

## *Broad and balanced curriculum*

For many years there have been calls for primary schools to provide children with a 'broad and balanced' curriculum as part of their all-round development (DES, 1978; Schools Council, 1983). The HMI Survey of 1978 found that the schools which performed best in the basics invariably did so in the context of a broad curriculum that covered work in the arts and humanities. HMI proposed that such breadth could be provided through 'areas of experience' and elements of learning rather than attempt to cover so many subjects (HMI, 1985).

Cross-curricular teaching and the linking of subjects is a long-established idea. For instance, the Revd Fearon (1889) suggested history and geography should support each other in his manual on school inspection - the speeches of Oliver Cromwell could illustrate the geography of Ireland. There was renewed interest in the 1970s and 80s through the work of the Schools Council Project, *Place, Time and Society 8-13*. One of the difficulties encountered and, arguably never satisfactorily overcame, was defining what labels such as 'social studies', 'environmental studies', 'humanities' and 'integrated studies' covered (Campbell, 1993).

The National Curriculum that followed the Education Reform Act (1988) was produced from subject working groups, naturally protective of their subjects' contribution to children's education. Previous reports had indicated concerns that the curriculum was too narrowly focused on English and mathematics (DES, 1978). However, as these groups

operated largely independent of each other, the curriculum 'lacked an integrated vision for children's learning experiences' (Harnett, 2008: 123).

The introduction of a subject-based curriculum meant that primary schools in England and Wales had to juggle coverage of nine or ten statutory subjects. Difficulties were raised in curriculum organisation and planning as some schools attempted to graft heavy subject-specific content onto existing 'topic' or thematic plans. The challenges were acknowledged in a discussion paper produced by Alexander, Rose and Woodhead (1992), dubbed in the press as the 'Three Wise Men'. They concluded:

The subject is a necessary feature of the modern primary curriculum. There is clear evidence to show that much topic work has led to fragmentary and superficial teaching and learning. There is also ample evidence to show that teaching focused on single subjects benefits primary pupils.

In sum, many schools struggled to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum in the time available. The balance, breadth and relevance of the curriculum were good in less than one in three primary schools (HMI, 1998).

A decade later, the Geographical Association (2008) is not alone in blaming the national literacy and numeracy strategies for distorting the notion of a broad and balanced curriculum, weakening curriculum planning skills and leaving many younger teachers struggling to teach creatively outside of the 'core'. The Cambridge-based Primary Review of education in England (2008) has sympathy for this view claiming that children's entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum was at risk due to high-stakes testing in numeracy and literacy. The primary school curriculum has been subject to so much

change since its inception that it has proven very difficult to retain a fixed reference point (Ross, 2000; Moyles and Hargreaves, 1998). A constant, however, has been the pressure on primary schools to achieve high standards in the core subjects. Schools have had to respond to calls for greater creativity and enjoyment for learners within a context that still values a performance-driven agenda featuring objectives, targets, inspection and accountability. Turner-Bisset (2007) argues that many schools are reluctant to become too innovative while this conflict exists. In seeking to provide breadth and balance *within* subject areas, schools are inevitably constricted by available facilities, staff and timetable arrangement (Lord and Jones, 2006). Moreover concerns have been expressed over the lack of balance within subject areas arising from the recent changes to the curricula across the United Kingdom; for instance in Scotland, the perceived concern about the privileging of Christianity in Religious and Moral Education; and the place afforded to the study of other world religions within Religious Education for Catholic Schools.

There remains widespread support for the continuation of the National Curriculum (IRPC, 2008). Many long-serving teachers recall unfavourably the time when too much of the primary curriculum was left to the discretion of schools, resulting in uneven breadth, balance and quality than was the case after 1988. The Westminster government is eager to draw attention to the excellent schools that achieve high standards in the core subjects within a broad curriculum - 'Strength in the basics and the arts are mutually reinforcing' claimed Charles Clarke, Education Secretary, in 2003. Ofsted (2002) pointed out that the most successful primary schools did not compromise their broad

curriculum by over-concentrating upon literacy and numeracy. According to the government strategic document *Excellence and Enjoyment* (DfES, 2003:27):

Children's entitlement to a rich, broad and balanced set of learning experiences can only be guaranteed if they have firm foundations for their learning. Literary and numeracy cannot and should not supplant a broad and balanced curriculum, but they are children's key to the wider world of learning.

