Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency

Primary curriculum review

Curriculum reform consultation report to the DCSF

September 2009

QCDA/09/4355

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Background to the consultation

In January 2008, the secretary of state for children, schools and families invited Sir Jim Rose to lead an independent review of the primary national curriculum with the support of the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA). The purpose of the review was to further strengthen the focus on ensuring that all pupils develop the essential reading, writing, numeracy and personal skills they need in order to learn and develop; give schools greater flexibility to meet pupils' individual needs and strengths reducing prescription where possible; improve transition from early years education and to secondary education; and advise on how best to make languages compulsory at Key Stage 2.

The independent review's final proposals were published in April 2009 and formed the basis of this curriculum reform consultation.

The proposed new primary national curriculum is organised into three parts and sets out a national entitlement for what all children should be taught in the primary years (ages 5 to 11).

1. Curriculum aims

   These aims inform all aspects of curriculum planning, teaching and learning at whole-school and subject levels. The curriculum aims for all young people to become:

   - successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve
   - confident individuals who are able to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
   - responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

2. Essentials for learning and life

   The essentials for learning and life are literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology (ICT) capability, learning and thinking skills, personal and emotional skills, and social skills. The essentials for learning and life are designed to be embedded and developed across the curriculum.

3. Six areas of learning

   The six areas of learning are understanding the arts; understanding English, communication and languages; historical, geographical and social understanding;

mathematical understanding; understanding physical development, health and wellbeing; and scientific and technological understanding.

An additional programme of learning on religious education was also part of the consultation, but this is non-statutory and religious education is not part of the National Curriculum.

The proposed six areas of learning set out the essential knowledge, skills, and understanding to which all children are entitled during the primary phase.

Specific requirements for developing ICT capability are set out in each area of learning where they directly contribute to the essential knowledge and key ideas within that area of learning. In this way, children will see the skills and use of ICT as a part of their everyday learning across the whole curriculum.

Within each area of learning, curriculum progression is set out in three sections: early, middle and later. These are designed to help teachers plan appropriately challenging experiences for their children.

QCDA was asked by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to manage the consultation and report on the outcomes. The survey questions were designed by the DCSF and QCDA, and Ipsos MORI was commissioned to process data from the survey. The consultation was open to any member of the public wishing to respond between 30 April and 24 July 2009. A range of conferences, focus groups and stakeholder engagements was also organised during this consultation period. This report contains the outcomes of the public consultation.

Composition of the responses

This report is based on the following evidence at the end of the consultation period:

- 1,057 responses to the consultation survey – 812 completed the survey online, and 245 were received on hard copy questionnaire
- 507 online responses from a consultation specifically designed for children
- 375 online responses from a consultation specifically designed for parents
- 747 attendees at 49 focus groups with headteachers, initial teacher education providers, system leaders, local authority advisers, professional associations, unions, area of learning interest groups (for example arts representatives consulting on understanding the arts; citizenship practitioners consulting on historical, geographical and social understanding; and mathematics representatives consulting on mathematical understanding), standing advisory councils for religious education, a group representing different diversity organisations, and parents and children focus groups
- a series of large conferences with different audiences including:
    - two QCDA conferences with a broad spectrum of more than 300 stakeholders previously engaged in the review
    - a QCDA / Council for Subject Associations (CfSA) joint event with 70 subject association delegates
    - a QCDA / General Teaching Council for England (GTCE) joint event with 70 teachers and headteachers
    - three QCDA / National College for School Leadership (NCSL) (now operating as the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services) joint events with 100 headteachers
    - the annual Association of Professionals in Education and Children‘s Trusts (Aspect) conference with 90 delegates
    - the annual National Governors‘ Association (NGA) conference with 70 delegates
- emails, letters and petitions received during the consultation period
- verbal and written comments made at a variety of meetings attended by QCDA advisers.

Consultation format

A series of statements was developed about the proposed primary curriculum under five headings, and respondents were asked about the strength of their support for each statement. This report considers the findings under each of these headings in turn:

1. how the curriculum is organised
2. essentials for learning and life
3. areas of learning
4. languages
5. transition.

This report summarises the quantitative data for each section as a result of the online questionnaire. 'Agree' and 'disagree' responses (and not 'don't know' responses) have been reported and so numbers do not add to 100.

In conferences and focus groups QCDA requested participants to suggest alterations and improvements to the proposals, some of which are quoted after the quantitative data for each section. Comments, where they are critical, are not representative of the breadth of support for the proposed curriculum.

1. How the curriculum is organised

Participants responded to the following statements in the consultation.

- *The proposed curriculum aims provide an appropriate foundation for primary education.*
- *The proposed areas of learning help teachers plan for meaningful learning experiences.*
- *The proposed areas of learning help children make useful links between related subjects.*
- *The proposals to integrate ICT through the curriculum help children use technology to enhance their learning.*
- *The proposed essentials for learning and life provide schools with a helpful framework for the skills that all children should develop.*
- *Overall, the proposed curriculum is less prescriptive than the existing curriculum.*
- *Overall, the proposed curriculum gives schools more flexibility to adapt the curriculum to the needs of their children.*

Organisation of the primary curriculum

From the consultation survey

Curriculum aims

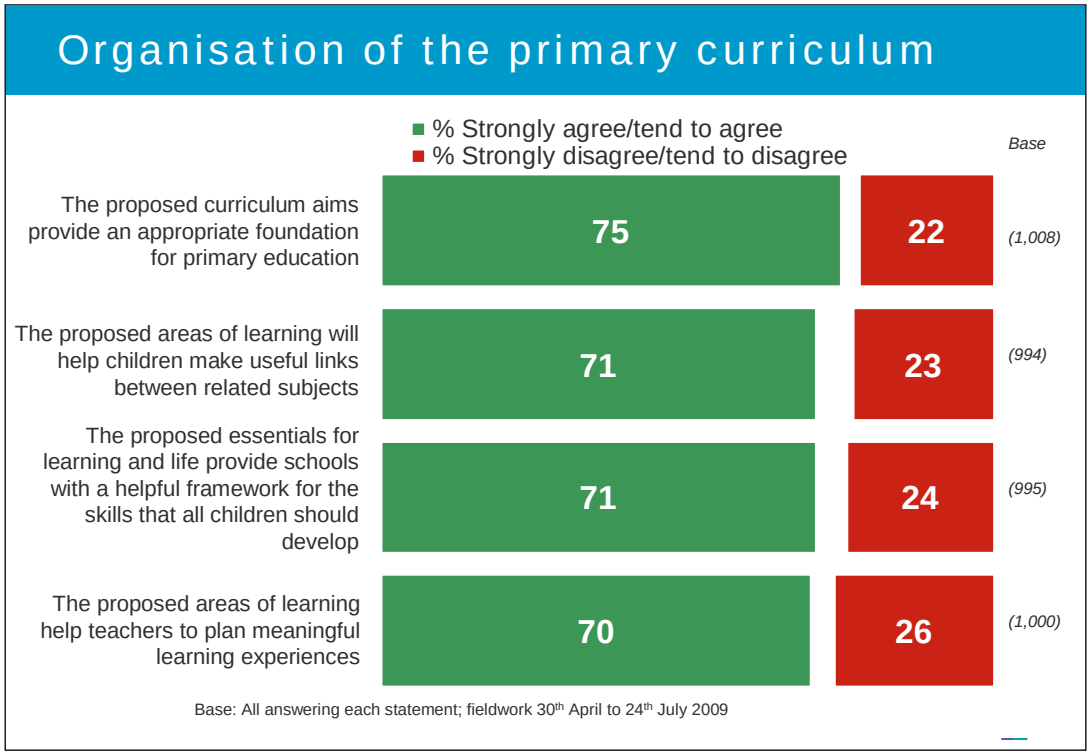
Three quarters of respondents (75 per cent) agreed that the proposed curriculum aims provide an appropriate foundation for primary education. 22 per cent disagreed.

Six areas of learning

Seven in ten respondents (70 per cent) agreed that the areas of learning help teachers plan meaningful learning experiences. 71 per cent agreed that they will help children make useful links between related subjects.

Essentials for learning and life

Just more than seven in ten respondents (71 per cent) agreed that the proposed essentials for learning and life provide schools with a helpful framework for the skills that all children should develop.



From free text responses, conferences, focus groups and written submissions

At QCDA's consultation conferences, delegates were asked to vote on the proposals. Over nine in ten respondents (92 per cent) agreed that the proposed aims provide an appropriate foundation for primary education. Over half (54 per cent) agreed that the three

curriculum stages (early, middle and later) help teachers plan for progression. Nearly four out of five respondents (79 per cent) agreed that the proposed essentials for learning and life provide schools with a helpful framework for the skills that all children should develop.

Responses were also gathered from the survey free text box, focus groups and written submissions. Comments included the following.

