



Department
for Education

Consultation Response Form

Consultation closing date: 16 April 2013
Your comments must reach us by that date.

Reform of the National Curriculum in England

Consultation Response Form

THIS FORM IS NOT INTERACTIVE. If you wish to respond electronically please use the online response facility available on the Department for Education e-consultation website (<http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations>).

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

If you want all, or any part, of your response to be treated as confidential, please explain why you consider it to be confidential.

If a request for disclosure of the information you have provided is received, your explanation about why you consider it to be confidential will be taken into account, but no assurance can be given that confidentiality can be maintained. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data (name and address and any other identifying material) in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, and in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential.

Reason for confidentiality:

Name James Garnett
Organisation (if applicable) The UK Association for Music Education – Music Mark
Address: Suite 23, Tulip House,
70 Borough High Street
London, SE 1 1XF

If your enquiry is related to the DfE e-consultation website or the consultation process in general, you can contact the Public Communications Unit by e-mail:

consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk or by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the Department's ['Contact Us'](#) page.

Please tick one category that best describes you as a respondent

<input type="checkbox"/> Primary School	<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary School	<input type="checkbox"/> Special School
<input type="checkbox"/> Organisation representing school teachers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Subject Association	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent
<input type="checkbox"/> Young Person	<input type="checkbox"/> Higher Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Further Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Academy	<input type="checkbox"/> Employer/Business Sector	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Authority
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

Please Specify:

Are you answering this consultation in response to particular subjects? Please tick all those that apply.

<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> mathematics	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> art & design	<input type="checkbox"/> citizenship	<input type="checkbox"/> computing
<input type="checkbox"/> design & technology	<input type="checkbox"/> geography	<input type="checkbox"/> history
<input type="checkbox"/> languages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> physical education
<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable		

1 Do you have any comments on the proposed aims for the National Curriculum as a whole as set out in the framework document?

Comments:

- Much depends on what is understood by “core knowledge” - this may be taken by some simply to mean facts, rather than embracing the rich collection of facts, competencies and attitudes that pupils will need as educated citizens. A word of explanation may help.
- Likewise, in the second sentence of paragraph 3.2, much depends on how the word “appreciation” is understood. Engendering “an appreciation of **and participation in** human creativity and achievement” would promote excellence and counteract the impression that children are to be mere bystanders.

2 Do you agree that instead of detailed subject-level aims we should free teachers to shape their own curriculum aims based on the content in the programmes of study?

Agree

Disagree

Not sure

Comments:

Generally we welcome the way in which the new curriculum seeks to empower teachers by putting them in control of how the curriculum is taught. The proposed aims for music are sufficiently open-ended that teachers will be able to shape their own school curriculum whilst meeting the overall objectives of the curriculum. However, it is helpful to have the subject-level aims because they help to set expectations as to what is intended to be achieved by the curriculum. If there is to be any sense in which this is a national curriculum, this degree of consistency is desirable.

Whilst welcoming the empowerment of teachers, we note that this will not happen simply by making the curriculum document shorter. Throughout our response we will return to the need actively to promote a culture of continuing professional development in schools in order for teachers to elaborate their curriculum, enrich their pedagogy and share expectations regarding high-quality achievement.

Purpose of study:

- Whilst we welcome the importance attached to music by the opening statement about music as a universal language, we note that many writers on both music and language question the connection between them. We suggest the alternative: “Music is a universal feature of human culture, and every pupil should have the opportunity to become active participants.” (If the language metaphor is retained, we would urge you to make it clear that pupils should be fluent in *speaking* the language

of music as well as *hearing* it.)

- The references to a breadth of musical styles and genres that are made throughout the programme of study should also be captured in this statement, setting the expectation from the outset that the musical canon embraces the students' own heritage, the heritage of others in their community, our national heritage and the heritage of other cultures around the world.
- The PoS goes on to express the detail of musical learning in terms of what pupils are taught to do, not in terms of what they should understand. This runs the risk of promoting music lessons that are no more than a sequence of activities, with little connection with learning. The statement regarding the purpose of study is an opportunity to counteract this by exchanging the word "appreciation" for "understanding" and to insert a reference to creativity. We suggest: "Pupils should leave school with an understanding of how music is composed and performed across a wide range of styles and genres, allowing them to participate creatively in music and to listen with discrimination and judgement to the best in the musical canon."