These words echo former views expressed by HMI and the Schools Council in the early 1980s that a narrow concentration on teaching basic skills was counter-productive. The Schools Council (1983: 28) noted:

Schools may still tend to concentrate on teaching basic skills, to the exclusion of other elements of the curriculum. Unhappily for children taught in this way, the teaching of skills in isolation does not produce the best results...when children are fired by some new experience, they talk, and write, and draw, and count, as if possessed.

The present Westminster government line, outlined in *The Children's Plan*, is that there is enough flexibility in the National Curriculum for teachers to provide stimulating experiences across the board (DCSF, 2007: 71). However, there are current soundings that a Conservative government would scrap the Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs) for eleven-year-olds and replace them with national tests in the first year of secondary school, marked by their teachers (*The Guardian*, 14 June 2009).

## *Task*

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- Read Alexander's (2002) paper 'The Curriculum in successful primary schools: a response' and consider his arguments to reconsider the notions of 'broad' and 'balanced', available at: [http://www.robinalexander.org.uk/docs/Ofsted\\_2002.pdf](http://www.robinalexander.org.uk/docs/Ofsted_2002.pdf)

In the context of a growing emphasis upon inclusive practice, few would disagree with the principle that primary schools should provide a rich diet of educational experiences.

This entitlement applies to all pupils, including those with additional learning needs who should *over time* enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils themselves have expressed a need for greater balance between ‘academic’ and ‘practical’ subjects achieved through making lessons more relevant to their lives (Lord and Jones, 2006).

Education has to respond to the economic and technological changes that demand a more adaptable workforce where ‘it is no longer merely sufficient to have excellence in depth and grasp of knowledge. Critical to surviving and thriving is, instead, creativity’ (Robinson, 2001). In this regard, Wyse (2006) suggests a curriculum model of the future which builds upon pupils’ own interests and allows them to pursue them in depth from an early age.

### *Characteristics of good standards and teaching*

Estyn (2004), the Welsh Inspectorate, have produced guidance on assessing the quality of teaching and standards achieved by pupils in lessons. The following table summarises these and can be a useful aide-memoire when observing lessons but should not be used as a tick-list.