Curriculum aims

- ~ *We (*parents*) generally agree with the new aims.*
- ~ *We (*parents*) think the aims reflect the outcomes of Every Child Matters but they needed greater explanation.*
- ~ *The proposed primary curriculum aims are appropriate.*
- ~ *It is important that the same aims underpin the primary and secondary curriculum.*
- ~ *The three aims could be better reflected in the essentials for learning and life - with more emphasis on 'confident individuals' and 'responsible citizens'.*

Areas of learning

- ~ *We (*parents*) support the opportunities for learning outside the curriculum. This will be especially helpful for parents of children excluded from mainstream education.*
- ~ *Areas of learning provide opportunities for children to make useful links between subjects.*
- ~ *There needs to be clearer articulation of the knowledge, skills and understanding and how these link across and between the different areas of learning.*
- ~ *Without understanding a subject in depth, it will be difficult for children to make concrete connections.*
- ~ *Subject silos could still exist because of the subjects within an area of learning.*
- ~ *There needs to be greater links between the areas of learning and further exemplification of how to do this.*

Essentials for learning and life

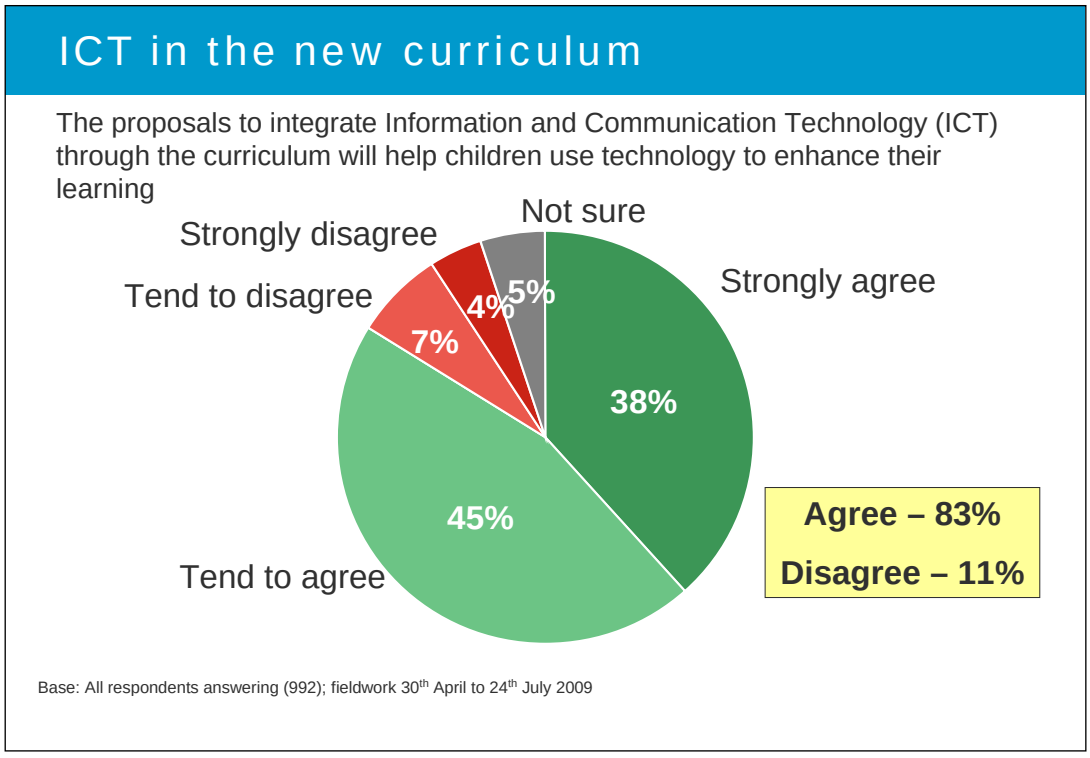
- ~ *The proposed curriculum will benefit children's learning.*
- ~ *The new curriculum is excellent, with a sound theoretical underpinning.*
- ~ *I (*parent of children with special educational needs*) feel the essentials for learning and life are the most important part of the curriculum as these will be the route by which my children will begin to meet the curriculum aims.*
- ~ *We (*parents*) broadly support the essentials for learning and life, as they reinforce the learning of fundamental skills.*

- ~ *It is crucial to ensure all children are given opportunities to learn and transfer these skills into everyday life.*
- ~ *The essentials for learning and life need a higher profile in the curriculum and need to be addressed in more depth in each area of learning.*
- ~ *Teachers will need clear and appropriate guidance on implementing the essentials.*

ICT in the new curriculum

From the consultation survey

More than four in five respondents (83 per cent) agreed that the proposals to integrate ICT through the curriculum will help children use technology to enhance their learning. Just more than one in ten respondents (11 per cent) disagreed that this will be the case.



From free text responses, conferences, focus groups and written submissions

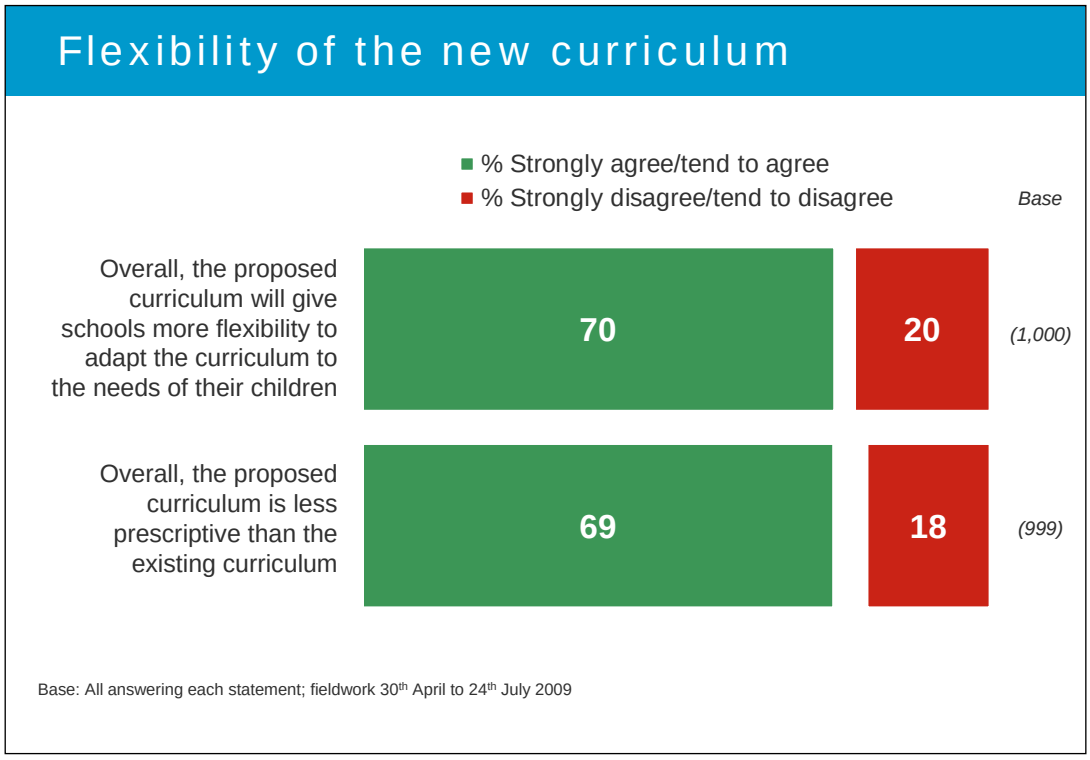
Responses were gathered from the survey free text box, focus groups, conferences and written submissions. Comments included the following.

- ~ *Integration of ICT in the curriculum is important.*
- ~ *Guidance and support will be needed to ensure teachers are fully trained in ICT skills and pedagogy.*

Flexibility of the new curriculum

From the consultation survey

Seven in ten respondents (70 per cent) agreed that the proposed curriculum will give schools more flexibility to adapt to the needs of their children. One in five (20 per cent) disagreed. Nearly seven in ten respondents (69 per cent) agreed that the proposed curriculum is less prescriptive than the existing curriculum.



From free text responses, conferences, focus groups and written submissions

Responses were gathered from the survey free text box, focus groups, conferences and written submissions. Comments included the following.

- ~ *The proposed curriculum will allow greater flexibility for schools and teachers.*
- ~ *The flexibility of the new curriculum is welcome.*
- ~ *The benefits of the new curriculum will depend on how individual schools or teachers interpret it.*
- ~ *There is room for yet more flexibility in the new curriculum*
- ~ *There is a need for strong leadership of the curriculum in schools to maximise the opportunities presented.*
- ~ *Clear guidance will be essential to support teachers to make the curriculum flexible in practice.*

- ~ *The areas of learning could be shortened to match the essentials for learning and life, and detail in the early, middle and later stages could be provided as guidance for teachers.*
- ~ *There is no substantial reduction in prescription, and the three curriculum progression stages could actually lead to greater prescription.*

2. Essentials for learning and life

Participants responded to the following statements in the consultation.