Aims:

- The three aims capture three important aspects of the curriculum: the diversity of musical traditions, the practical nature of the subject, and the importance of understanding and thinking in music through doing it.
- The first aim could be clarified by moving the reference to the range of periods etc to the beginning of the bullet point. We suggest: "studying music across a range of historical periods, genres, styles and traditions by performing listening to, reviewing and evaluating the work of great musicians and composers."
- The second aim provides an opportunity to make reference to pupils' own engagement with music as part of a high-quality education. We suggest inserting "have the opportunity to explore and extend their own musical interests" before "and have the opportunity to progress to the next level of excellence."
- The third aim would be better expressed by moving the reference to notations so that it did not appear to be the principal feature of the bullet point. We suggest: "understand how music is constructed, produced and communicated through musical notations and its inter-related dimensions of pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture and structure." However, this point does suggest that pupils will remain as spectators of music, understanding at arm's length how it is constructed, produced and communicated. A more powerful version of this aim would therefore be "understand how to construct, produce and communicate through music, using musical notations and the inter-related elements of pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture and structure."

3 Do you have any comments on the content set out in the draft programmes of study?

Comments:

- By expressing the curriculum content as “Pupils should be taught to...”, the document focuses on what pupils will do rather than what they will learn. There is a danger that this will result in activity-based lessons that aren’t directed by a thorough consideration of what pupils will learn from the activities.
- This should be addressed by the preamble for each Key Stage (including Key Stage 1) making it clear that the purpose of the activities is for pupils to develop their understanding of how music works through the process of experiencing it. For example, at Key Stage 2: “Pupils should understand music through composing it and by singing and playing musically, with increasing confidence and control.”
- An introductory statement to Key Stage 1 should be added to make it clear how fundamental musical learning is at this stage (and earlier) to subsequent musical development.
- The importance of creativity in music, and of music in developing pupils’ creativity generally should receive greater emphasis. This should be in connection both with composition and with the interpretation of music through performance.
- Music technology should feature in the curriculum as a musical medium in its own right (alongside instruments) and as a means to achieving musical ends through composition.
- The history of music is currently mentioned in its own right only at Key Stage 2. As well as being referred to explicitly, it is implicit in the bullet point about appreciating and understanding a wide range of music. We suggest that this implicit reference is sufficient and that the final bullet point is removed from Key Stage 2.
- The second bullet point under Key Stage 2 refers to using the inter-related dimensions of music separately and in combination. This is confusing because the point about the dimensions being inter-related is that they *can’t* be used separately. We suggest: “improvise and compose music using the inter-related elements of music creatively in combination with one another.”
- At Key Stage 3, the fifth bullet point omits reference to “different traditions and musicians” as well as great composers. We suggest that this is inserted for consistency with Key Stage 2 and with the other points at Key Stage 3.

4 Does the content set out in the draft programmes of study represent a sufficiently ambitious level of challenge for pupils at each key stage?

Sufficiently ambitious

Not sufficiently ambitious

Not sure

Comments:

- It is good that the content at each Key Stage refers to the musicality of the pupils' work. This sets a high expectation in terms of the quality of music-making.
- However, without referring explicitly to the learning that is intended to arise from the activities specified in the PoS, the nature of the challenge is limited in scope. This could be addressed by using the preambles for each Key Stage to refer to the understanding of music that should result from the activities (see the response to question 3) and by making greater reference to the creativity and imagination of pupils' engagement with music.

5 Do you have any comments on the proposed wording of the attainment targets?

Comments:

They appear to be somewhat tokenistic. It would be better to omit them or, if necessary, simply state them at the start of the whole curriculum document rather than under every subject.

The absence of detailed descriptions of the intended outcomes of the curriculum once again highlights the increased importance of continuing professional development. While good and outstanding music departments will no doubt continue to excel, there is little in the PoS that will indicate to those departments in need of improvement exactly what is expected of them.

6 Do you agree that the draft programmes of study provide for effective progression between the key stages?

Agree

Disagree

Not sure

Comments:

- Within the constraints of its brevity, the programme of study does capture a sense of progressing musicianship in terms of control, confidence and discrimination. However, without an overarching concept of progression (such as that provided by the current National Curriculum Levels) much will depend upon the way in which individual teachers interpret words such as “musicianship” and “sophistication”.
- A greater sense of progression in understanding, alongside progression in technical mastery, could be achieved by using the preambles for each Key Stage (see response to question 3).
- CPD will be an essential ingredient in developing an understanding of progression under this new curriculum, especially for generalist primary teachers (see response to question 11).

7 Do you agree that we should change the subject information and communication technology to computing, to reflect the content of the new programmes of study?

Agree

Disagree

Not sure

Comments:

8 Does the new National Curriculum embody an expectation of higher standards for all children?

Yes

No

Not sure

Comments:

- It doesn't appear to say anything about expectations of standards.