Subject	Standards (extent to which pupils...)	Teaching (extent to which teachers...)
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<p>Language (Welsh and English)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a growing awareness that language serves a range of purposes and varies according to context and audience or readership;</li> <li>• speak clearly and with increasing confidence and accuracy;</li> <li>• communicate information effectively and give and respond to instructions appropriately;</li> <li>• listen purposefully and engage confidently in role-play and drama and interact with one another and the teacher using appropriate language;</li> <li>• increasingly sustain discussion and advocate and justify points of view;</li> <li>• are familiar with a range of strategies for reading and employ them effectively;</li> <li>• are able to read accurately, fluently and with appropriate expression;</li> <li>• have a clear understanding of what they read and view;</li> <li>• read and respond to a wide range of literary, non-literary, media and moving-image texts, including some which have special relevance to Wales or are from other cultures and traditions;</li> <li>• are able to respond orally and in writing to texts of increasing complexity;</li> <li>• are able to understand implicit as well as explicit meanings;</li> <li>• write in a variety of forms and for different purposes and audiences;</li> <li>• are increasingly able to produce purposeful and sustained writing using accurate spelling and punctuation and appropriate handwriting;</li> <li>• demonstrate an appropriate command of standard Welsh/English and are able to recognise and use an increasing range of styles and language registers;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• take account of the inter-relationship of oral work, reading and writing;</li> <li>• incorporate elements such as drama, media and ICT;</li> <li>• develop pupils' awareness and understanding of language, for example its historical development and how its use changes in different contexts and regions;</li> <li>• provide opportunities for pupils to participate fully in a variety of oral activities, including some which require the use of formal speech;</li> <li>• include systematic teaching of the initial skills of reading and writing;</li> <li>• use a wide range of literature and other texts, including some pre-twentieth century material, contemporary writing by established authors and texts which have a Welsh dimension;</li> <li>• provide pupils with challenging written tasks appropriate to their needs and levels of development;</li> <li>• include clear strategies for developing pupils' handwriting and their spelling and grammatical skills, and for helping them to plan, organise and re-draft their material appropriately.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• revise and re-draft their writing and present it appropriately; and</li> <li>• are increasingly able to reflect independently on what they have written</li> </ul>	
Welsh as a Second Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use the target language with developing accuracy for a range of purposes and in a variety of contexts;</li> <li>• make extended contributions in conversation, discussion and for example, when sharing experiences, conveying information, exploring ideas and offering their points of view;</li> <li>• are increasingly able to understand and respond to a broad range of oral and written topics in a variety of styles and registers;</li> <li>• show, as they progress through the key stages, that they have acquired, and are able to use, a wide vocabulary, a more comprehensive range of sentence structures, appropriate punctuation and accurate spelling;</li> <li>• are increasingly able to read accurately and fluently a range of appropriate materials, including fiction and non-fiction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide pupils with ample opportunities to practise their language skills in class, in small groups and in pairs, especially in oral work;</li> <li>• make substantial use of the target language in all aspects of the lesson;</li> <li>• take account of the inter-relationship of oral work, reading and writing;</li> <li>• show evidence of a developing awareness and knowledge of aspects of Welsh culture</li> </ul>
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recall key mathematical facts quickly and accurately and apply them in their work;</li> <li>• understand key mathematical concepts from previous lessons and how they underpin current work;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enable pupils to grasp the intrinsic fascination of the subject, and to perceive its role in the analysis and communication of information;</li> <li>• enable pupils to understand the mathematical principles that</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• see connections between mathematical topics;</li> <li>• reason and explain their work logically using appropriate mathematical language;</li> <li>• use mathematical diagrams, graphs and notation effectively to communicate findings and ideas to others;</li> <li>• are fluent in number, both in mental and written calculations;</li> <li>• use calculators proficiently where appropriate;</li> <li>• make sensible estimates;</li> <li>• interpret statistical information correctly;</li> <li>• choose suitable mathematical techniques to solve problems;</li> <li>• use mathematics systematically to explore within unfamiliar contexts;</li> <li>• justify and prove results using valid mathematical reasoning; and</li> <li>• display evidence of steady progress across the full range of mathematics in the relevant programme of study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• underpin the techniques they apply in their work;</li> <li>• enable pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding in a wide range of contexts;</li> <li>• require pupils to reason and explain orally, using correct mathematical terms;</li> <li>• encourage them to recall and apply number facts rapidly;</li> <li>• pay due attention to consolidating and improving pupils' competence in numeracy</li> </ul>
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• behaviour of plants, animals, inanimate materials and systems, at levels appropriate to their stage of development;</li> <li>• apply their understanding of key scientific concepts in both familiar and unfamiliar situations and to offer explanations of behaviour they observe;</li> <li>• use scientific terms accurately in their descriptions and accounts;</li> <li>• gain information and data from a range of science reference books, tables and keys;</li> <li>• present ideas in forms that can be investigated and predictions in forms that can be tested;</li> <li>• plan a systematic enquiry and carry out experimental work purposefully and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inspire pupils with a sense of wonder for the natural world;</li> <li>• provide pupils with a range of opportunities to communicate and justify their ideas about science, both orally and in writing;</li> <li>• include a balance of practical demonstration by the teacher and well-organised and well-managed experimental work by the pupils;</li> <li>• ensure that pupils' learning is thoroughly grounded in their engagement in scientific enquiry;</li> <li>• ensure that pupils plan, carry out and consider the evidence arising from experimental and investigative work, including work</li> </ul>