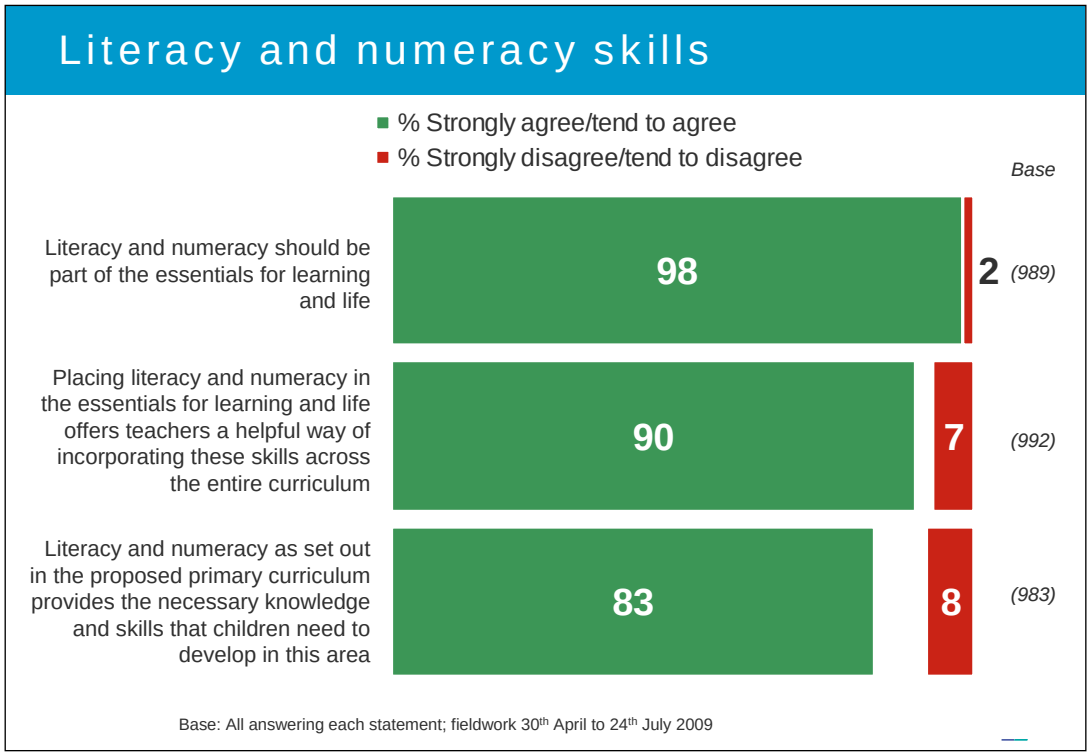
- *Literacy and numeracy should be part of the essentials for learning and life.*
- *Placing literacy and numeracy in the essentials for learning and life offers teachers a helpful way of incorporating these skills across the entire curriculum.*
- *Literacy and numeracy as set out in the proposed primary curriculum provide the necessary knowledge and skills that children need to develop in this area.*
- *ICT capability should be part of the essentials for learning and life.*
- *Placing ICT capability in the essentials for learning and life offers teachers a helpful way of incorporating these skills across the entire curriculum.*
- *ICT capability as set out in the proposed primary curriculum provides the necessary knowledge and skills that children need to develop.*
- *ICT capability is clearly expressed across the curriculum.*
- *Personal, learning and thinking skills should be part of the essentials for learning and life.*
- *Placing personal, learning and thinking skills in the essentials for learning and life offers teachers a helpful way of incorporating these skills across the entire curriculum.*
- *Personal, learning and thinking skills as set out in the proposed primary curriculum provide the necessary knowledge and skills that children need to develop.*

Literacy and numeracy skills

From the consultation survey

Almost all respondents (98 per cent) agreed that literacy and numeracy should be part of the essentials for learning and life. Nine in ten (90 per cent) also agreed that placing literacy and numeracy in the essentials for learning and life offered teachers a helpful way of incorporating these skills across the entire curriculum.

More than four in five (83 per cent) agreed that literacy and numeracy as set out in the proposed primary curriculum provides the necessary knowledge and skills that children need to develop in this area, while fewer than one in ten (8 per cent) disagreed.



From free text responses, conferences, focus groups and written submissions

At QCDA's consultation conferences, delegates were asked to vote on the proposals. Nearly nine out of ten respondents (89 per cent) agreed that literacy and numeracy should be part of the essentials for learning and life.

Responses were also gathered from the survey free text box, focus groups and written submissions. Comments included the following.

- ~ *The essentials for learning and life are a helpful framework for developing skills.*
- ~ *The statutory nature of the essentials for learning and life needs explaining.*

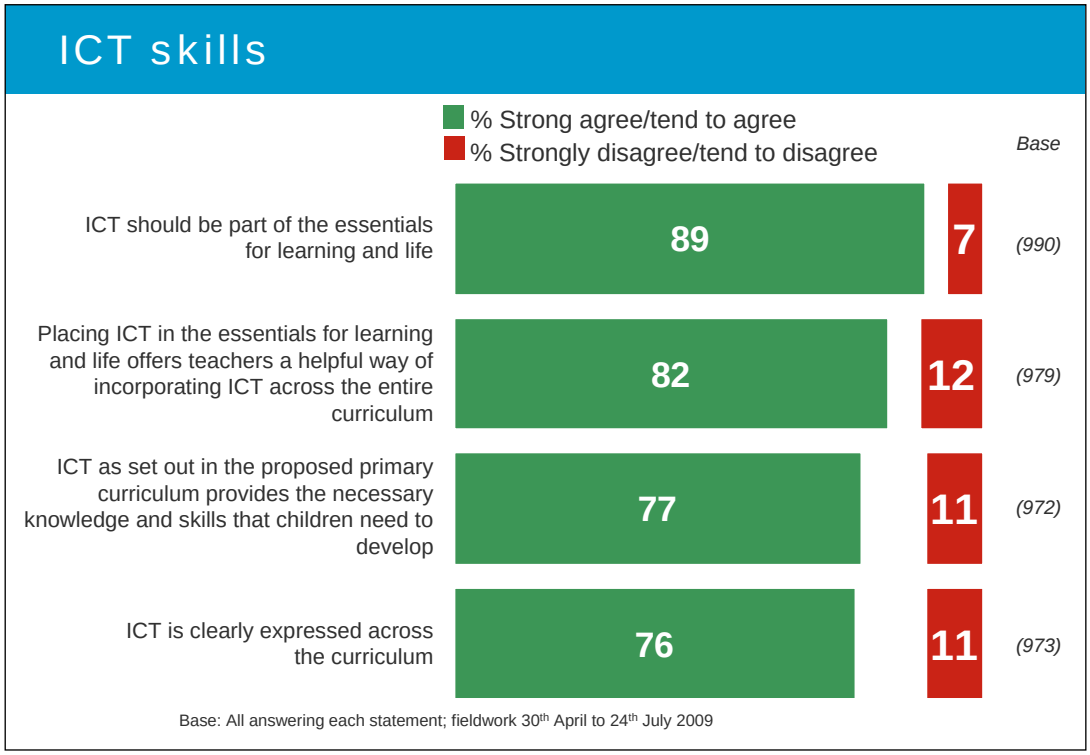
- ~ *'Mathematical capability' or 'mathematical skills' is preferable to the term 'numeracy', as this does not fully articulate the content of the essentials for learning and life.*
- ~ *There should be more focus on the basics, such as basic mathematics skills.*

ICT skills

From the consultation survey

Nearly nine in ten respondents (89 per cent) agreed that ICT should be part of the essentials for learning and life. A little more than four in five (82 per cent) believed that placing ICT in the essentials for learning and life offers teachers a helpful way of incorporating these skills throughout the curriculum. One in eight (12 per cent) disagreed that this will be the case.

More than three quarters of respondents (77 per cent) agreed that ICT as set out in the proposed curriculum provides the necessary knowledge and skills that pupils need, while just more than one in ten (11 per cent) disagreed. Over three quarters (76 per cent) believed that ICT is clearly expressed across the curriculum.



From free text responses, conferences, focus groups and written submissions

At QCDA's consultation conferences, delegates were asked to vote on the proposals. Just over three quarters (76 per cent) of respondents agreed that ICT should be part of the essentials for learning and life.

Responses were also gathered from the survey free text box, focus groups and written submissions. Comments included the following.

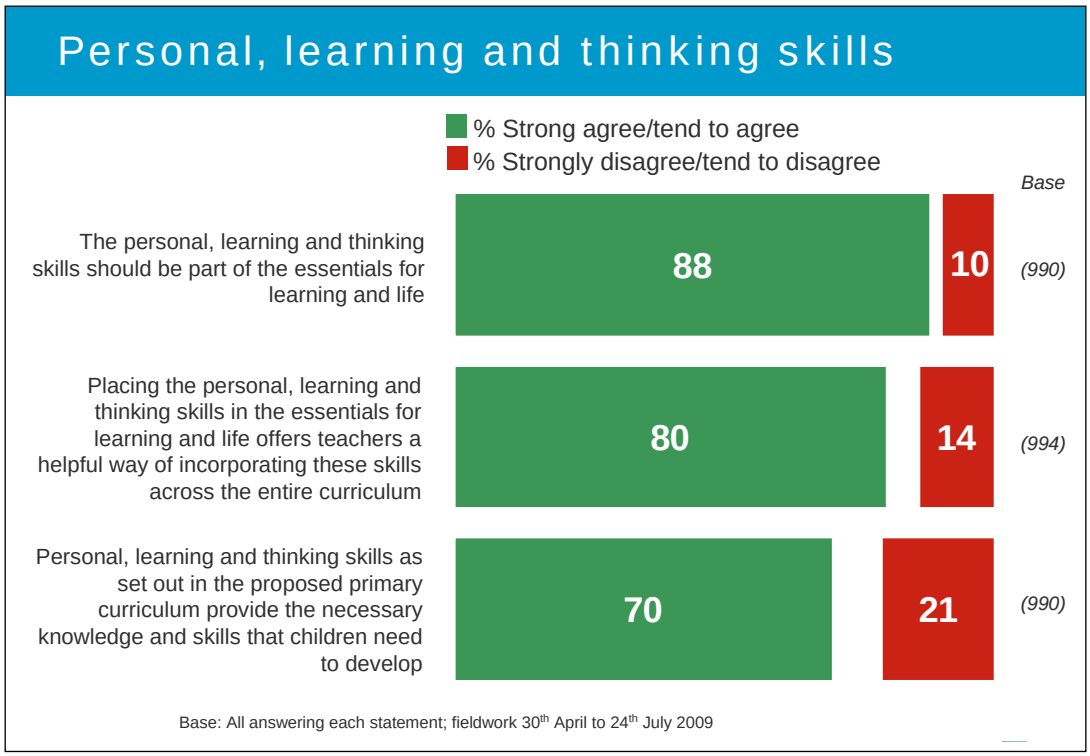
- ~ *The inclusion of ICT capability in the essentials for learning and life is welcome.*
- ~ *The curriculum would become quickly outdated if specific technologies were mentioned.*
- ~ *ICT is a vital part of the curriculum and is fundamental for young people's future prospects so it should be incorporated into all of the areas.*
- ~ *I think ICT capability is clearly expressed across the areas of learning. It is reflected well in scientific and technological understanding, but less well in historical, geographical and social understanding, and understanding physical development, health and wellbeing.*
- ~ *The status of ICT is raised, but ICT should have its own area of learning or it may be excluded from the curriculum if it is not fully embedded by schools.*
- ~ *We (*children*) are confident at using a computer and are happy to use more ICT in school. We also know why computer safety is important.*

Personal, learning and thinking skills

From the consultation survey

Almost nine in ten respondents (88 per cent) agreed that learning and thinking skills, personal and emotional skills, and social skills should be included in the essentials for learning and life, while one in ten (10 per cent) disagreed. Four in five (80 per cent) agreed that placing these skills in the essentials for learning and life offers teachers a helpful way of incorporating them throughout the curriculum, while one in seven (14 per cent) disagreed.

