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EDUCATION FOR LIFE

**The cross-curricular themes in
primary and secondary schools**

**Lesley Saunders,
David Hewitt and
Annette MacDonald**

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	i
NFER Evaluation Team	i
Acronyms.....	i
1. THE PROJECT.....	1
2. THE CONTEXT.....	2
3. KEY FINDINGS.....	7
4. ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS	18
5. MEMBERS OF THE EDUCATION FOR LIFE FORUM	23

This report consists of extracts from the full Report, limited copies of which are available from Carol Kay, Chief Executive, SCIP, University of Warwick, Westwood, Coventry CV4 7AL.

Acknowledgements

The NFER team would like to thank most warmly the staff in all the schools who took the time to respond to the questionnaire in sometimes difficult circumstances. We appreciate that it continues to be a time of change and accompanying pressure in the educational system - which is why this survey is particularly apposite.

The survey was funded by the Education for Life Forum, which was set up in 1994 by a group of people from key organisations involved in the development, promotion and delivery of the so-called cross-curricular themes as set out in the national curriculum guidance documents. The Forum's main aims are to examine the current position and status of the cross-curricular themes and to devise strategies for safeguarding their place within the curriculum. Members include the Council for Environmental Education, the Health Education Authority, the Schools Curriculum Industry Partnership and the Centre for Citizenship Studies in Education. (A full list is given in Appendix 4.) Representatives of the corporate sector - including BP, Esso UK, ICI, Shell, the Banking Information Service, the Post Office and Unilever - have provided funding for this survey.

The team is especially grateful to Carol Kay of SCIP and Ken Fogelman of the Centre for Citizenship Studies in Education for their guidance. Colleagues at NFER assisted the team in producing the report to a tight schedule and we are particularly grateful to Jill Ware, the project secretary, for her efficiency and skill.

NFER Evaluation Team

Lesley Saunders	Project Director
Sandie Schagen	Project Leader
Annette MacDonald	Research Officer
Jill Ware	Secretary
David Hewitt	Project Statistician

Acronyms

AoTs	Adults other than teachers
CBI	Confederation of British Industry
CEG	Careers Education and Guidance
DfE	Department for Education
EBP	Education Business Partnership
ERA	Education Reform Act, 1988
EIU	Economic and industrial understanding
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
INSET	In-service education and training
KS	Key stage (of the National Curriculum)
LEA	Local Education Authority
NCC	National Curriculum Council
NTETs	National Targets for Education and Training
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
PSE	Personal and social education
SCIP	School Curriculum Industry Partnership
TVEI	Technical and Vocational Education Initiative

1. THE PROJECT

The project - consisting of a mailed questionnaire survey of schools, together with analysis and reporting - was commissioned and funded by the Education for Life Forum. The purpose of the survey was to map current practice in schools regarding the five cross-curricular themes, gauge the level of support for them and try to discern the potential for future development. The five themes are:

- ♦ Environmental education
- ♦ Health education
- ♦ Citizenship
- ♦ Economic and industrial understanding
- ♦ Careers education and guidance

Most of the questions on school policy and practice were pre-coded, that is to say, respondents were asked to choose their answers from within a given range. Some space for individual comment was also provided.

The survey was conducted by the National Foundation for Educational Research in the spring term 1995 and was distributed to a sample of primary and secondary schools in the independent and maintained sectors in England and Wales. Replies were received from 579 schools in all (423 in the primary and 156 in the secondary sector). This represents a 41 per cent response rate overall, which compares closely with the 42 per cent response rate in a larger-scale study carried out in 1991-92 by the London University Institute of Education. Detailed comparisons between the sample and the respondents were undertaken in order to identify any bias amongst respondents in terms of school size, type, region, etc. None was found. Further technical details are contained in the full Report.

It should be noted that a large number of schools in the primary sector did not feel able to comment on aspects of questions relating to citizenship or to economic and industrial understanding (it was well understood that they would probably not comment on careers education and guidance). Readers need to bear in mind that the findings from primary schools relating to these themes are thus often based on a low response rate.

2. THE CONTEXT

In order to set the survey in context, the current state of play regarding the cross-curricular themes needs some brief discussion. Clearly, national government, local education authorities, individual schools and other agencies have been engaged, long before the advent of the National Curriculum, in developing and delivering provision to prepare young people for the complex demands of adult and working life. But the current debate about such provision takes place primarily in the context set by the National Curriculum and so it is with this rather recent history that the report begins.

The National Curriculum instituted by the 1988 Education Reform Act and consisting of three core and ten foundation subjects was intended to be supplemented by various types of 'cross-curricular' provision. These were summarised in the National Curriculum Council's Circular 6 *The National Curriculum and Whole Curriculum Planning* (1989), where it was laid out that these comprised *dimensions*, 'concerned with the intentional promotion of personal and social development through the curriculum as a whole'; *skills*, 'such as communication skills...., problem-solving and study skills, which can be developed through all subjects'; and *themes*, 'elements that enrich the educational experience of pupils and include:

- ♦ Economic and industrial understanding;
- ♦ Careers education and guidance;
- ♦ Environmental education;
- ♦ Health education;
- ♦ Citizenship (individual, family, community, national, European and international, including legal and political dimensions).'

Three points can be made about the cross-curricular themes as proposed. The first thing to note is that the above list was plainly not intended to be exhaustive; the cross-curricular themes have nevertheless come to be understood as consisting of these five areas and the current piece of research is no exception. The themes have different degrees of relevance for the primary and secondary sectors, however. Whilst primary schools have a long tradition of placing strong emphasis on developing pupils' personal and social skills, they are unlikely to accord the same importance to those areas seen as 'pre-vocational', i.e. assisting with transition to post-compulsory education/training. Careers education and guidance and economic and industrial awareness have not had a large role to play in primary schooling, therefore. In secondary education, on the other hand, these areas have been accorded increasing importance.

Secondly, given that each of the themes was intended explicitly to involve 'questions of values and belief' (*Cross-curricular elements* - 4, in National Curriculum Information Pack No. 2), it is unsurprising that the precise role of the themes in the National Curriculum or, more broadly, in educational provision for pupils of compulsory school age is still far from resolved. There is a very wide range of perceptions and assumptions in operation amongst practitioners, policy-makers and commentators.

