

# QCA's plans for curriculum and qualifications

Richard Browne  
MEI

# Overview

- Background
- Changes in the National Curriculum
- Qualifications development
- Timeline

# Background

- Influences on QCA's curriculum thinking
- Influences on qualifications development
- A personal perspective

# A personal perspective

- Industry 1972-76
- Teaching 1977-89
- QCA and predecessors 1989-2006
- MEI Programme Leader (Industry) 2006-

# Influences on QCA's curriculum thinking

- QCA's Futures project
- Focus on aims and outcomes
- Components, learning approaches dimensions
- Big picture of curriculum



# Changes in the National Curriculum

- The proposed programmes of study are designed to provide greater flexibility for teachers, greater coherence for the curriculum as a whole and increased personalisation of the curriculum for learners. The revisions will provide opportunities for schools to renew their curriculum based on greater flexibility to meet pupils' needs and enhanced by newer priorities such as:
  - the Every Child Matters agenda
  - personal, learning and thinking skills
  - the aims of the curriculum

[QCA website]

# Structure of the revised programmes of study

- Curriculum aims
- The importance statement
- Key concepts
- Key processes
- Range and content
- Curriculum opportunities
- Explanatory notes

# How is this different from the current NC?

- Principal change is reduction in detail of content
- At present full detail is in *SNS Framework for Teaching*
- Similar full detail will be needed in GCSE subject criteria
- Some changes to Level descriptions

# Commentary on the proposals

- Key concepts of competence, creativity, applications and implications, and critical understanding
- Key processes of representing and analysing
- Content in number and algebra, geometry and measures, and statistics

# Geometry and measures

- properties of 2D and 3D shapes and their applications, including constructions, loci and bearings, deductive reasoning and Pythagoras' theorem
- transformations, similarity and congruence including the use of scale
- points, lines and shapes in 2D coordinate systems
- units, compound measures and conversions
- perimeters, areas, surface areas and volume

# Curriculum timeline

- September 2007 new KS3 NC into schools
- September 2008 first teaching
- May 2011 changes reflected in NC tests

# Influences on qualifications development

- Views of mathematics education community, eg *Tackling the Mathematics Problem*
- Views of other stakeholders, eg removal of GCSE coursework
- Reports such as Adrian Smith's *Making Mathematics Count*

# Qualifications development

- GCSE
- A level
- Diplomas
- Functional Mathematics

# GCSE - immediate changes

- From September the two tier GCSE will be without a coursework requirement
- Specifications and SAMs on ABs websites
- Two written papers cover all assessment objectives, including UAM
- One paper to be done without a calculator

# GCSE - immediate changes

- Absence of coursework does not signal reduction in value of UAM
- Important for schools to find ways to enhance students' ability to use and apply mathematics, especially to ensure they can use simple mathematics in complex contexts

# GCSE from 2010

- Smith proposed a double award
- From September 2010 there will be two separate GCSEs, working titles *GCSE Mathematics* and *GCSE Additional Mathematics*
- First GCSE will incorporate functional mathematics
- Second will have a greater problem solving element
- Important for large proportion of 16 year olds to take the second GCSE

# A level

- A\* grades from summer 2010, in mathematics based on C3 and C4 grades
- A\* likely to mean  $> 180$  UMS in C3 and C4
- No AEA style questions in mathematics papers before September 2011 courses
- No 3-6-9-12 grading from January 2008

# A level Pathways project

- Pathways pilots from September at AQA and OCR
- Based on revised content proposed by Phase 1 contractors, and trialled this year
- Issue about 4 or 6 units from 2011 not resolved

# Diplomas

- First teaching of the following Diplomas from 2008:
  - engineering
  - society, health and development
  - construction and the built environment
  - IT
  - creative and media

# Diplomas

- Diplomas require learners to gain functional skills in English, mathematics and ICT:
  - at level 1 for the level 1 Diploma
  - at level 2 for Diplomas at levels 2 and 3

# Functional Mathematics

- Available as part of GCSE Mathematics or as stand alone qualification
- Three models for providing within GCSE
- Based on QCA Standards
- Process skills are key: representing, analysing, interpreting
- Critical that assessments match the QCA Standards' expectations