Seven in ten respondents (70 per cent) agreed that learning and thinking skills, personal and emotional skills, and social skills as set out in the proposed curriculum provide the necessary knowledge and skills for students to develop. Just more than one in five (21 per cent) disagreed.



From free text responses, conferences, focus groups and written submissions

At QCDA's consultation conferences, delegates were asked to vote on the proposals. Nearly all respondents (97 per cent) agreed that learning and thinking skills, personal and emotional skills, and social skills should be part of the essentials for learning and life.

Responses were also gathered from the survey free text box, focus groups and written submissions. Comments included the following.

- ~ *We (*children*) value research and planning skills which will help us in the future and problem-solving, connecting ideas and voicing our views.*
- ~ *We (*children*) value skills that enable us to socialise – making friends, respecting people and communicating. We also think literacy and numeracy are important.*
- ~ *Schools should be doing more personal, social, health and economic education, and developing personal, emotional and social skills.*
- ~ *A consistent approach with personal, learning and thinking skills in the secondary curriculum would be helpful.*
- ~ *The essentials for learning and life could be reflected more explicitly within each area of learning, and there could be greater synergy between the statements in the essentials for learning and life and the key skills sections.*
- ~ *Community cohesion; diversity; spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; and creativity could be strengthened within the essentials for learning and life.*

- ~ *Personal, emotional and social skills should come before literacy, numeracy and ICT capability in the essentials for learning and life.*
- ~ *Children should be taught more about how to take 'safe' risks, as children have lost the ability to take risks and make judgements for themselves.*
- ~ *There should be more focus on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.*
- ~ *Religious education is an excellent cross-curricular subject that should be included in the essentials.*

3. Areas of learning

Participants responded to the following statements in the consultation.

- *'Why is this area of learning important' captures the significance of this area for children's education.*
- *'Essential knowledge' captures the big ideas of what children need to learn in primary school.*
- *'Key skills' are the important skills that children need to develop in each area of learning to progress at primary school.*
- *'Breadth of learning' covers a sufficient range of content and experiences.*
- *The three curriculum stages (early, middle and later) help teachers plan for progression.*
- *'Cross-curricular studies' make useful links to other areas of learning and the essentials for learning and life framework.*
- *The explanatory text is helpful in improving understanding of each area of learning.*
- *There is sufficient reference to ICT in each area of learning.*

Understanding the arts

From the consultation survey

More than eight in ten respondents (84 per cent) agreed that 'Why is this area of learning important' captures the significance of understanding the arts for children's education. One in ten (10 per cent) believed this is not the case.

Just more than four in five respondents (82 per cent) felt that 'Essential knowledge' captures the big ideas of what children need to learn at primary school, while just more than one in ten (13 per cent) disagreed.

Nearly nine in ten respondents (87 per cent) agreed that 'Key skills' are the important skills that children need to develop in this area of learning to progress at primary school. Nearly one in ten (9 per cent) disagreed.

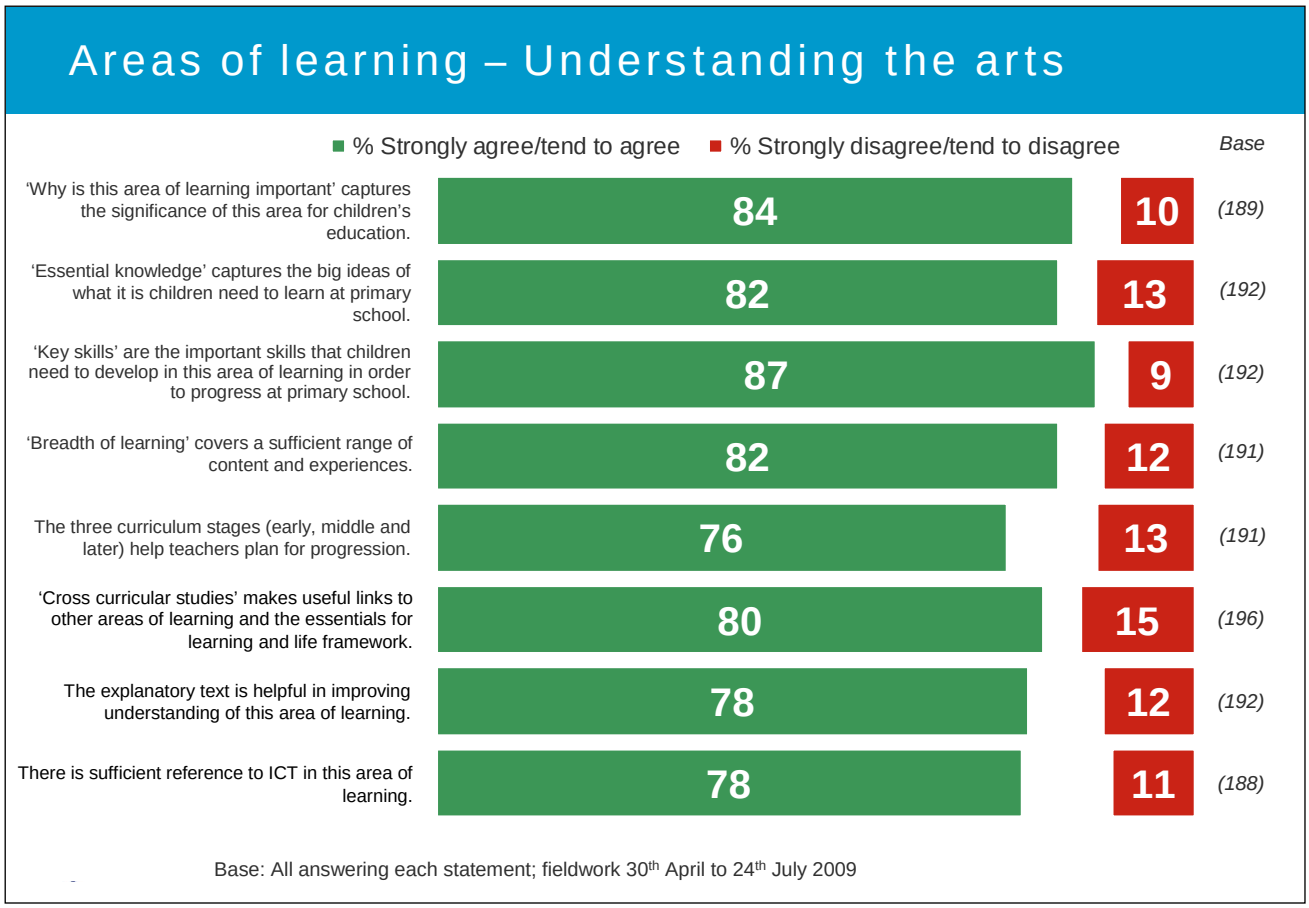
Just more than four in five respondents (82 per cent) thought that 'Breadth of learning' covers a sufficient range of content and experiences in understanding the arts, while just more than one in ten (12 per cent) disagreed that this is the case.

Over three quarters of respondents (76 per cent) believed that the three curriculum stages (early, middle and later) in understanding the arts help teachers plan for progression, while just more than one in ten (13 per cent) disagreed.

Four in five respondents (80 per cent) agreed that 'Cross-curricular studies' makes useful links to other areas of learning and the essentials for learning and life framework. One in seven (15 per cent) did not agreed that this is the case.

More than three-quarters of respondents (78 per cent) held the view that the explanatory text is helpful in improving understanding of this area of learning, while just more than one in ten (12 per cent) felt that it is not helpful.

The same proportion (78 per cent) believed that understanding the arts contains sufficient reference to ICT, while just over one in ten (11 per cent) did not.



From free text responses, conferences, focus groups and written submissions

Responses were gathered from the survey free text box, focus groups, conferences and written submissions. Comments included the following.