Thirdly, as is well known, the status of the themes has shifted in an interesting way. The NCC Circular of 1989 quoted above noted that 'where these themes are embedded in the National Curriculum programmes of study, they are statutory. Other aspects, whilst not statutory, are clearly required if schools are to provide an education which promotes the aims defined in Section 1 of the Education Reform Act¹.' The documentation underlined the importance of the themes as key contributions to the broad, balanced and relevant curriculum promoted by the introduction of a statutory National Curriculum.

By 1994, the picture had changed radically. The so-called Dearing Review of the National Curriculum recommended slimming down the statutory content for each subject in the National Curriculum in order to release 20 per cent of teaching time for use at the school's discretion. However, the cross-curricular themes were not included in Dearing's remit and the Report had rather restricted recommendations to make about the use of time released. Only one of the original themes (careers education and guidance) is explicitly referred to, and the concept of cross-curricular themes as a whole is conspicuous by its absence.

Two other factors have an additional bearing on how schools arrive at their priorities: the inspection of schools and the so-called league tables. The current framework for inspection contains no explicit commitment to the importance of the cross-curricular themes, though it requires OFSTED reports on individual schools to include judgements about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, and about the effectiveness of personal and educational guidance and careers education and advice. (A revised framework is due to be published in September 1995.) As far as the 'league tables' of performance are concerned, these are at present restricted to academic and vocational qualifications.

1 '[the curriculum should] promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils [and] prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.'

The cumulative impression is of a lack of clarity and consistency in national policy regarding the priority that schools should be giving to the cross-curricular themes. This uncertainty about the themes as a whole is compounded by an unevenness in how far the separate themes have been developed and promoted individually. At a local level, there has been a multiplicity of initiatives established to support individual themes but the funding for these activities is far from assured. Even more importantly, from a national perspective it is noticeable that there are, and have been over the years, differential and varying amounts of government resourcing for the themes. Broad policy intentions on the part of respective government departments seem to be at odds with specific funding decisions for educational provision. Staff in schools, school governors and those with a local policy-making role in education are faced with a dilemma: society, as represented by a loose alliance of national bodies, government departments and broad-based interest groups continues to make demands on schools to deliver a broad programme of personal and social education alongside academic and vocational provision; and to that extent the themes could be said to have equivalent, if also somewhat ambivalent, status. At the same time, however, the messages given by funding decisions and mechanisms make implicit distinctions between them in terms of relative importance. Without a restatement of requirements on schools to deliver the cross-curricular themes, school managers have had apparently little choice but to follow the contours set by statute on the one hand and funding on the other.

Nevertheless, it is important to emphasise the fact that the themes continue to be taken seriously. In schools and in the wider community, support for aspects of provision which look very much like the original five cross-curricular themes continues to be strong. There are pressing policy-related reasons to account for this, and it may be as well to list, albeit briefly, some of these under the appropriate thematic headings:

Health - schools have had a long-term concern with health education. More specifically, over the last decade, there has grown up a widely-perceived need among parents, religious bodies, educationists and youth workers as well as ministers of state, to inform young people about the recreational use and abuse of drugs; and an equal concern to inform young people about sexual relationships and protect them from unwelcome consequences, notably HIV/AIDS. In the light of this and other concerns about fitness, diet and the environment, the emphasis in health education is beginning to change to one of active health *promotion*, encouraged by the Health Education Authority (though with little or no funding). A key concern in this is to ensure that young people acquire the skills to make healthy choices in life. Some aspects of health education are covered by National Curriculum Orders for science.

Environment - there are elements of environmental education in the Statutory Orders for science and geography, and there is a need, less widely-felt than for health education but one with support from various national and international scientific bodies as well as the 'green' movement, to inform and empower young people in relation to sustainable local, national and global ecologies. As with health education, however, there are no specific funding programmes nor, usually, a dedicated budget within schools to support environmental education. This is a particular difficulty in the light of the fact that the most effective forms of environmental education would seem to be those involving hands-on experience and out-of-school visits, which are resource-intensive.

Economic and industrial understanding - over the last decade, there has been substantial central funding - mainly from the Employment Department - for pre-vocational programmes in the 14-18 curriculum, notably the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) and Compacts, which were designed as an entitlement for all young people. Now this funding is nearing its end, people working in the education-business partnership field are concerned that valuable activities set up through these programmes, such as work experience, teacher placements into industry, employer input into the curriculum, will not be able to be resourced by individual schools and/or firms. At the same time, bodies like the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) have been arguing since the mid-'eighties for educational provision to improve the UK's international competitiveness, which needs the work-force to be able to demonstrate so-called transferable skills such as flexibility, problem-solving, decision-making and team-working as much as specific occupational skills.

Citizenship - the issues surrounding citizenship are the most overtly political and ideological, and therefore encompass a wide spectrum of interests. There is a growing sense, for example, that education for democracy is very much needed in a global context of increasing nationalism; at the same time, there are calls on the domestic front, in a context of increasing crime and perceived social disorder, for greater individual responsibility. For the group of organisations which include Community Service Volunteers, the Citizenship Foundation and the Centre for Education in World Citizenship, a major preoccupation is with fund-raising to support ongoing activities with schools, such as community placements for students analogous to work experience placements. Interestingly, the private sector has recently released funds for specific programmes.

Careers education and guidance - this area, along with health education, was well established long before the 1988 Education Act, delivered through a sometimes effective, sometimes patchy combination of school-based and service-based provision. Unlike the other cross-curricular themes, CEG has historically been linked to a high level of external input, funded by the rate support grant through local education authorities, who have also had responsibility for managing the service. Now, however, the Careers Service is undergoing major restructuring through being put out to tender; there has also been an injection of government funding to enhance guidance provision in schools and colleges. The principle of equipping young people with the skills to make informed, rational and responsible choices - increasingly observable in the other areas also - has been promoted in CEG through the use of individual action plans.

In reality, then, the cross-curricular themes constitute a hugely varied and complex range of ideas and requirements. So the final point to be made is this: as the early NCC guidance stated, 'the teaching of cross-curricular themes requires careful planning, coordination and management'. Suppose that a firmer consensus about the legitimate role and content of the themes in compulsory education could now be established, to what extent could this planning, coordination and management be effectively undertaken in a climate of cost-cutting and increased work-load?

This is then the context within which school senior staff responded to the NFER's survey in the spring term of 1995. The broad questions the survey sought to give some answer to are accordingly:

- ♦ what are the realistic priorities for schools in delivering the cross-curricular themes?
- ♦ what future potential can be discerned for further developments?
- ♦ how can the various agencies concerned to support the themes most effectively do so?