	<p>safely, making effective use of ICT to collect, store, retrieve and present scientific information;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make systematic observations and measurements;</li> <li>• communicate effectively their understanding of scientific concepts using text, diagrams, graphs, tables and charts;</li> <li>• assess the validity of their experimental findings and draw reasoned conclusions from them;</li> <li>• understand how errors occur in experimental work and how they may be reduced;</li> <li>• study the practical applications of science and how these influence the quality of their lives;</li> <li>• have an understanding of the nature of scientific ideas and are aware of the contribution that science makes to society and of its impact upon industry, the environment and the economy;</li> <li>• explore some of the ethical dilemmas that scientific discoveries and technological developments can raise; and</li> <li>• demonstrate responsible attitudes towards safety and show respect for living organisms and the physical environment.</li> </ul>	<p>using ICT;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide opportunities for pupils to apply their scientific knowledge in familiar and unfamiliar contexts and to demonstrate their skill in handling apparatus and materials with due attention to safety.</li> </ul>
<p>Information Technology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use ICT equipment and software competently and confidently to achieve specific outcomes;</li> <li>• exercise a degree of autonomy and choice in their use of ICT, appropriate to their age and development;</li> <li>• enhance and apply their knowledge, understanding and skills of information technology in a variety of worthwhile contexts and to increasingly challenging situations and problems;</li> <li>• use ICT to process, present, share and exchange information, to explore and solve problems, and to promote creative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• set relevant and worthwhile tasks which give pupils the opportunity to become discerning in their use of ICT;</li> <li>• provide a wide range of challenging ICT activities which take account of pupils' prior experience and attainments;</li> <li>• allow opportunities for pupils to investigate the characteristics of a variety of ICT equipment and software, intervening judiciously as necessary</li> </ul>

	<p>work and enhance its presentation;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand the importance of accuracy in giving information and instructions to a machine;</li> <li>• develop, in key stage 2, the ability to make critical judgements about the contribution of ICT to their work;</li> <li>• have clear ideas of how they can use ICT to improve the quality of their work</li> </ul>	
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop clearly and progressively their understanding of chronological awareness;</li> <li>• increase their knowledge and understanding of the past and how it has helped to fashion the present;</li> <li>• ask questions based on how and why historical events, personalities and issues developed as they did;</li> <li>• make informed judgements based on the historical evidence, as well as the representations and interpretations they have considered;</li> <li>• select, recall and organise historical information and opinion;</li> <li>• in key stage 2, progressively begin to show an awareness that there are often several representations and interpretations of people, issues and events from the past;</li> <li>• understand firmly that people living in the past would have rarely viewed own lives or their wider society in ways in which they have subsequently represented and interpreted;</li> <li>• communicate, according to age and ability, in appropriate depth and in of ways, making accurate use of historical terminology and concepts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a good, up-to-date knowledge of the historical periods they teach;</li> <li>• have a good grasp of historical concepts of continuity and change, similarity and difference historical significance and historical specificity;</li> <li>• enable pupils to ask historical questions and to reflect knowledgeably on issues and explanations, both within and across defined historical events and periods;</li> <li>• develop and consolidate pupils' knowledge and understanding through looking at chronology, planning historical enquiries, considering interpretations and enabling pupils to use appropriate historical sources;</li> <li>• make effective use of any field work, links with the community and visits to places of historical interest.</li> </ul>
Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop a secure knowledge and understanding of the location, features</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stimulate pupils' interest, concern and sense of responsibility for the</li> </ul>

	<p>and character of places;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand thoroughly the patterns and processes in physical and human geography and apply their understanding to places in a widening range of contexts and scales;</li> <li>• understand the relationship between people and the environment, sustainable development and global citizenship;</li> <li>• develop an awareness and understanding of the relevance of geography to environmental, social, economic and political issues and to people's attitudes and values;</li> <li>• acquire a wide range of geographical skills and techniques, particularly those associated with the use of maps, diagrams, photographs, satellite images and information and communications technology;</li> <li>• apply their skills and techniques with precision and accuracy through geographical enquiry and fieldwork;</li> <li>• recall and use appropriate geographical terminology, with increasing precision and accuracy; and</li> <li>• at an appropriate level, know and understand the geography of Wales and the links between people in Wales and those in a range of other places</li> </ul>	<p>world around them;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use accurate and up-to-date information in a variety of forms about places and environments;</li> <li>• draw out general geographical principles from particular instances and case studies;</li> <li>• ensure that thematic work is based on a real places selected from an appropriate and balanced range of locations and scales;</li> <li>• provide opportunities for pupils to investigate places and geographical themes through fieldwork and enquiry</li> </ul>
<p>Religious Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop a secure knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and practices of Christianity and the other major faiths represented in Great Britain, as required by the locally agreed syllabus;</li> <li>• acquire a conceptual framework which helps them to understand religion in general and the specific religion they are studying;</li> <li>• know how and why believers of various faiths worship, meditate and celebrate their faith;</li> <li>• grow to understand the authority that</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• plan appropriately and thoroughly on the basis of the locally agreed syllabus;</li> <li>• introduce pupils to Christianity and the other principal religions represented in Great Britain;</li> <li>• make clear connections between pupils' experience of the world and the religious beliefs and practices that are studied;</li> <li>• engage pupils in a process of exploration and encourage them to develop and express their own</li> </ul>