- ~ *Giving drama and dance a clear place in the curriculum is welcomed.*
- ~ *Breadth of learning is strong and we agree with the identification of key learning and activities.*
- ~ *Arts are undervalued and need to feature more prominently in children's learning.*
- ~ *Media, film, creative writing, plays and poetry should be included.*
- ~ *The importance statement underplays the rigour of the creative process. There is an overemphasis on emotions and feelings.*
- ~ *A more explicit link between culture and the arts could be included, as well as a reference to learning about children's own cultures.*
- ~ *ICT links could be expanded to reflect a wider range of technology, for example using video and recording equipment within drama.*
- ~ *Children should be given the opportunity to experience the arts rather than trying to understand them.*

Understanding English, communication and languages

From the consultation survey

More than nine in ten respondents (92 per cent) agreed that 'Why is this area of learning important' captures the significance of understanding English, communication and languages. Fewer than one in twenty (4 per cent) did not agree.

A similar proportion (89 per cent) felt that 'Essential knowledge' captures the big ideas of what children need to learn at primary school, while fewer than one in ten (7 per cent) disagreed.

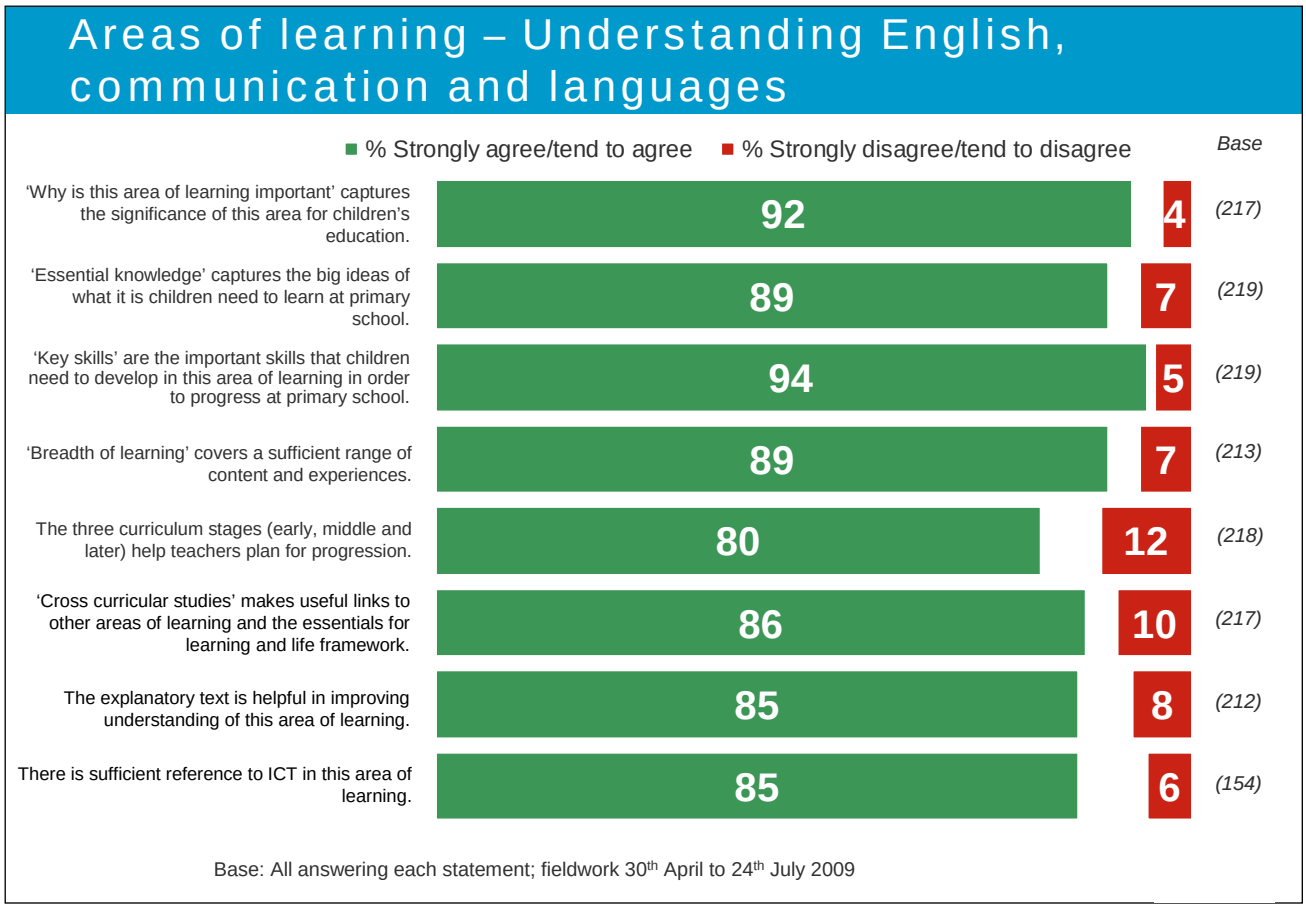
More than nine in ten respondents (94 per cent) agreed that 'Key skills' are the important skills that children need to develop in this area of learning to progress at primary school, while one in twenty (5 per cent) disagreed.

Nearly nine in ten respondents (89 per cent) thought that 'Breadth of learning' covers a sufficient range of content and experiences in understanding English, communication and languages, while fewer than one in ten (7 per cent) felt the coverage is insufficient.

Four in five (80 per cent) believed that the three curriculum stages (early, middle and later) in this area of learning help teachers plan for progression, while just over one in ten (12 per cent) felt they are not helpful for this.

Nearly nine in ten (86 per cent) of respondents agreed that 'Cross-curricular studies' makes useful links to other areas of learning and the essentials for learning and life framework, while one in ten (10 per cent) disagreed.

A similar proportion (85 per cent) said that the explanatory text is helpful in improving understanding of this area of learning and the same proportion again (85 per cent) believed that understanding English, communication and languages contains sufficient reference to ICT.



From free text responses, conferences, focus groups and written submissions

Responses were gathered from the survey free text box, focus groups, conferences and written submissions. Comments included the following.

- ~ *The addition of modern languages is welcomed.*
- ~ *I welcome the programme of learning and the way it includes multimodal texts.*
- ~ *I support the inclusion of sign language.*
- ~ *Speech skills are extremely important and should be at the centre of all learning.*
- ~ *Links to literacy in the essentials for learning and life need explaining.*
- ~ *There should be more emphasis on allowing reading for pleasure.*
- ~ *There should be more emphasis on writing.*
- ~ *The opportunity to explore connections between languages and culture could be strengthened.*
- ~ *The three stages of curriculum progression could be reviewed to ensure a clear sequence. Drama could also be used as a tool for learning through these stages.*

Historical, geographical and social understanding

From the consultation survey

With regard to historical, geographical and social understanding, nearly nine in ten respondents (85 per cent) agreed that 'Why is this area of learning important' captures the significance of this area of learning, while just over one in ten (11 per cent) disagreed.

Four in five respondents (80 per cent) felt that 'Essential knowledge' captures the big ideas of what children need to learn at primary school. Around one in six (17 per cent) disagreed that this is the case.

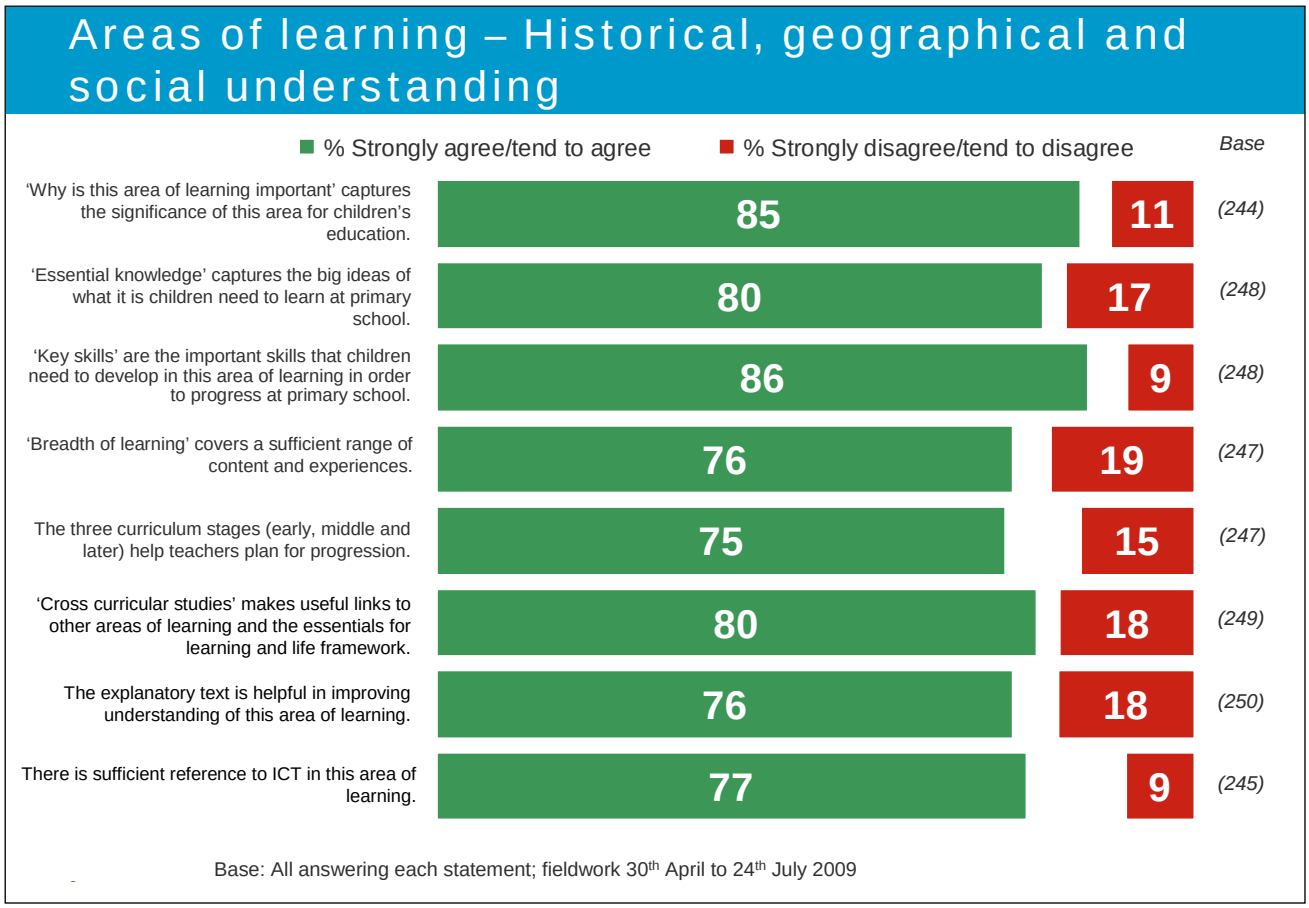
Nearly nine in ten respondents (86 per cent) agreed that 'Key skills' are the important skills that children need to develop in this area of learning to progress at primary school. Almost one in ten (9 per cent) did not agree.