3. KEY FINDINGS

A. SCHOOLS' POLICIES

Some general patterns emerged quite clearly in relation to schools' policies on the cross-curricular themes:

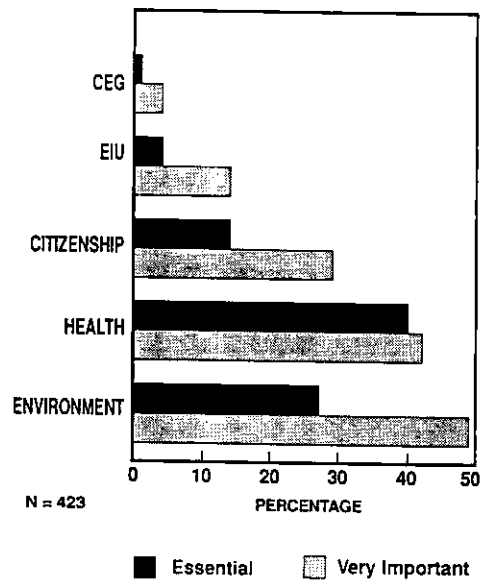
A1 Overall support in principle for themes was strong amongst the majority of schools. However, the degree to which individual themes were being addressed or given a key role varied considerably, and there was also, not surprisingly, a difference between primary and secondary sectors in the relative emphases given at a policy level within schools. The key differences are outlined in paragraphs A2 to A4.

A2 Environmental and health education were being addressed by nearly all schools in both sectors. Health education was thought to be essential or very important by over four-fifths of both primary and secondary sectors; it was more likely than the other areas to be coordinated by a member of staff with special responsibility for this area and to be covered by specific curriculum documents (though not by the school development plan). Environmental education was rather less highly rated, though still thought essential or very important by the majority of schools in both sectors and likely to be included in written documentation at some level.

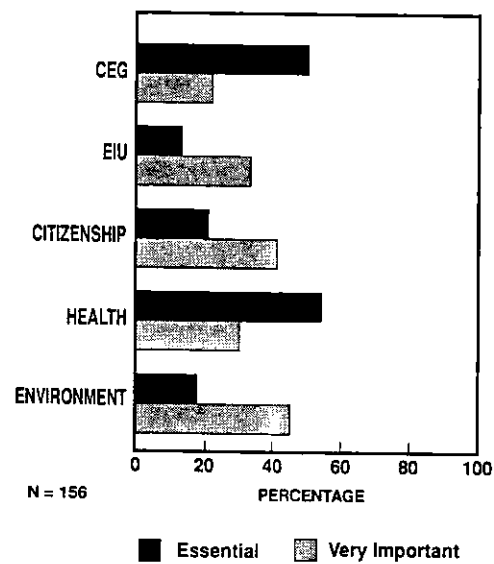
A3 Careers education has traditionally been seen as the province of the last two years of compulsory schooling and this emphasis was not challenged by the survey: nearly three-quarters of secondary schools, compared with only five per cent of primary schools, thought CEG was essential or very important. However, some primary schools had identified CEG as an area for which awareness-raising at least was needed. Over two-thirds of secondary schools, on the other hand, had a designated CEG coordinator and nearly two-thirds had a specific policy for CEG. It was also more likely than the other themes to be included as a major focus in secondary schools' development plans.

A4 Citizenship and economic and industrial understanding were also both more highly rated by secondary schools than by primaries, although EIU was rated least highly out of all the themes. Under half the secondaries rated EIU as essential or very important. Furthermore, there seemed to be more variation in emphasis between schools in both sectors with regard to these two themes: whilst many said that that one or other theme was not featured at all in curriculum documentation, for example, many other schools reported having specific policy documents.

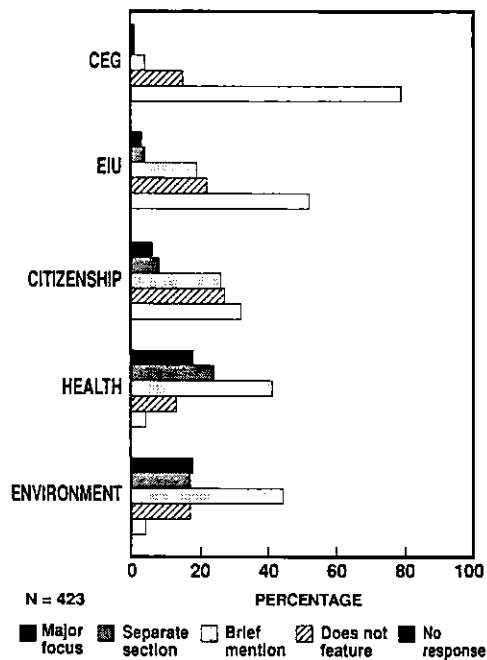
**IMPORTANCE OF CROSS-CURRICULAR THEMES:
PRIMARY SCHOOLS**



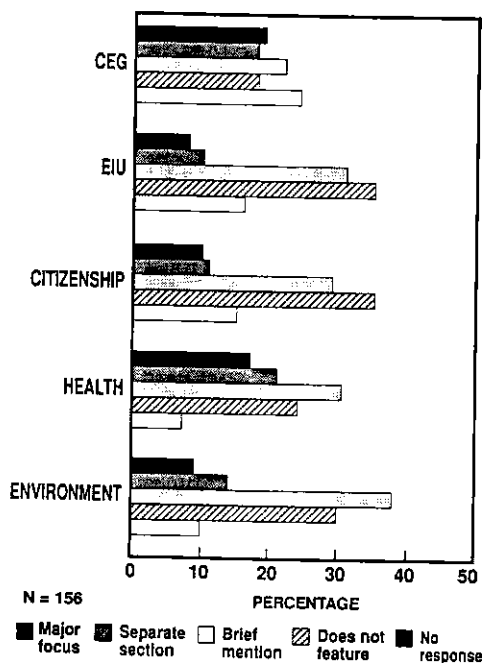
**IMPORTANCE OF CROSS-CURRICULAR THEMES:
SECONDARY SCHOOLS**



EMPHASIS ON THEMES IN SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PRIMARY SCHOOLS



EMPHASIS ON THEMES IN SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN: SECONDARY SCHOOLS



B. CURRENT PRACTICE WITHIN SCHOOLS

Considerable variations in practice emerged from the survey:

B1 Forms of delivery and assessment varied between themes and also between sectors. Although most schools who responded to the relevant questions had formal strategies for delivering each of the themes, health education was most likely, and economic/industrial understanding least likely, to be covered in this way. Additionally, almost all secondary schools had a formal strategy for careers education and guidance.