	<p>believers ascribe to religious texts and traditions, and to key figures both in the history of religions and in contemporary faith communities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are aware of ways in which people’s lifestyles are affected by their religious and other beliefs;</li> <li>• recognise the importance of religious beliefs in shaping the identity of both individuals and faith communities;</li> <li>• become increasingly aware of the use of symbolism in religion and of non-literal ways in which religious faith is expressed;</li> <li>• grow increasingly aware of the questions and issues raised by their experience of the natural world and human relationships, and of the ways in which religious beliefs and practices address these questions and issues;</li> <li>• acquire a range of skills that enables them to explore religion and human experience for themselves and to express their own responses to the questions and issues that are raised in the process</li> </ul>	<p>values by responding to what they discover in a variety of ways;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nurture open-mindedness and positive attitudes towards people with different beliefs and practices and avoids stereotyping by acknowledging the variations found within all religious traditions;</li> <li>• focus on ways in which religious faith is expressed and how it affects people’s lives in the contemporary world;</li> <li>• make good use of religious texts, people, communities, and artefacts, as part of a wide range of resources for teaching the subject;</li> <li>• reflect ways in which the national language, culture and heritage provide a context for the expression of religious belief in Wales;</li> <li>• bring pupils into contact with faith communities locally and further afield;</li> <li>• confront pupils with, and encourage them to seek solutions to, the problems presented by religion and the pupils’ own experience of the world;</li> <li>• contribute significantly to pupils’ spiritual and moral development</li> </ul>
<p>Design and Technology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• apply knowledge, skills and understanding related to design and technology;</li> <li>• apply appropriate knowledge and skills from other subjects, especially science, mathematics and art;</li> <li>• succeed in producing original designs and making good quality products from an appropriate range of materials and components which meet a clear need and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have good technological knowledge and understanding;</li> <li>• have good designing and making skills;</li> <li>• ensure design tasks provide pupils with an appropriate level of challenge;</li> <li>• ensure pupils work safely;</li> <li>• encourage and support good</li> </ul>