Over three quarters of respondents (76 per cent) thought that 'Breadth of learning' covers a sufficient range of content and experiences in historical, geographic and social understanding, while nearly one in five (19 per cent) disagreed.

Three quarters of respondents (75 per cent) also believed that the three curriculum stages (early, middle and later) in historical, geographic and social understanding help teachers plan for progression, while fewer than one in five (15 per cent) disagreed.

Four in five respondents (80 per cent) agreed that 'Cross-curricular studies' makes useful links to other areas of learning and the essentials for learning and life framework. Fewer than one in five (18 per cent) did not feel this way.

Over three quarters (76 per cent) of respondents held the view that the explanatory text is helpful in improving understanding of this area of learning. A similar proportion (77 per cent) believed that this area of learning contains sufficient reference to ICT.



From free text responses, conferences, focus groups and written submissions

Responses were gathered from the survey free text box, focus groups, conferences and written submissions. Comments included the following.

- ~ *More explicit inclusion of citizenship is good.*
- ~ *We support the three phases of learning.*
- ~ *We welcome the emphasis on localised study, which we feel can really help to anchor children's understanding of a variety of topics and subjects in a secure way. While children needed to study both world and British history, it needs to be in a global context and needs more specification in the curriculum content.*
- ~ *Priority should be given to teaching British history and geography so that children understand where they come from.*
- ~ *The title does not sufficiently recognise the role of citizenship within this area. 'Social' could be confused with social skills in the essentials for learning and life.*
- ~ *The importance statement does not convey the distinctive nature of history, geography and citizenship.*

- ~ *The importance statement needs to make clear the expectation that children should work together and participate in real decision-making to address social issues.*
- ~ *There should be more explicit references to identity and diversity, challenging discrimination and the global dimension.*
- ~ *The breadth of learning section should include historical sites that are important sources of evidence.*
- ~ *The three stages of curriculum progression could be reviewed and refocused around key concepts (sustainability, democracy, chronology etc).*
- ~ *ICT opportunities could be expanded to include communication with different people using video conferencing, email and social networking.*

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Mathematical understanding

From the consultation survey

More than nine in ten respondents (92 per cent) believed that 'Why is this area of learning important' captures the significance of mathematical understanding for children's education.

The same proportion of respondents (92 per cent) also agreed that 'Essential knowledge' captures the big ideas of what children need to learn at primary school, with fewer than one in ten (7 per cent) disagreeing.

The same proportion again (92 per cent) agreed that 'Key skills' are the important skills that children need to develop in this area of learning to progress at primary school.

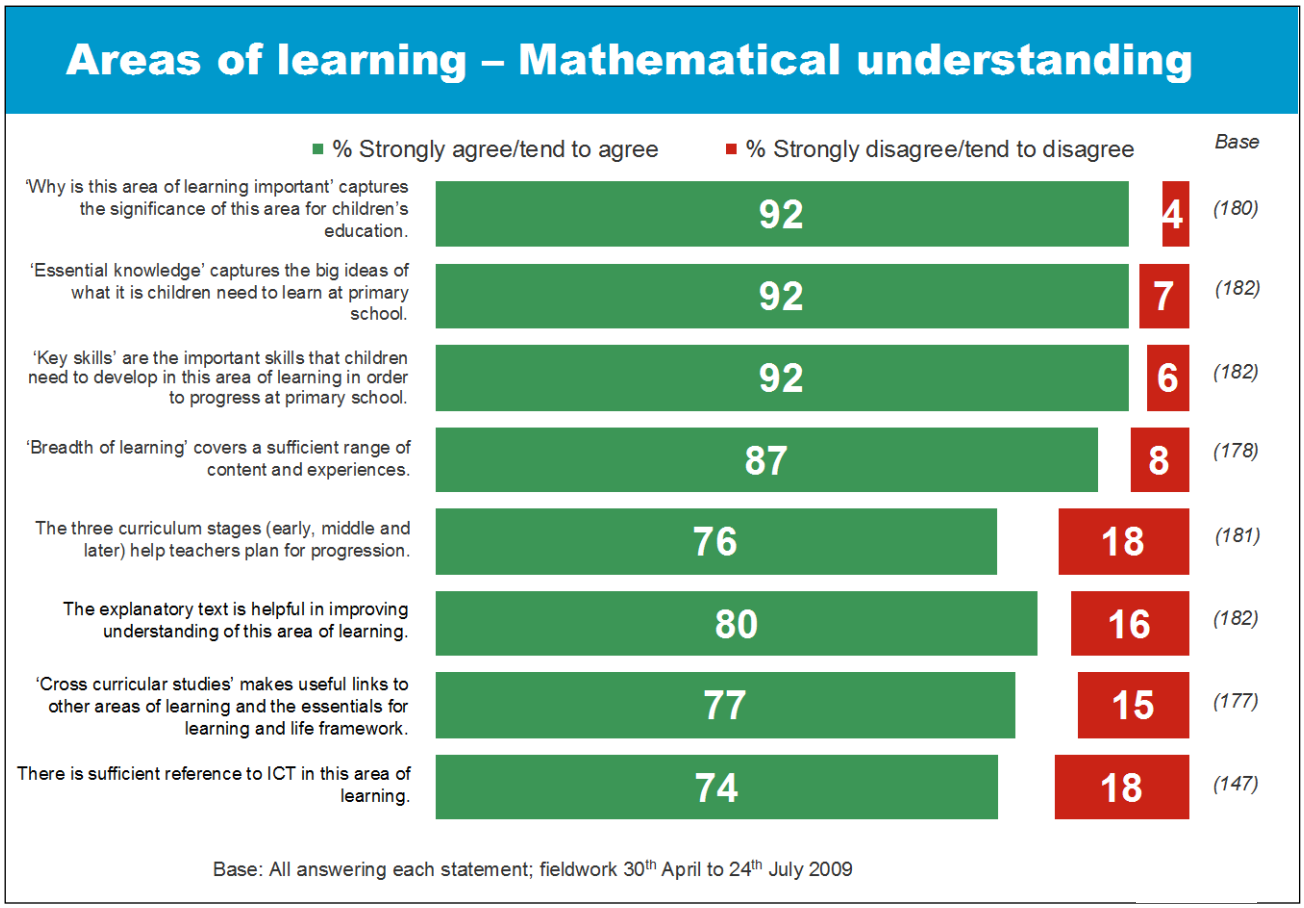
Nearly nine in ten respondents (87 per cent) thought that 'Breadth of learning' covers a sufficient range of content and experiences in mathematical understanding, while fewer than one in ten (8 per cent) did not feel this way.

Over three quarters of respondents (76 per cent) believed that the three curriculum stages (early, middle and later) in mathematical understanding help teachers plan for progression, while fewer than one in five (18 per cent) disagreed.

Four in five respondents (80 per cent) agreed that 'Cross-curricular studies' makes useful links to other areas of learning and the essentials for learning and life framework, with one in six (16 per cent) disagreeing.

Just more than three-quarters of respondents (77 per cent) agreed that the explanatory text is helpful in improving understanding of this area of learning. One in seven (15 per cent) disagreed.

Almost three quarters of respondents (74 per cent) believed that mathematical understanding contains sufficient reference to ICT, while just fewer than one in five (18 per cent) disagreed.



From free text responses, conferences, focus groups and written submissions

Responses were gathered from the survey free text box, focus groups, conferences and written submissions. Comments included the following.

- ~ *We think the proposed maths curriculum is appropriate for primary education.*
- ~ *The Key skills and Breadth of learning sections are valuable to teachers and capture the importance of this area of learning.*
- ~ *Mathematics needs to have more definite links to other areas of the curriculum.*
- ~ *The importance statement needs to reflect enjoyment of mathematics.*
- ~ *The link with numeracy in the essentials for learning and life should be explained.*
- ~ *Essential knowledge should include measurement, patterns, structures and relationships.*
- ~ *Breadth of learning needs to include the role of mathematics in everyday life and needs to encourage children to work together and discuss mathematics with others.*
- ~ *The three stages of curriculum progression need reviewing to link with key skills and ensure children develop confidence in the early stages.*
- ~ *ICT opportunities need to include data handling along with statistics.*

Understanding physical development, health and wellbeing

From the consultation survey

Nearly two thirds of respondents (63 per cent) thought that 'Why is this area of learning important' captures the significance of understanding physical development, health and wellbeing. Almost one third (31 per cent) disagreed.