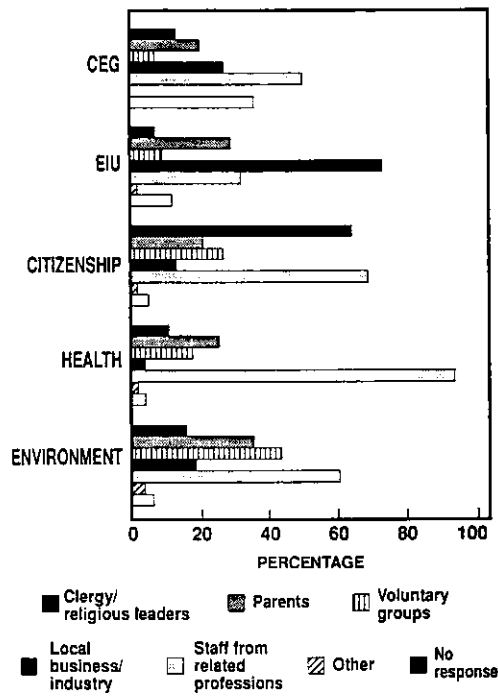
B2 Topic work was naturally a popular form of delivery with primary schools, whereas secondary schools were more likely to be delivering the themes through a range of subjects and/or through personal and social education. Separate timetabling for any of the themes apart from careers education (and to a much lesser extent health education) was unusual.

B3 The majority of schools in both sectors reported they did not formally assess work in any of the themes, the exception being careers education, which just over half the secondary schools said was assessed. Economic/industrial understanding was least likely to be assessed by primary schools, whilst environmental education and citizenship were least likely to be assessed by secondary schools.

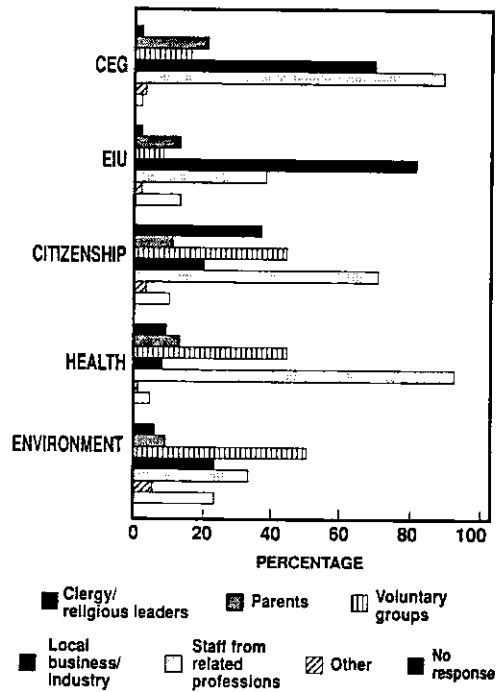
B4 Secondary schools were asked about forms of accreditation at key stage 4: for each of the themes, over half the schools said there was no accreditation, though again careers education was the exception (just over one-third reported no accreditation for CEG). **Where there was some form of accreditation, pupils' individual records of achievement played the major role.**

B5 The role played by external agencies and adults other than teachers is considerable. Once again, according to those who replied, health education was the area most likely to be supplemented by AoT input, whilst the areas least likely to use such provision were environmental education in secondary schools and EIU in primary schools. Staff from related professions were the group most likely to be invited into schools for each of the themes, except for EIU where the major role was played by local business and industrial personnel. Careers education was something of an exception to this general pattern, given that a large part of school-based provision is supplied by a statutory service in any case.

ADULTS (NON-TEACHERS) CONTRIBUTING TO THE THEMES:
PRIMARY SCHOOLS

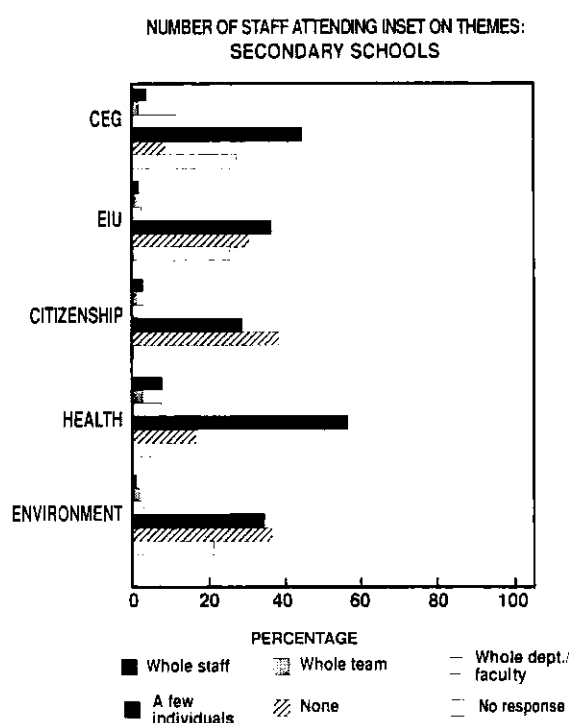
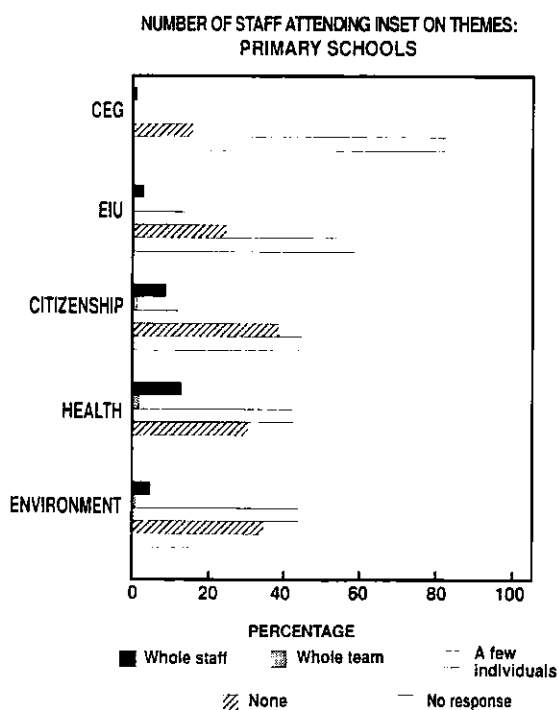