	<p>are fit for purpose;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• test products against the initial design specification and identify improvements;</li> <li>• design modifications and incorporate these into the prototype product;</li> <li>• use appropriate technological vocabulary and a variety of techniques to communicate clearly the various stages of designing and making;</li> <li>• use an appropriate range of ICT skills to support their design work and to manufacture their products;</li> <li>• have an understanding of control technology and incorporate this into some of their design projects;</li> <li>• apply appropriate health and safety measures when using equipment, tools and materials; and</li> <li>• understand the place of design and technology in meeting the needs of society.</li> </ul>	<p>quality visual, technical and constructional work;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encourage and support pupils to develop original design ideas;</li> <li>• effectively teach pupils to acquire practical skills;</li> <li>• effectively teach pupils how to use mechanical and simple electronic and computer control;</li> <li>• provide opportunities for pupils to use a range of materials and resources to support and enhance their designing and making;</li> <li>• develop pupils' project planning skills;</li> <li>• ensure pupils apply knowledge of aesthetic, cultural, economic, environmental, moral, social and technical influences to inform designing; and</li> <li>• involve local industry and the community to enhance the range and relevance of learning experiences.</li> </ul>
<p>Art</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop their knowledge and understanding of artists, craft workers and designers working in a range of media and from a variety of periods, cultures and contexts, including local and Welsh examples;</li> <li>• respond practically and imaginatively to the methods and ideas of others;</li> <li>• demonstrate an understanding of the visual language of line, tone, colour, pattern, texture, shape, form and space and apply it effectively in their own work;</li> <li>• select, control and experiment with a range of materials, processes and techniques in two and three dimensions and on a variety of scales;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have secure knowledge and understanding of concepts and skills across art, craft and design;</li> <li>• provide proficient demonstrations of practical techniques;</li> <li>• understand and convey the importance of drawing as a skill for learning;</li> <li>• extend learning through the use of museums, galleries and artists in residence;</li> <li>• encourage pupils to evaluate their own work through comparing their work to that of other pupils and artists from a range of</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>record images effectively from direct observation and visualise ideas expressively from memory, feelings and imagination, using a variety of resources</li> </ul>	<p>cultures;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop pupils' aesthetic and technical art vocabulary;</li> <li>emphasise the importance of using sketchbooks to record and collect visual resources during the investigation process;</li> <li>enable pupils to use information and communications technology as a resource for research and image manipulation.</li> </ul>
<p>Music</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate technical competence and accuracy, appropriate to their development, in both vocal and instrumental performance;</li> <li>perform confidently, with expression and sensitivity, and showing a sense of style and occasion;</li> <li>explore a range of sound sources from which they select, combine and arrange sounds effectively, imaginatively and with musical expression;</li> <li>improvise and create complete compositions in response to a variety of stimuli;</li> <li>produce outcomes which are musically interesting;</li> <li>appraise their own and others' music perceptively, focusing on specific elements and evaluating the effectiveness of their use;</li> <li>appraise music from a broad range of styles and cultures;</li> <li>acquire musical knowledge, skills and understanding by direct engagement with the elements of music through practical activities;</li> <li>make progress through regular practice in these activities, and by evaluating their own work and that of others;</li> <li>produce work which displays musical imagination and achieves good technical</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>encourage and enable pupils to achieve high musical standards;</li> <li>make effective use of available lesson time;</li> <li>to ensure that activities that require regular practice, such as singing, take place often;</li> <li>to provide opportunities for extended periods of practical activity, especially in composing and instrumental performance;</li> <li>provide opportunities for each pupil to make progress in making music, whether individually or with others;</li> <li>ensure that assessment procedures focus on pupils' progress in performing, composing and appraising music.</li> </ul>

	and expressive standards	
Physical Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acquire a range of skills and techniques in the areas of activity, particularly those associated with athletics, dance, games, gymnastics, outdoor and adventurous activities and swimming;</li> <li>• develop and consolidate their skills and techniques to show increasing control, appropriate application of tension, clarity of body shape, and greater precision and accuracy;</li> <li>• apply and adapt their skills effectively in a variety of contexts to cope with the varying physical demands of each activity;</li> <li>• demonstrate increased efficiency, fluency and sensitivity in more complex tasks and when working with others;</li> <li>• have a secure and developing knowledge of the benefits of regular exercise to a healthy lifestyle;</li> <li>• monitor and explain the short term effects of exercise on the body;</li> <li>• judge performance across the areas of physical activity and use this information to improve the efficiency, quality and variety of their work;</li> <li>• secure and apply appropriate skills and techniques to effectively demonstrate increased refinement and consistency across activities;</li> <li>• acquire a range of skills and techniques in the areas of activity, particularly those associated with athletics, dance, games, gymnastics, outdoor and adventurous activities and swimming;</li> <li>• develop and consolidate their skills and techniques to show increasing control, appropriate application of tension, clarity of body shape, and greater precision and accuracy;</li> <li>• apply and adapt their skills effectively in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encourage and support all pupils to improve and refine the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of their performance in a range of physical activities;</li> <li>• challenge pupils to analyse their own and others' physical performance in order to identify targets for improvement;</li> <li>• encourage pupils to participate in physical activities that enable them to consolidate and refine their physical skills in a variety of challenging situations;</li> <li>• ensure that pupils recognise and assess risks and follow relevant rules, conventions and procedures that apply to different activities; and</li> <li>• make connections between health and the benefits of regular exercise and fitness, effective performance and active lifestyles.</li> </ul>

	<p>a variety of contexts to cope with the varying physical demands of each activity;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate increased efficiency, fluency and sensitivity in more complex tasks and when working with others;</li> <li>• have a secure and developing knowledge of the benefits of regular exercise to a healthy lifestyle;</li> <li>• monitor and explain the short term effects of exercise on the body;</li> <li>• judge performance across the areas of physical activity and use this information to improve the efficiency, quality and variety of their work;</li> <li>• secure and apply appropriate skills and techniques to effectively demonstrate increased refinement and consistency across activities;</li> <li>• adapt their performance in response to changing situations and others;</li> <li>• demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the key principles of a health related exercise programme including safe warm up and cool down routines;</li> <li>• recognise and evaluate progress in performance and identified targets for improvement</li> </ul>	
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Source: Estyn (2004), *Guidance on the Inspection of Primary and Nursery Schools - September 2004*, Cardiff: Estyn.