Three in five respondents (60 per cent) felt that 'Essential knowledge' captured the big ideas of what children need to learn at primary school, while more than one-third (36 per cent) felt that it does not.

Two-thirds of respondents (66 per cent) agreed that 'Key skills' are the important skills that children need to develop in this area of learning to progress at primary school, while more than one-quarter (28 per cent) disagreed.

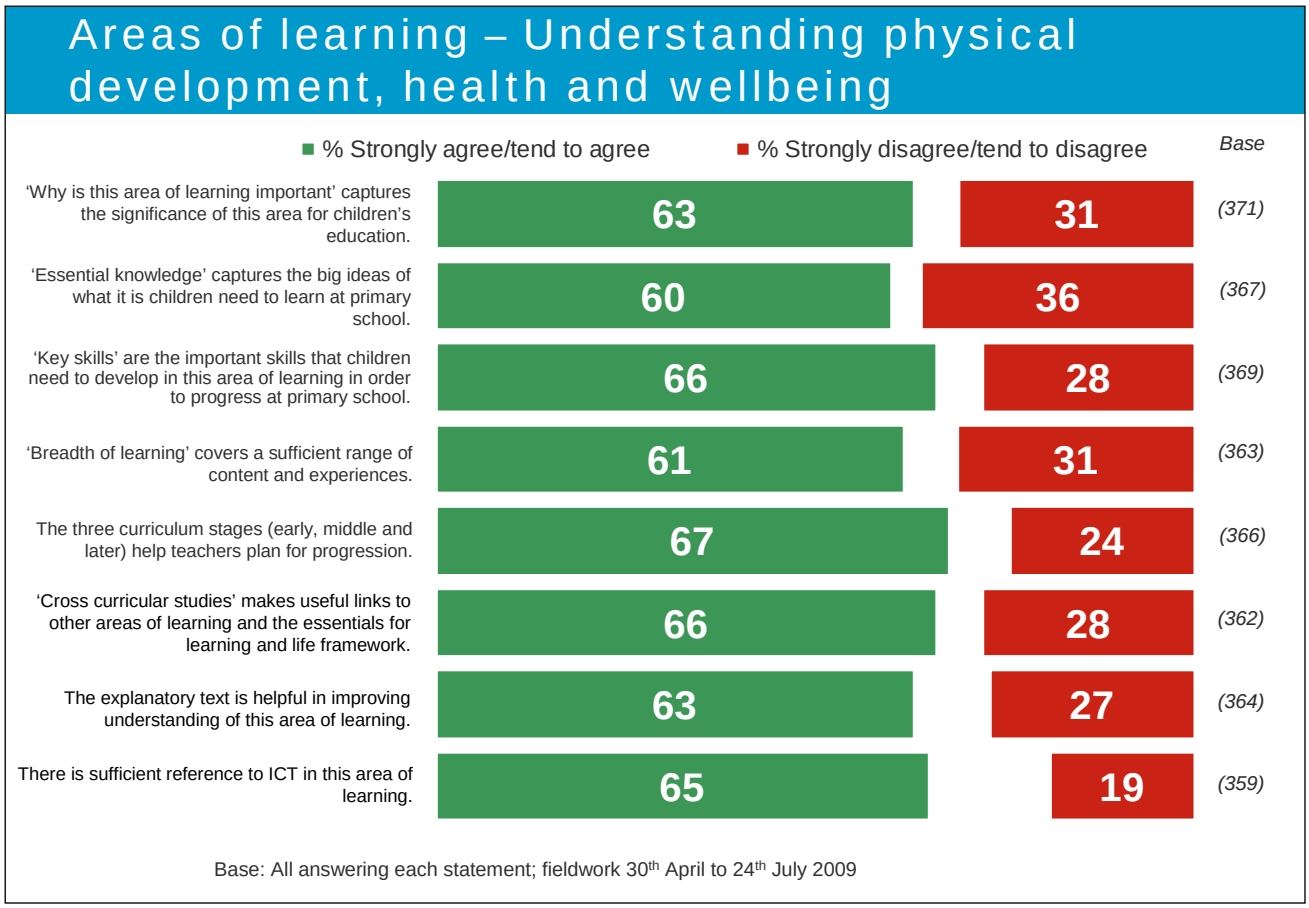
Just more than three in five respondents (61 per cent) thought that 'Breadth of learning' covers a sufficient range of content and experiences in this area of learning, while just more than three in ten (31 per cent) disagreed.

Two-thirds of respondents (67 per cent) believed that the three curriculum stages (early, middle and later) in this area of learning help teachers plan for progression. Just over one quarter (26 per cent) did not believe they are helpful.

A similar proportion (66 per cent) agreed that 'Cross-curricular studies' makes useful links to other areas of learning and the essentials for learning and life framework, while nearly three in ten (28 per cent) disagreed.

Nearly two thirds (63 per cent) of respondents felt the explanatory text is helpful in improving understanding of understanding physical development, health and wellbeing, while just more than a quarter (27 per cent) found it unhelpful.

Nearly two thirds of respondents (65 per cent) believed that understanding physical development, health and wellbeing contains sufficient reference to ICT, while nearly one in five (19 per cent) did not.



From free text responses, conferences, focus groups and written submissions

Responses were gathered from the survey free text box, focus groups, conferences and written submissions. Comments included the following.

- ~ *An increased emphasis on personal development in this area is welcomed.*
- ~ *We welcome references to e-safety.*
- ~ *We fully support the proposals to include financial capability.*
- ~ *Physical education needs to feature more prominently.*
- ~ *Swimming does not seem to be a priority in the curriculum proposals.*
- ~ *There is insufficient reference to relationships, mental health, and spiritual health.*
- ~ *The personal, social, health and economic education aspects have not been incorporated in a meaningful way and tend towards health issues.*
- ~ *The breadth of learning needs to be reduced.*
- ~ *ICT opportunities could be developed.*
- ~ *I (*parent*) think that some aspects of sex and relationships education should appear later in the curriculum progression stages or not at all.*

Scientific and technological understanding

From the consultation survey

Concerning scientific and technological understanding, four in five respondents (80 per cent) thought 'Why is this area of learning important?' captures the significance of this area of learning. One in six (16 per cent) disagreed.

Three quarters of respondents (75 per cent) agreed that 'Essential knowledge' captures the big ideas of what children need to learn at primary school, with almost one quarter (23 per cent) disagreeing.

More than eight out of ten respondents (84 per cent) said that 'Key skills' are the important skills that children need to develop in this area of learning to progress at primary school, while one in seven (14 per cent) did not think that this is the case.

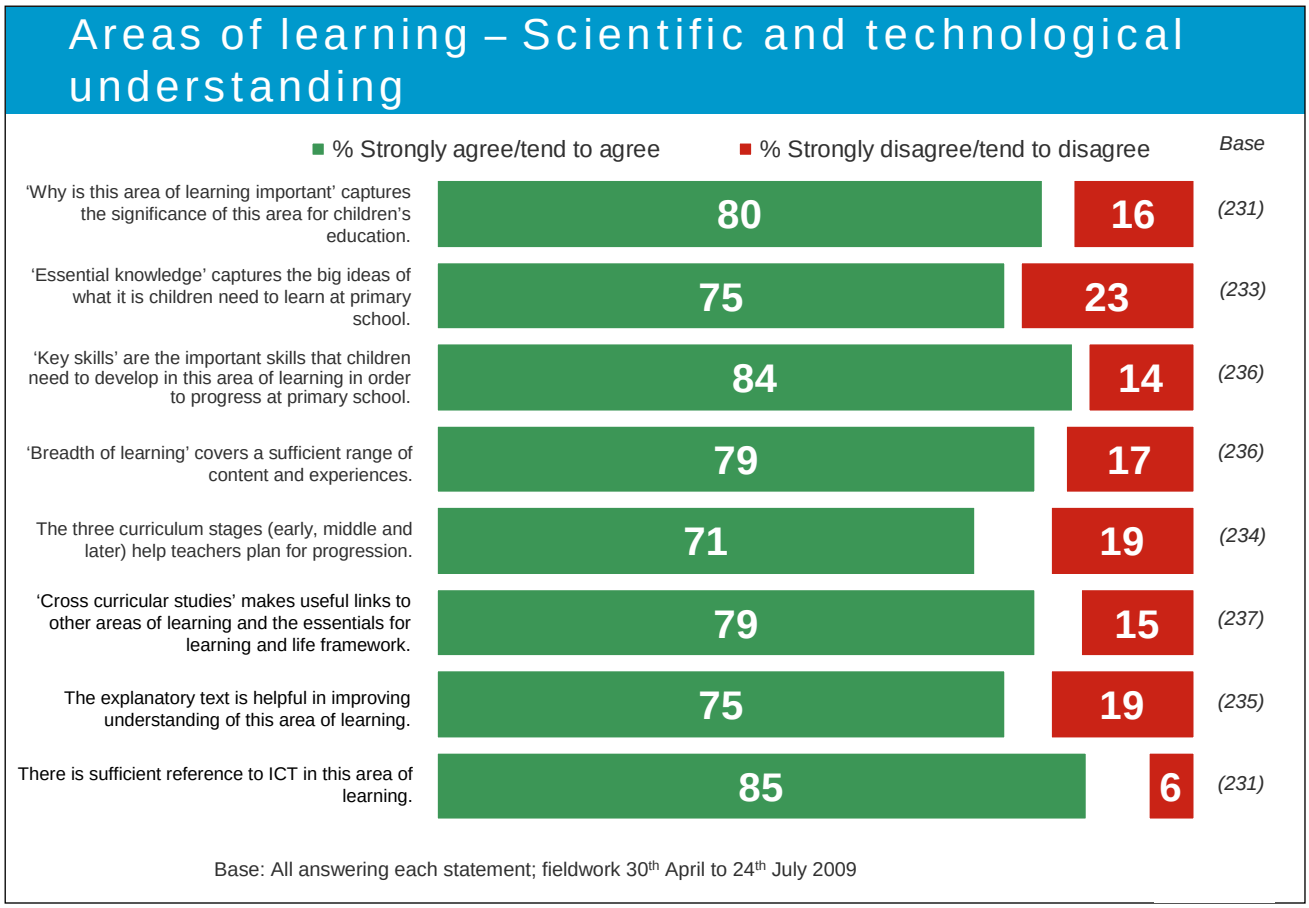
Nearly four in five respondents (79 per cent) agreed that 'Breadth of learning' covers a sufficient range of content and experiences in this area of learning, while fewer than one in five (17 per cent) believed the range is insufficient.