ADULTS (NON-TEACHERS) CONTRIBUTING TO THE THEMES:
SECONDARY SCHOOLS

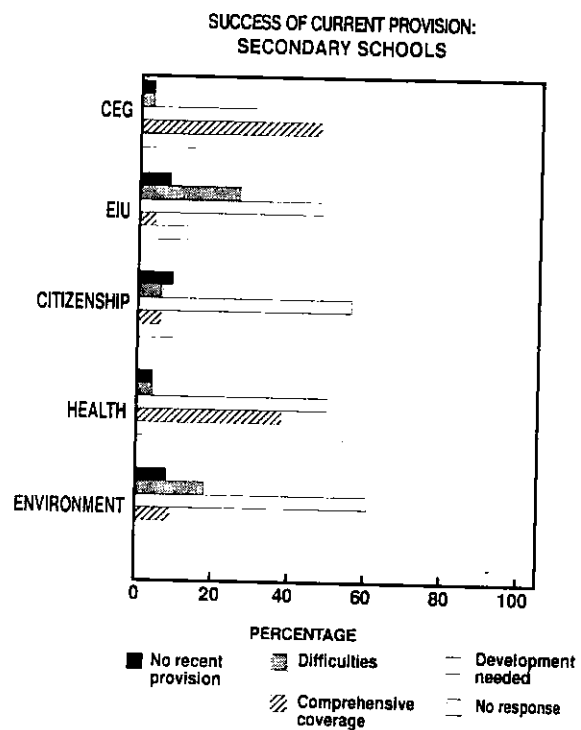
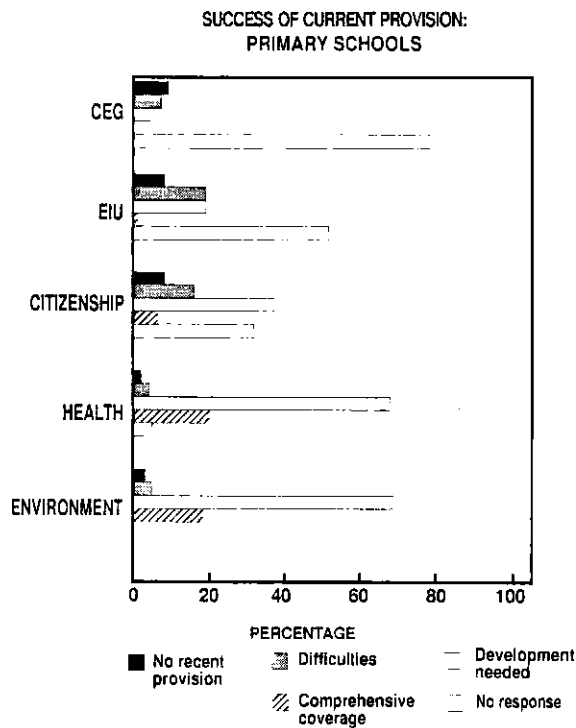


B6 The ostensible importance of the themes in the curriculum of individual year groups was less than might have been expected from the support for themes in principle. It was noted in the last chapter that support for health education and environmental education, for example, was strong overall, but few schools in either sector then said that either health or environment was a major priority for individual year groups - schools were more likely to say that the themes were being addressed but not in great detail. **The exception again was careers education in secondary schools, which was reported to be an area of importance or even a major priority especially for the older year groups.**

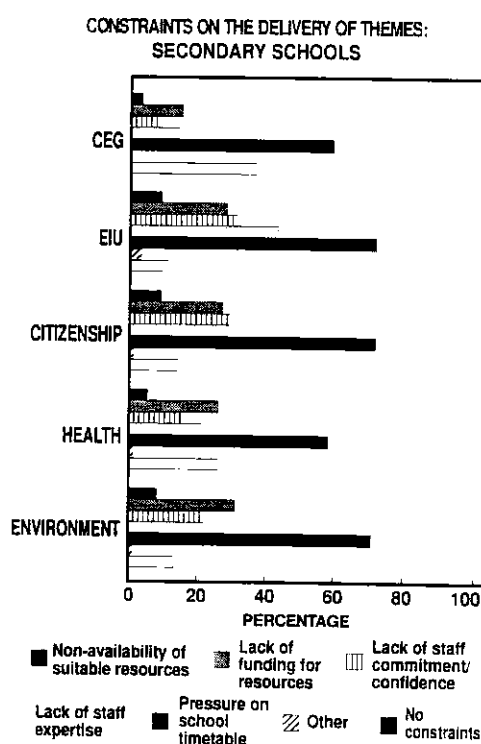
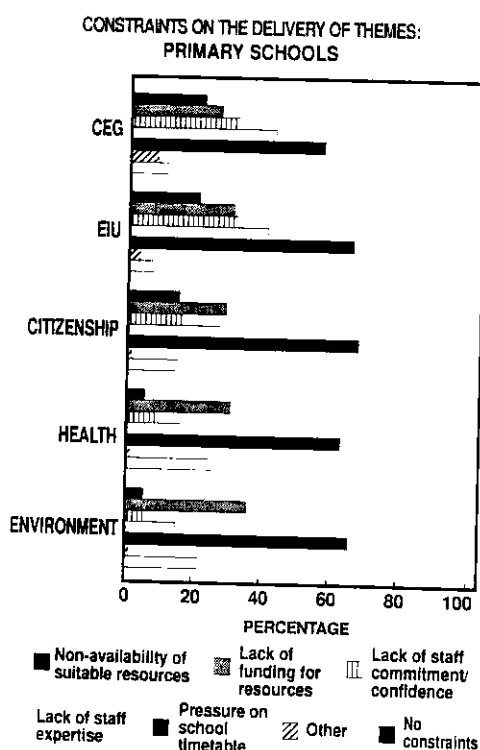
B7 In-service training for teachers has been undertaken on most of the themes. The area least likely to have been covered by INSET was citizenship (nearly two-fifths of schools in both sectors reported no such provision); whereas only one-tenth of secondary schools reported no INSET for careers education over the past twelve months.



B8 Provision of the cross-curricular themes was felt to be broadly successful, though further development work needed to be done. The area felt to be most well developed in both primary and secondary schools was health education, where the vast majority thought provision was good or even comprehensive. Over three-quarters of secondary schools felt the same about careers education. Areas where the greatest difficulties were being experienced were citizenship and economic/industrial understanding.