9 What impact - either positive or negative - will our proposals have on the 'protected characteristic' groups?

Comments:

- The proposals are inclusive. They make it clear that "every child" should have the opportunity to become fluent in music.
- This could be enhanced further by referring to the use of music technology as a tool to enhance the accessibility of music for all.

10 To what extent will the new National Curriculum make clear to parents what their children should be learning at each stage of their education?

Comments:

- The National Curriculum will provide parents with only a very general picture of what their children will be *doing* in music. Further reference in the preambles to each Key Stage may provide some information on what they will be *learning*.
- Far more significant than the PoS will be the requirement for schools to publish in detail how the National Curriculum is being implemented through the content of pupils' work.

11 What key factors will affect schools' ability to implement the new National Curriculum successfully from September 2014?

Comments:

- Given the brevity of the curriculum document and the intention to encourage teachers in developing their own curricula as well as the pedagogy by means of which the curriculum will be taught, continuing professional development will be absolutely vital. Key issues will be:
 - Developing schemes of work that interpret and expand on the content of the curriculum
 - Support in understanding and recognising the learning that should be expected to follow from the "Pupils should be taught to..." statements.
 - Developing expectations surrounding the high standards that are expected and expertise in how to meet them.
 - Assessment
- In addition to an initial need for subject-based professional development to support the implementation of the new curriculum, there will be an increased ongoing need for teachers to monitor and refine their work, in the absence of clear expectations expressed through the curriculum document itself.
- This culture of subject-based CPD is not currently present in many schools and will not arise spontaneously with the introduction of the new curriculum. Having removed pedagogical guidance from the National Curriculum document, the DfE will need to explore ways of promoting a culture of continuing professional development within schools to replace this guidance.

12 Who is best placed to support schools and/or develop resources that schools will need to teach the new National Curriculum?

Comments:

- Ultimately, teachers themselves are best placed to take on this role, and should be encouraged to engage in local, regional and national networks in order to develop their expertise and capacity for leadership.
- Music Education Hubs play an important role in supporting and empowering teachers to do this, and in providing a forum for sharing and developing resources and practice in a local area.
- Subject associations, and in particular the UK Association for Music Educaiton - Music Mark, likewise have an important role to play in supporting a developing network of teachers. By bringing together expertise from teachers, hubs, Initial Teacher Training and the music industry, the UK Association for Music Education - Music Mark is able both to provide an inclusive forum for discussion and a means for co-ordinating and disseminating key messages for the sector.

13 Do you agree that we should amend the legislation to disapply the National Curriculum programmes of study, attainment targets and statutory assessment arrangements, as set out in section 12 of the consultation document?

Agree

Disagree

Not sure

Comments:

- Yes. So long as the requirement remains for the subjects to be taught, the flexibility would be helpful in making the transition to the new curriculum.
- The two provisos that are implicit in this statement are: 1) that it remains compulsory for the subject to be taught; and 2) that resources are made available to support the transition to the new curriculum through CPD.
- In particular, Senior Leadership Teams will need guidance on how to replace existing assessment procedures that are based on the National Curriculum Levels. Without such guidance, it is likely that current arrangements for generating and tracking pupil data will remain in place.

14 Do you have any other comments you would like to make about the proposals in this consultation?

Comments:

15 Please let us have your views on responding to this consultation (e.g. the number and type of questions, whether it was easy to find, understand, complete etc.)

Comments:

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply

E-mail address for acknowledgement: _____

Here at the Department for Education we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be alright if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

Yes

No

All DfE public consultations are required to meet the Cabinet Office [Principles on Consultation](#)

The key Consultation Principles are:

- departments will follow a range of timescales rather than defaulting to a 12-week period, particularly where extensive engagement has occurred before
- departments will need to give more thought to how they engage with and consult with those who are affected
- consultation should be 'digital by default', but other forms should be used where these are needed to reach the groups affected by a policy; and
- the principles of the Compact between government and the voluntary and community sector will continue to be respected.

Responses should be completed on-line or emailed to the relevant consultation email box. However, if you have any comments on how DfE consultations are conducted, please contact Carole Edge, DfE Consultation Coordinator, tel: 0370 000 2288 / email: carole.edge@education.gsi.gov.uk

Thank you for taking time to respond to this consultation.

Completed questionnaires and other responses should be sent to the address shown below by 16 April 2013

Send by post to:

Consultation Unit,
Area 1c,
Castle View House,
East Lane,
Runcorn,
Cheshire,
WA7 2GJ.

Send by e-mail to: NationalCurriculum.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk