum construction and lesson design. A significant number of curriculum leaders felt that this was important, as it presented an opportunity to create a new enthusiasm in teacher driven curriculum and lesson design.

The debate was widened with schools to discuss the implications of the new programmes of study on 'transferability'. Much has been said about target areas for the town relating to progress of pupils in specific 'groups' such as those pupils 'looked after' or ethnic minorities etc. and the link to 'closing or narrowing the gap' [whatever the gap actually is]. It seems clear that the uptake of the Personal Learning and Thinking Skills and consequential lesson delivery is underway and, in some cases, strong. At the moment there is less clarity about the impact in a number of areas.

These are:

- Transferability: meaning how well were pupils able to transfer skills and competences across their school lives
- Transferability: what was the impact of transferable skills on the wider everyday lives of pupils, particularly those in the more vulnerable groups, those living in super output areas etc. Hence the debate here being about the philosophy of what the Personal Learning and Thinking Skills are intended to do, as balanced by the need to deliver against them because they are now a part of the statutory curriculum. As one deputy head said “you had to plan for what you *wanted* the Personal Learning and Thinking Skills to do right from the outset”. This debate was widened further at the Building Schools for the Future symposium where we talked about quality first teaching and learning, and the link between the Personal Learning and Thinking Skills and ‘narrowing the gap’
- Impact on progress and curriculum continuity
- Links with Primary curriculum and the impact of the Rose review
- Local Authority themes and commissioning process (See later)
- *It should be noted that although there is little evidence of impact in these areas at the moment, this could be more to do with the need to extend this work rather than it be a statement that the evidence does not exist. These are areas that we may expect to see impact in the medium to longer term.*

The impact of the removal of Key Stage SATs has been varied. Most schools are still using the available tests in order to provide a check on teacher assessment. Most saw the removal as a good thing as it would allow further integration of the skills and competences development curriculum and would promote creativity (in teaching and learning). Running parallel with this thought was that there would be a refreshed focus on assessment. Much progress has been made with the use of Assessing Pupils Progress in English and maths at Key Stage 3 and schools are keen to extend this work into science and ICT as the new materials become available. This will become a part one of the Local Authority themes for commissioning in 2009/10. The view from 3/6 schools was that a refreshed view of assessment for learning should now take into account the impact of the new programme of study.

Discussions often came back to targets and examinations. SATs removal and subsequent removal of expected PIs for these areas have alleviated some pressures on schools to achieve Key Stage 3 target areas. There is still a movement towards more flexibility and starting points for Key Stage 4 courses so there is perhaps an interesting thought to explore further. One school is keen to change the point of transfer of Year 6 pupils into Year 7, taking the opportunity to improve curriculum continuity and progression. This would perhaps allow a greater linkage between the primary and secondary phases in relation to the transferable skills and competences. This is likely to evolve further in the Rose review of the Primary Curriculum.

One view was that the overall impact of the Personal Learning and Thinking Skills is not easy to determine. Formal arrangements within schools for discussing and assessing impact vary from at least monthly discussions and planning sessions for the Personal Learning and Thinking skills to termly or annual review of the impact of the new curriculum. It was suggested by 2 schools that this might become an area for development across the town as part of Local Authority theme on curriculum development.

### **Next steps in curriculum development in Darlington**

From September 2009 Darlington will begin a new process of schools commissioning and development to support schools in a range of ways. The process is designed to promote collaboration across schools, with the Local Authority and other agencies to both solve current issues and have a greater impact on development areas. One such area will be that of Primary and Secondary curriculum development. Commissioned collaboration is being devised that will aim to improve and accelerate progress in a number of areas. These are in curriculum innovation and design, curriculum continuity post-Rose review including transition through Key Stages, and assessing the impact of curriculum design on pedagogy and transferable skills such as the Personal Learning and Thinking Skills.

The process described above of a Local Authority working with its schools to take a view of progress has yielded a number of development points. This process should not just be repeated at a later stage, but become an integrated function of commissioned support and development. In that way we believe that a deeper learning will occur about how the curriculum is evolving across the town, and about how best this should be managed to improve provision for all pupils in Darlington. We are about to create a new group of school curriculum innovators to work on this and link it strongly to the primary and secondary curriculum deputies networks. It has been interesting to note that whilst the secondary phase curriculum group has been focussing its attention on the 14-19 agenda and diploma development, there has been an energetic enthusiasm to create something to look at 'pure pedagogy'. We don't know what this means yet, but it sounds exciting!