B9 Constraints on delivery had been experienced by the majority of both primary and secondary schools in most of the cross-curricular areas. Pressure on school timetables was the commonest cause of problems, but lack of funding and lack of staff expertise and/or confidence were contributory factors in many cases. Apart from careers education, health education was the least affected area; but even so, only one quarter of the schools said they had experienced no constraints in delivering provision.



C. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS IN SCHOOLS

Despite this wide variation in schools' practice, there was a noticeable consistency of message emerging from the data on future intentions and priorities:

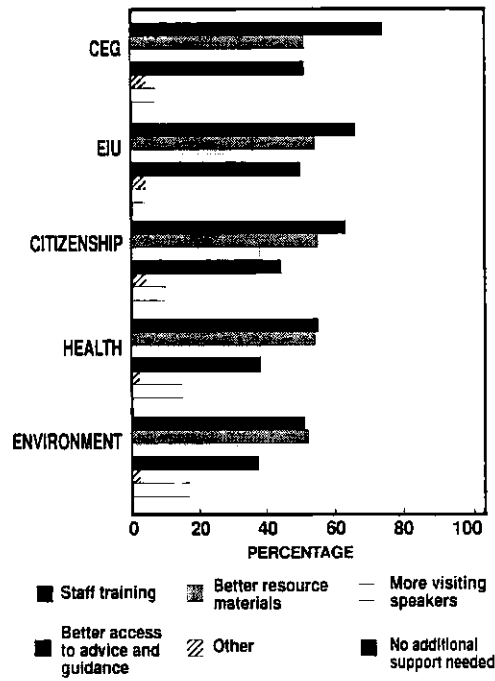
C1 When asked about their future plans with regard to the cross-curricular themes, **the majority of schools in both sectors said no changes were planned with regard to their work on any of the themes.** Health education was the one area where just under half the schools, whether primary or secondary, were thinking about changes, mainly with regard to school policy.

C2 So far as the use of any discretionary time was concerned:

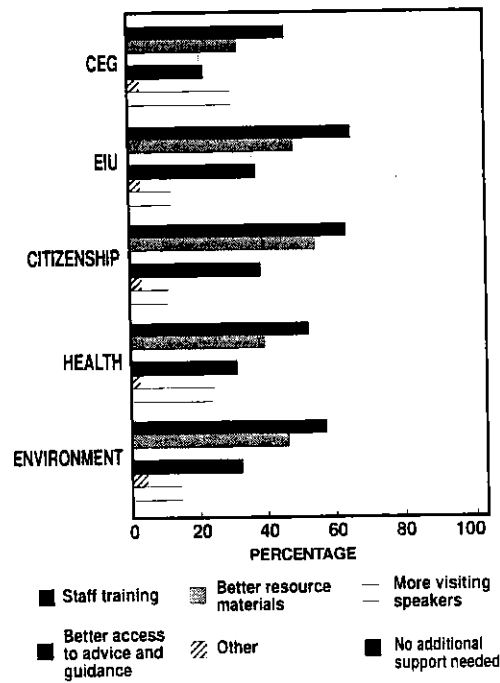
- ♦ primary schools were intending to concentrate on the **basic skills of literacy and numeracy** and/or **national curriculum subjects**;
- ♦ secondary schools were intending to use the extra time allocation for **national curriculum subjects, basic skills** and/or **optional subjects**. One-quarter of secondary schools also referred to time for developing pupils' **skills for adult and working life** (presumably aspects of all five cross-curricular themes would come under this heading).

C3 Nonetheless, **the great majority of schools gave clear indications that they would welcome further support to enhance their delivery of the cross-curricular themes**, and this was particularly true of primary schools. The only - and perhaps unsurprising - exception to this pattern was that almost one-third of secondary schools felt there was no need for further support for their careers work. **Staff training** was identified as the top priority by both primary and secondary schools for all themes.

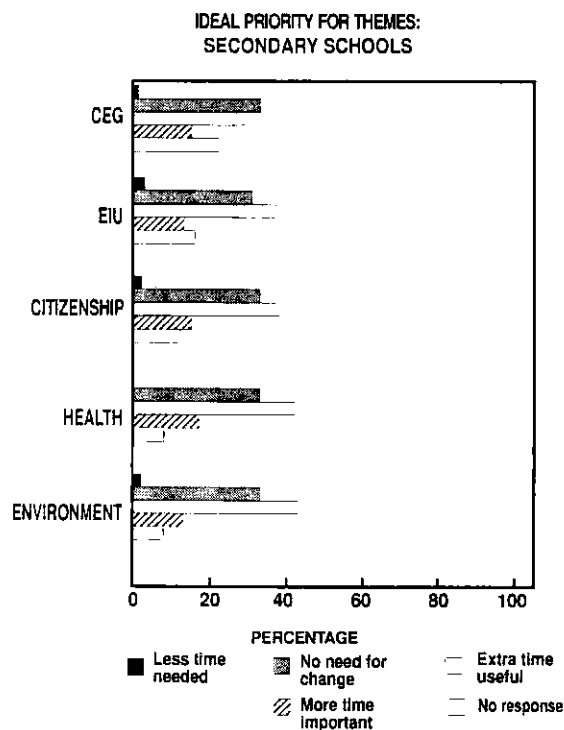
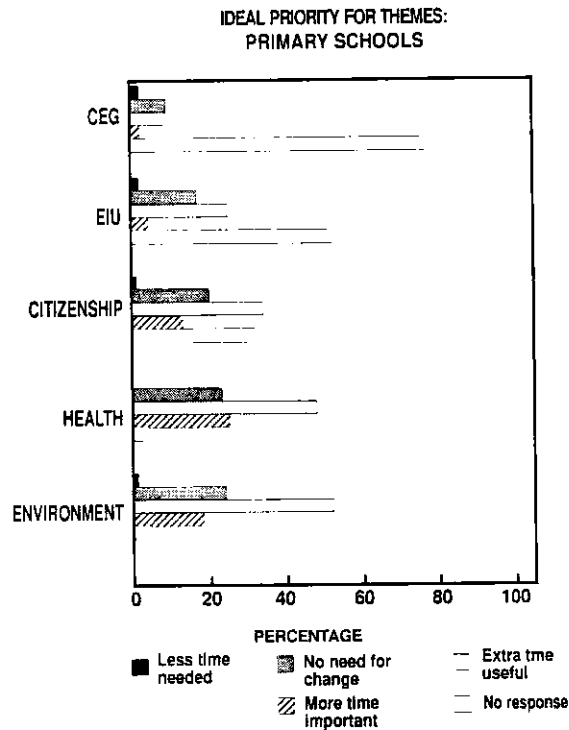
**SUPPORT TO ENHANCE PROVISION OF THEMES:
PRIMARY SCHOOLS**



**SUPPORT TO ENHANCE PROVISION OF THEMES:
SECONDARY SCHOOLS**



C4 Schools were asked to state what priority should be given to each of the cross-curricular themes within a revised curriculum, that is, one with more flexibility. **The most frequent response by schools in both sectors and for all of the themes bar one was that extra time for cross-curricular work would be useful, but that this would not be their top priority.** The exception was, once again, careers education and guidance, for which schools were most likely to think there was sufficient provision as things stood.



