

The Creative Learning Journey

....every child matters

The Rose Review

The CLJ Review

• Curriculum design and content

4. A design for the curriculum is proposed, which promotes challenging subject teaching alongside equally challenging cross-curricular studies. Given the excellent examples of both of these approaches observed by the Review, high quality subject teaching must not disappear from primary schools, nor should the benefits to children of well-planned cross-curricular studies. To this end, six areas of learning are proposed to give schools optimum flexibility for planning cross-curricular studies, and ample opportunities to teach essential content discretely and directly. The Review also considers how far the existing division between 'core' and 'foundation' subjects remains valid in a curriculum geared to providing breadth and balance.

CLJ already organises the Primary Curriculum into the six areas of learning that underpin the curriculum in the Foundation stage. This means that children's learning is built up from the roots of the early years rather than being a top-down imposition of subject-led learning from the secondary sector. Children do not learn 'subjects' they learn 'about' things and do not recognise or need to recognise the demarcations between disciplines. However, the integrity of each subject is maintained because the teacher is still delivering the Programmes of Study (POS) and can keep a high standard of learning through the focus on skills rather than content.

5. The six areas of learning dovetail well with the EYFS framework to ease transition from the foundation stage to Key Stage 1. The proposed six areas of learning are:

- Understanding English, communication and languages;
- Mathematical understanding;
- Scientific and technological understanding;
- Human, social and environmental understanding;
- Understanding physical health and well-being;
- Understanding the arts and design.

CLJ organises the subjects in a slightly different way than the Rose Review suggests but this is no great problem. The important issue is that teachers using CLJ, who are not familiar with Foundation Stage (the majority), will have already made that conceptual leap from discrete subjects to cross-curricular planning and delivery and this will be a significant step in helping them to adopt the new curriculum. You could say that CLJ 'puts them one step ahead of the game'!!!! – or in Ofsted-speak, they would be 'better placed' to cope with the transition from the old to the new curriculum when the time comes.

6. Securing progress which builds on children's prior learning is a central curricular objective. Because progress is goal related, the goals of learning must be explicit in order to guide planning and teaching, whether cross-curricular or focused on discrete subject content.

The progression of skills is integral to CLJ so that teachers can already track pupil progress effectively. By adopting CLJ schools will already have organised a system of record-keeping and evaluation of progress and will merely have to adapt them when the new curriculum comes out. It will be one less change for them to cope with since they will have had time to trial systems and find one that suits them. The important issue, again, is that they will have gone through the conceptual thought processes that will enable them to be more able to cope with the changes, rather than having to start from scratch.

The Rose Review continued...

- **Reading, writing, numeracy and ICT**

7. The Review's remit insists that literacy, numeracy and ICT must be prioritised. Primary schools must make sure that the best professional practice is brought to bear on teaching these essential skills directly, with ample opportunities for children to use and apply them across the curriculum.

Again, cross-curricular numeracy and literacy are a fundamental part of CLJ and the opportunities that CLJ gives for natural cross-curricular work excites many schools. In the future when schools have to accumulate evidence to assist the APP process, they will have all the evidence they need in one place – the Project books – so that the APP process can be done quickly and smoothly. APP becomes part of the system instead of an additional task which is always a better way of doing things.

- **Discussion of reading, writing and numeracy**

Discussion of reading, writing and numeracy in primary education often fails to recognise the central importance of developing children's spoken communication.

CLJ offers tremendous opportunities for speaking and listening through its creative approach to delivering the curriculum. Acting, interviewing, 'hot-seating', role-play (right up to Year 6), visits and visitors are only a few of the ways that children are engaged in their learning so that their literacy skills can be enhanced.

11. The SEAL programme is useful but not sufficient to cover all the disparate elements that have been added to the area of personal development as deep societal concerns about such critical matters as drug abuse, obesity, sex and relationship education, violent behaviour, e-safety, financial capability and so forth, press for an educational response in primary schools with children at an ever earlier age.

CLJ already incorporates the SEAL programme into its skills progression which is another advantage that schools appreciate. This means that teachers already have all the PSHE skills available to them to incorporate into their cross-curricular planning as well as being able to track coverage so that they could deliver them discretely if they wish.