## Good practice in teaching the under-fives

The areas of learning outlined below have recently changed in Wales to include wellbeing and cultural diversity as part of personal and social development, and to distinguish clearly Welsh Language Development (DCELLS, 2008). Nonetheless the pointers are useful regarding good practice in teaching and learning within these areas.

Area of learning	The extent to which children...	The extent to which teachers...
Language, Literacy and Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• listen attentively and talk about their experiences;</li> <li>• use a developing vocabulary with increasing fluency to express thoughts and convey meaning to the listener;</li> <li>• make up their own stories and co-operate in role play with confidence;</li> <li>• enjoy books and handle them correctly;</li> <li>• know that words and pictures carry meaning;</li> <li>• understand some of the functions of writing and that written symbols have sound and meaning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• apply the principles of good quality education of under-fives in Wales;</li> <li>• have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning;</li> <li>• meet the needs of all children with particular attention to the areas of Language, Literacy and communication; personal and social development; and mathematical development. Particular attention should also be given to those children with special educational needs and those who do not speak English or Welsh as a first language;</li> <li>• have a secure knowledge and understanding of the development and learning processes for children under five</li> </ul>
Mathematical Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use mathematical language in relevant contexts;</li> <li>• recognise and create patterns;</li> <li>• are able to recall a range of number rhymes, songs, stories and counting games;</li> <li>• can compare, sort, match, order, sequence and count familiar objects;</li> <li>• understand the purpose and use of money;</li> <li>• begin to understand mathematical concepts such as 'less' and 'more';</li> <li>• begin to recognise numbers and begin to match number</li> </ul>	

	to sign and sounds	
Personal and social development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• show confidence and ability to establish effective relationships with other children and adults;</li> <li>• work as part of a group and independently;</li> <li>• are able to concentrate and persevere in their learning and to seek help where needed;</li> <li>• show an eagerness to explore new learning, to initiate ideas and to solve problems;</li> <li>• demonstrate independence in selecting an activity or resources, and in dressing and personal hygiene;</li> <li>• are sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and are able to respond positively to a range of new cultural and linguistic experiences;</li> <li>• express their own feelings and behave in appropriate ways, and are able to take turns and share fairly; and</li> <li>• demonstrate appropriate care, concern and respect for all living things.</li> </ul>	
Knowledge and understanding of the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• talk about their environment, families, past and present events and the work people do;</li> <li>• explore and recognise features of living things, objects and events in the natural world, have a basic understanding of the seasons and their features and look closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change;</li> <li>• show an awareness of the purposes of some features of the area in which they live;</li> <li>• begin to understand the idea</li> </ul>	

	<p>of time: meal times, times of the day, sequencing;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• begin to appreciate the importance of the environment;</li> <li>• talk about and record their observations, and ask questions as to why things happen and how things work;</li> <li>• understand the use of a variety of information sources (for example, books, television, libraries, information and communications technology);</li> <li>• begin to appreciate the differences in and uses of a range of materials.</li> </ul>	
Physical Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• move confidently and imaginatively with increasing control and co-ordination;</li> <li>• develop an awareness of space;</li> <li>• use a range of small and large equipment and balancing and climbing apparatus, with increasing skill;</li> </ul>	
Creative Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respond to and enjoy rhythm in music and music-making with a range of instruments and with their voices;</li> <li>• explore and make choices about colour and medium and use a range of materials to create representational images;</li> <li>• respond to suggestions for dance and imitate movements and enjoy role-play and imaginative drama;</li> <li>• begin to observe and appreciate the work of others;</li> <li>• discuss work in progress and completed</li> </ul>	

Source: Estyn (2004), *Guidance on the Inspection of Primary and Nursery Schools - September 2004*, Cardiff: Estyn.

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