

Professor Andrew Pollard

Professor Mary James

The Secretary of State for Education
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
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Dear Michael,

We would like to thank you most sincerely for the very constructive discussion which took place yesterday on the issues we raised in our letter of the 10th.

We appreciate the points that you made about our continuing involvement. Our understanding is that, if we are to continue, it would be on the following basis:

1. The schedule for consultation and development of the National Curriculum will be deferred to bring phase 1 and phase 2 into a new alignment for full implementation from September 2014.
2. Programmes of Study will only be made available for public consultation when accompanied by a document setting out a framework for the curriculum as a whole, excepting the confidential sharing of preliminary drafts with subject and phase experts.
3. We understand that we will not ourselves be involved in the detailed drafting of the Programmes of Study but that we will be invited to comment on issues which bear on their relationship to the curriculum framework and design as a whole.
4. We will produce a report on behalf of the Expert Panel which will provide the rationale and evidence for a whole-curriculum framework. The views of colleagues on the Expert Panel will be represented through the report, and any differences of perspective will be made explicit.
5. We will attempt to complete the report by no later than 5th December when our current contracts expire.
6. The expertise and practical assistance of DfE NCR Team will be made available to support the production of the report.
7. It is understood that the report will be published, although we recognise that the Department and Ministers may or may not endorse all or parts of it.
8. A future role is anticipated for us as constructive advisers on the curriculum framework.
9. The Department has responsibility for the National Curriculum in its final form and our role as independent academic commentators will continue to be respected.

If this accords with your understanding then we hope that you will feel able to request your officials to take this forward. We estimate that the time available to us before completion of the report will need to be enhanced by up to ten days each. Further work as constructive advisers would need to be subject to a new or extended contract providing for at least two days per month during the subsequent development period.

In these circumstances we will withdraw our resignations. We believe, with you, that the review of the National Curriculum is vital to the improvement of the education of children and young people. This is our main concern.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Pollard



Mary James