The overall sense of these findings would therefore appear to be that schools value cross-curricular work and would certainly like more support in actually delivering what they do. On the other hand, it has to be said that there does not seem to be a marked emphasis in most schools' future plans, or indeed in their ideal priorities, on giving any of the five areas a great deal more attention within the curriculum than they already have. This is probably because the overarching priority for most schools at the moment (at least in the eyes of their senior managers) is to manage the teaching of national curriculum subjects and basic skills within tight financial limits.

4. ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

The evidence from this survey of primary and secondary schools - which was carried out at a time when schools were able to contemplate the possibility of again having some (albeit limited) discretion about what to teach - tends broadly to support the conclusions of earlier research carried out by the University of London Institute of Education, that there is no great call for further legislation in support of the themes. The secondary school curriculum has continued to be largely subject-dominated and, whilst much of the primary curriculum is still delivered through cross-curricular topics, it may well be that the national curriculum has come to dominate the planning of these topics. This would leave little scope for the incorporation of non-statutory elements and themes. It certainly appears that schools in both sectors support cross-curricular work (as encompassed by the five themes) in principle, and wish to go on making that kind of provision for their pupils - on the other hand, they do not wish to go so far as to recommend a curriculum underwritten by a greater statutory emphasis on the themes.

The key question for schools may therefore be: **Can the work covered by the cross-curricular themes be more effectively delivered?** This would not necessarily require any more time or space in the curriculum.

The key question for the Forum, on the other hand, is probably: **How can national organisations, corporate companies, voluntary groups, etc., who have a keen interest in one or all of the themes keep cross-curricular issues on the national agenda for education and also give more effective support to schools?** The context for this, however, would be that the overarching priority for most schools at the moment (at least in the eyes of their senior managers) is to manage the teaching of national curriculum subjects and basic skills within tight financial limits.

Although this research project did not explore detailed issues of delivery in classrooms on the one hand nor the role of agencies such as those in the Forum on the other, other research done by NFER projects in the individual theme areas have highlighted issues which it may be timely to consider.

4.1 Issues for Schools

KEY AREA 1: ENHANCING DELIVERY

Other research indicates that a great deal of cross-curricular work is happening in schools which i) is not recognised and/or ii) could be more effective. Making delivery more effective would clearly be a preferable option for most schools than trying to create more time/space for the themes in an already pressurised timetable.

- ♦ **What is the role of the 'coordinator' (if there is one)?** Does the coordinator examine provision from the point of view of **learning coherence** from the pupils' point of view, or is the role more an administrative one, a 'gofer'?
- ♦ **Is too much use being made of pastoral as distinct from curricular provision?** Nearly half the primary schools and one-third of secondary schools in this survey had not carried out a curriculum mapping exercise which included the themes, and it may be that there is scope for delivering much cross-curricular work through national curriculum attainment targets in different subjects.
- ♦ **Is there a case for specialist teams within schools?** Research has shown that knowledge and skills for the various cross-curricular themes are being covered, but often in an uncoordinated way and implicitly rather than explicitly; and also that the quality of teaching is variable even within the same year group or the same department.
- ♦ **Are there ways in which it would help to treat the themes as a 'package'?** Not only would this help to restore the notion of 'the whole curriculum', but it could also assist with delivering cross-curricular work more economically and coherently.
- ♦ **What use is being made of existing materials and resources?** There are some 'school-friendly' materials and packages now available on some of the cross-curricular themes, but it is not clear how far schools are aware of these and making best use of them.
- ♦ **Can schools make greater use of expertise and support from outside agencies and organisations?** 'Resources' also include adults other than teachers, and there may be further ways of developing and improving delivery through the use of professional personnel.

- ♦ **Is there scope for using extra-curricular provision to deliver aspects of the themes?** Schools provide a very wide variety of extra-curricular activities for their pupils and it may be that some of these would fit closely the objectives of some aspects of some themes.

4.2 Issues for Organisations Supporting Cross-Curricular Themes

KEY AREA 1: MAKING THE CASE FOR CROSS-CURRICULAR THEMES

In one sense, this has already been done, since most schools clearly support, and indeed go a long way to fulfil, the need to provide pupils with knowledge and skills related to adult and working life. Nevertheless, some questions probably still need addressing, such as:

- ♦ **Making sure the proposals on cross-curricular provision are realistic** from the schools' point of view, given their considerable timetable and financial pressures.
- ♦ **Reviewing whether the five cross-curricular themes as commented on in this survey are still the appropriate ones** to focus on (what about money management, consumer awareness, etc.?)
- ♦ **Further awareness-raising with schools**, especially primary schools re Citizenship and EIU. (And what about CEG? If the future emphasis is to be on 'guidance' rather than 'careers', is there not a place for this in primary schools too?) Special attention may need to be paid to school governors, who may make policy and spending decisions without complete awareness of cross-curricular needs and issues.

KEY AREA 2: DEVELOPING (NON-FUNDED) PARTNERSHIP LINKS

- ♦ **How can agencies draw schools further into partnership with them** and convince more schools that they have a role to play? (Perhaps a prior question, actually, is to make explicit the range of roles the agencies - or the Forum as a whole - can and should be playing?)
- ♦ **What kinds of mediation and coordination would be required at a local level** to bring schools into partnership vis a vis particular themes? Again, examples of good practice? (Use of TVEI consortia and/or EBPs, as structures to deliver other activities?)
- ♦ **How can 'change agents' (i.e. committed and dynamic teachers) within schools be identified** and supported?