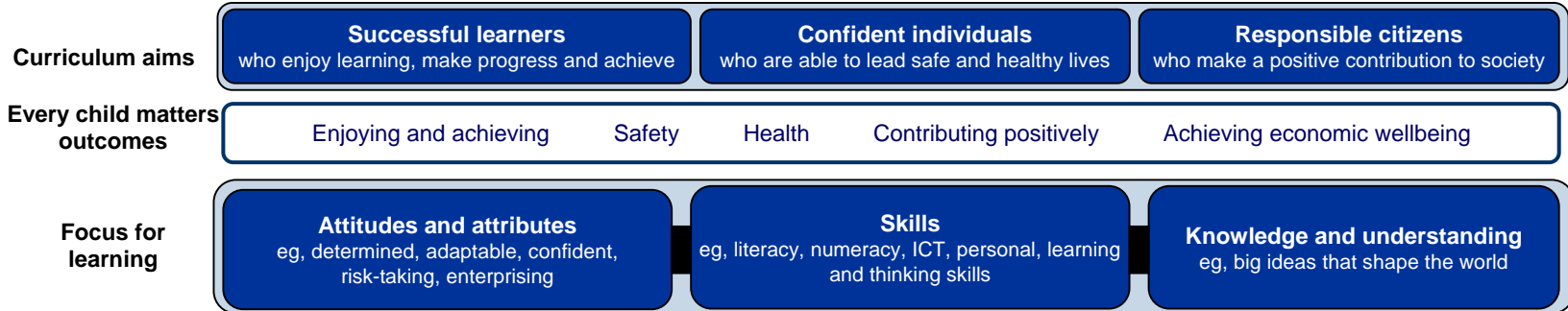
Three key questions

1  
WHAT are we trying to achieve?

2  
HOW do we organise learning?

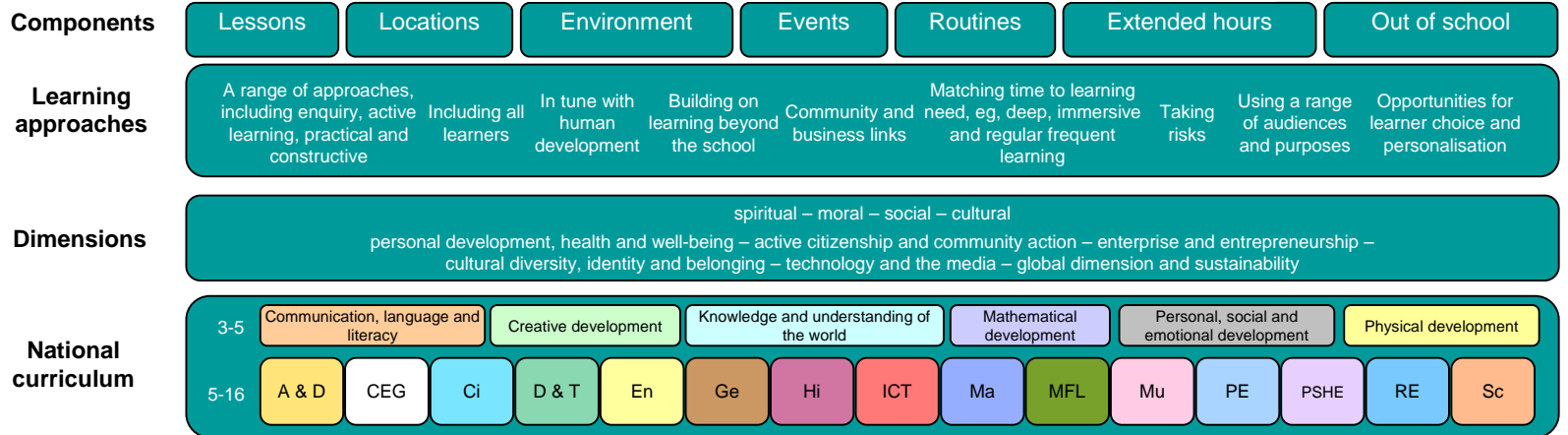
3  
HOW WELL are we achieving our aims?

The curriculum aims to enable all young people to become



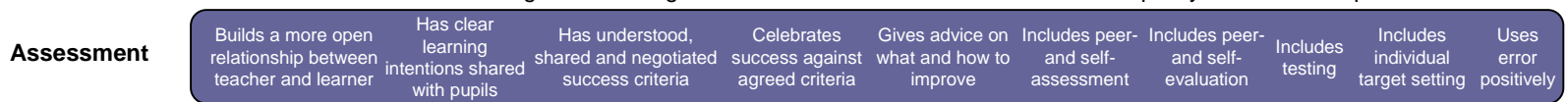
The curriculum as an entire planned learning experience

underpinned by a broad set of common values and purposes



Assessment fit for purpose

To make learning and teaching more effective so that learners understand quality and how to improve



Securing