#### **Contact**

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## Calendar of events

### QCA

#### Phase Three of the Secondary Curriculum Implementation Programme

QCA/Aspect Local Authority Conference 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2009, TUC Congress Centre, 28 Great Russell Street, LONDON WC1B 3LS

### NSCoPSE

#### Conference - PSHE Education Comes of Age ~ Unlocking the door to the future

NSCoPSE is the professional organisation for Local Authority advisers, inspectors and advisory teachers with responsibility for all aspects of personal and social education, including health education and citizenship. Membership also includes independent consultants and inspectors, as well as health promotion professionals.

This year, NSCoPSE is 21 and we are hosting our 20<sup>th</sup> **Annual National Conference** on **Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> & Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October** at Brandon Hall, Coventry, CV8 3FW.

Conference delegates can join NSCoPSE for a reduced fee of £30. There are reduced rates for members confirming attendance before 31st July and further reductions for additional delegate(s) from the same authority.

Last years speakers included Mick Waters, Margaret Jones and Baroness Morris of Yardley. Further details to be announced but application forms are available from [www.NSCoPSE.org.uk](http://www.NSCoPSE.org.uk)

### Religious Education

#### “Making Cross-Curriculum Projects Meaningful and Manageable”

Please contact Dave Francis [nsl@natre.org](mailto:nsl@natre.org) for further information on a number of events taking place throughout the country.

**Cross Curriculum Events in Autumn 2009/Spring 2010**

**Art & Design, Citizenship, Design & Technology, Geography and Physical Education**

Eastern	Friday 9 October 09	Huntingdon Marriott
North West	Thursday 15 October 09	Manchester United FC
East Midlands	Thursday 22 October 09	Leicester Tigers
South West	Wednesday 4 November 09	Taunton Racecourse Ltd
North East	Tuesday 26 January 2010	Life Conference & Banqueting
Yorkshire & Humberside	Wednesday 10 February 2010	Metropole Leeds
West Midlands	Monday 1 March 2010	Holiday Inn Birmingham City
South East	Thursday 11 March 2010	Wooton House, Dorking
London	Wednesday 17 March 2010	Marriott Maida Vale

**Music, Languages, History, PSHEe and Religious Education**

North East	Monday 9 November 09	Marriott Gosforth
West Midlands	Thursday 19 November 09	Warwick Conference
South East	Monday 23 November 09	Wooton House, Dorking
Yorkshire & Humberside	Wednesday 25 November 09	Metropole Leeds
London	Thursday 3 December 2009	Hilton Kensington
Eastern	Monday 8 February 2010	Huntingdon Marriott
North West	Tuesday 2 March 2010	Manchester United FC
East Midlands	Monday 8 March 2010	Leicester Tigers
South West	Tuesday 16 March 2010	Taunton Racecourse Ltd

## Useful Websites

DCSF Local Authority support site:

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/localauthorities/index.cfm?action=content&contentID=3104&categoryID=75&subcategoryID=106>

QCA home:

<http://www.qca.org.uk>

QCA Curriculum design site: **NEW SECONDARY CURRICULUM WEBSITE**

<http://curriculum.qca.org.uk>

QCA Curriculum general:

[http://www.qca.org.uk/qca\\_104.aspx](http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_104.aspx)

Functional Skills

[http://www.qca.org.uk/qca\\_6066.aspx](http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_6066.aspx)

National Strategies Renewed Frameworks:

<http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/secondary/frameworks/>

NCSL home:

<http://www.ncsl.org.uk/>

SSAT curriculum design:

[www.ssatrust.org.uk/curriculumdesign](http://www.ssatrust.org.uk/curriculumdesign)

CfBT New Secondary Curriculum:

<http://www.newsecondarycurriculum.org>

New Diplomas:

[http://www.qca.org.uk/qca\\_13916.aspx](http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_13916.aspx)

TEACHERNET home:

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk>

Ofsted: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/>