KEY AREA 3: TARGETING SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS MORE CLOSELY

- ♦ **What is already known about schools' needs?** For example, the need to produce, and to disseminate, high quality, 'school-friendly' curriculum support materials, with teachers' guidance notes and detailed suggestions for links with ATs in different subject areas; for databases of good practice examples and annotated guides to resources; for teacher training and support in the use of such materials.
- ♦ How can agencies continue to identify ways to support schools most effectively, especially in the area of **training and support for school staff**? And which staff? This is probably not simply a question of securing teachers' knowledge base but also of helping them plan the teaching of requisite skills, attitudes and values.

KEY AREA 4: ENABLING SCHOOLS TO USE ADULTS OTHER THAN TEACHERS MORE EFFECTIVELY

- ♦ Schools are clearly making use of AoTs, but there may be room for further development. **How effectively are AoTs recruited and trained**, for example: is there any evidence from elsewhere about the involvement of AoTs in education in secondary as well as in primary schools?
- ♦ **What models of good practice exist** in using the expertise of AoTs in clear, properly planned and manageable programmes? How can these be most effectively disseminated? (Examples might include such activities as Compact mentoring programmes for EIU and CEG; police/school liaison programmes for Citizenship.)

KEY AREA 5: TOWARDS A NATIONAL STRATEGY?

In one sense, it would be unrealistic to expect individual schools to make the case - through their actions and activities - for the cross-curricular themes. In the current climate, the context for what is or should be taught needs to be made clear by policy-makers. Is there accordingly a need for:

- ♦ **increased and more systematic publicity** for the work already being done by various organisations to support the skills for adult and working life?
- ♦ **agreed (re)definitions** of what constitutes 'environmental education', 'health education', 'citizenship', 'economic/industrial understanding', 'careers education and guidance', in terms of intrinsic content and skills; and for a (re)statement of where these now fit in relation to appropriate national curriculum subjects?

- ♦ **policy statements and accompanying strategies for delivery** of the cross-curricular themes (together and/or separately) agreed at national level by interested bodies exemplified by Forum members?
- ♦ **more effective campaigning** by the relevant pressure groups, individually and collectively; and a greater **sense of connection** between policy statements made by national bodies and what is happening in schools?
- ♦ **further/renewed lobbying of government departments?** (Does the issue of conflicting messages need to be raised again?)

Taken together, these areas might constitute an initial agenda for action by those concerned with the cross-curricular themes.


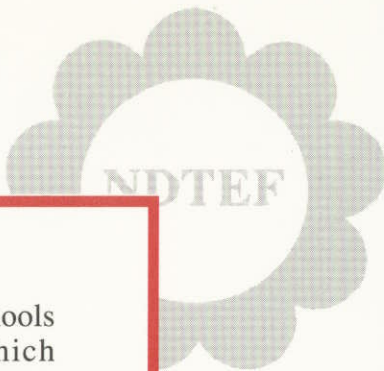
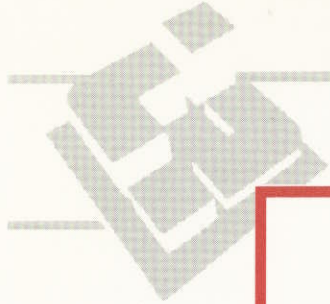
5. MEMBERS OF THE EDUCATION FOR LIFE FORUM

The following organisations belong to the Forum:

ASDAN, Newbury
British Diabetic Association
Centre for Citizenship Studies in Education, University of Leicester
Centre for the Study of Comprehensive Schools
Citizenship Foundation
Council for Education in World Citizenship
Council for Environmental Education
Cross-Curricular Initiatives Centre, Goldsmiths College, University of London
CSV (Community Service Volunteers)
Economics & Business Education Association
Esso UK plc
Fakenham High School
Field Studies Council
Health Education Authority
High Tunstall School, Hartlepool
Ifield Community College, Crawley
London Enterprise Agency
Martineau Education Centre, Birmingham
National Advisory Council for Education and Training Targets
National Association for Environmental Education
National Association of Careers and Guidance Teachers
National Design & Technology Education Foundation
National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling
Ofsted
Pathways Toward Working Life Project
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
RSA (the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufacturing and Commerce)
SCIP (the School Curriculum Industry Partnership)
Society of Education Officers
The Careers Research and Advisory Centre
The Partnership Centre, South Wirral
Unilever
University of Reading
Young Enterprise
Youth Award Scheme

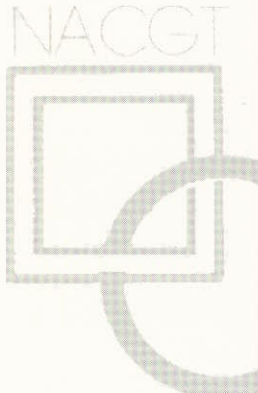
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BP
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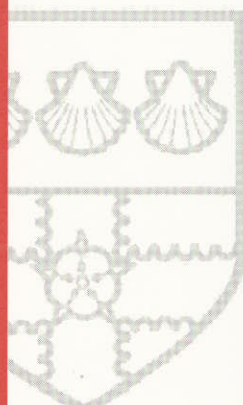


Senior managers in most primary and secondary schools consider the five cross-curricular themes which supplemented the original National Curriculum - health education, environmental education, citizenship, economic and industrial understanding, and careers education and guidance - to be very important and possibly crucial aspects of schooling. Yet the majority of schools still find it hard to make provision for many of these themes and do not expect to devote more time or space to them in the foreseeable future.

This timely report from the NFER gives valuable insights into the role and delivery of the cross-curricular themes in compulsory education. It sheds light on the reasons why the 20 per cent of so-called 'discretionary time' made available by Sir Ron Dearing's recommendations for the curriculum is unlikely to be used for enhancing the themes.



Commissioned by the Education for Life Forum in the spring term of 1995, this study also looks at key differences between the themes in terms of, for example, the emphasis given to each of them in school development planning, the amount of INSET undertaken to help staff with delivery and the various modes of assessment used in recording pupils' progress.



The Education for Life Forum was set up in 1994 by a group of people from key organisations involved in the development, promotion and delivery of the cross-curricular themes. Members include the Council for Environmental Education, the Health Education Authority, the Schools Curriculum Industry Partnership and the Centre for Citizenship Studies in Education. Representatives of the corporate sector - including BP, Esso UK, ICI, Shell, the Banking Information Service, the Post Office and Unilever - provided funding for the study.

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