Over seven in ten respondents (71 per cent) believed that the three curriculum stages (early, middle and later) in this area help teachers plan for progression, while nearly one in five (19 per cent) disagreed.

Nearly four in five respondents (79 per cent) agreed that 'Cross-curricular studies' makes useful links to other areas of learning and the essentials for learning and life framework. Nearly one in seven (15 per cent) disagreed.

Three quarters of respondents (75 per cent) held the view that the explanatory text is helpful in improving understanding of this area of learning, while almost one in five (19 per cent) found it unhelpful.

Nearly 9 out of ten respondents (85 per cent) believed that scientific and technological understanding contains sufficient reference to ICT.



From free text responses, conferences, focus groups and written submissions

Responses were gathered from the survey free text box, focus groups, conferences and written submissions. Comments included the following.

- ~ *The Breadth of learning section is welcomed and extremely helpful.*
- ~ *The three 'stages' has many advantages over 'ages'*
- ~ *The cross-curricular studies section makes effective links with mathematical understanding and understanding physical development.*
- ~ *Science should still have core curriculum status and should be seen as a basic foundation of education – creatively exploring and questioning the world.*
- ~ *The ICT links relate to data handling and control well, but neglect communication aspects.*
- ~ *Evolution should feature more prominently* (this was also the subject of an e-petition).
- ~ *The use of the word 'technology' could be confused with 'ICT'.*
- ~ *The importance statement lacks impact and does not give a clear rationale for the area of learning or capture the essence of the subjects within it.*

- ~ *The breadth of learning section should contain learning and thinking skills, ethical dimensions, asking questions, considering evidence and developing models.*
- ~ *The three stages of curriculum progression could be reorganised to identify themes.*
- ~ *Aesthetic and sensory aspects of designing and making, ingredients in food technology, and energy in science could all be added.*

Religious education (non-statutory)

From the consultation survey

For religious education, just over seven in ten respondents (71 per cent) believed that 'Why is this area of learning important' captures the significance of this area of learning, with just more than one in five (22 per cent) disagreeing.

Nearly two thirds of respondents (65 per cent) felt that 'Essential knowledge' captures the big ideas of what children need to learn in this area of learning at primary school. Nearly three in ten (29 per cent) held the opposite view.

Over seven in ten respondents (71 per cent) said that 'Key skills' are the important skills that children need to develop in this area of learning to progress at primary school. Just more than one in five (22 per cent) believed this is not the case.

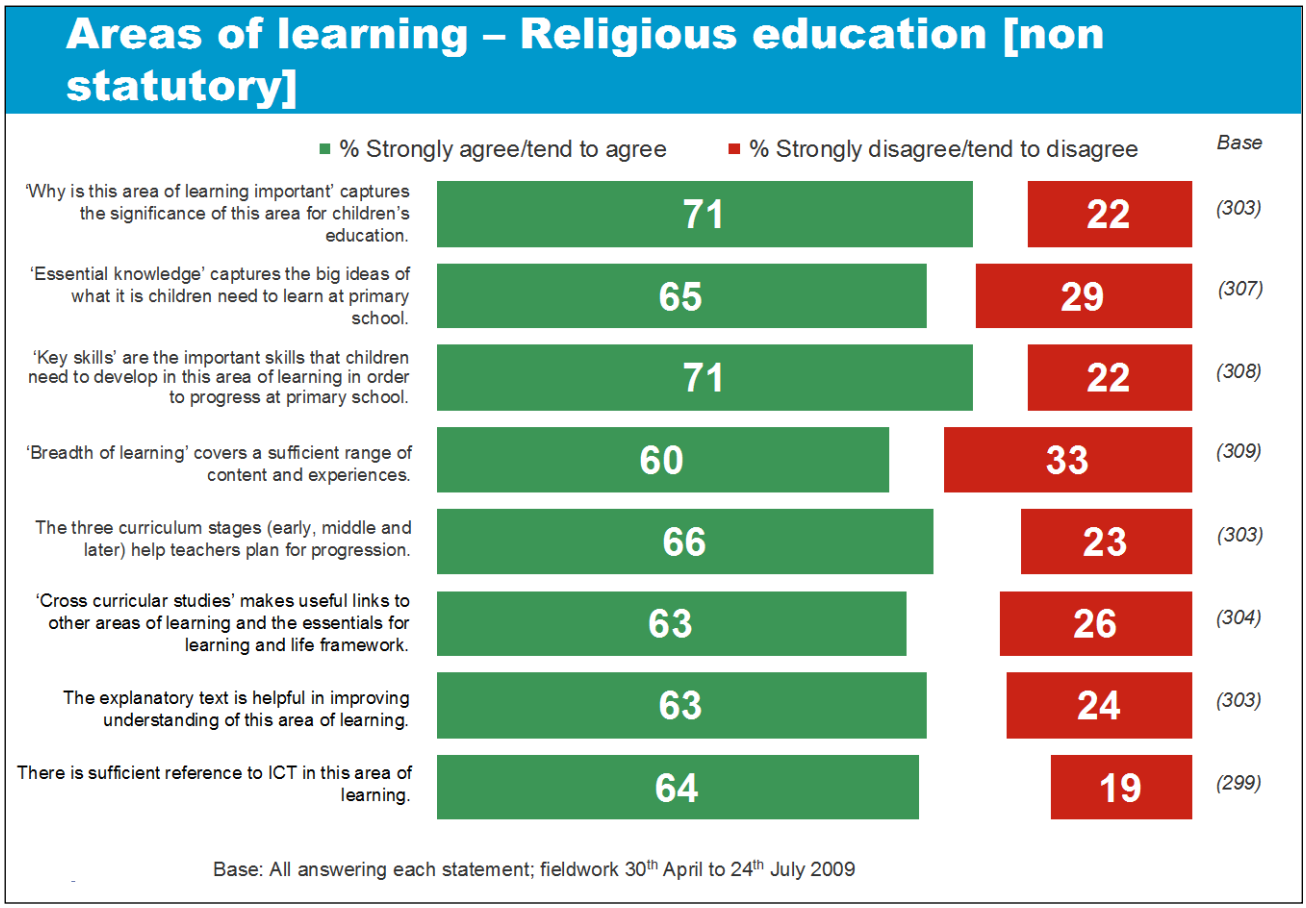
Three in five respondents (60 per cent) agreed that 'Breadth of learning' covers a sufficient range of content and experiences in religious education, while one third (33 per cent) felt the coverage is not sufficient.

Two thirds of respondents (66 per cent) believed that the three curriculum stages (early, middle and later) in this area of learning help teachers plan for progression. Just under a quarter (23 per cent) held the opposite view.

Nearly two thirds of respondents (63 per cent) agreed that 'Cross-curricular studies' makes useful links to other areas of learning and the essentials for learning and life framework. Over one quarter (26 per cent) did not think that useful links are made.

Nearly two thirds of respondents (63 per cent) also found that the explanatory text is helpful in improving understanding of this area of learning, while just fewer than one quarter (24 per cent) disagreed.

Just fewer than two thirds of respondents (64 per cent) felt that religious education contains sufficient reference to ICT, while nearly one in five (19 per cent) did not.



From free text responses, conferences, focus groups and written submissions

Responses were gathered from the survey free text box, focus groups, conferences and written submissions. Comments included the following.

- ~ *The programme of learning for religious education is flexible and helpful in following the same format as other areas.*
- ~ *The study of religious and non-religious views was welcomed.*
- ~ *'Faiths and beliefs' should be replaced by 'principal religions'.*
- ~ *Curriculum progression does not balance learning about and learning from religion.*
- ~ *Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and values should be included.*
- ~ *There should be links with other aspects of the curriculum including citizenship and personal, social, health and economic education.*

General comments about all areas of learning

From free text responses, conferences, focus groups and written submissions

Responses were gathered from the survey free text box, focus groups, written submissions and conferences. Comments included the following.

- *The connection between 'Essential knowledge', 'Key skills' and 'Breadth of learning' seems to be clear.*
- *We (*parents*) think that organising the curriculum into areas of learning is good.*
- *We (*children*) think it is good to make links between subjects.*
- *The titles of the programme of learning sections should match those at secondary.*
- *Removing the curriculum progression section would increase flexibility, reduce prescription and ensure a focus on the essence of each area.*
- *Effective Initial teacher education and continuing professional development will be needed to implement the new curriculum.*
- *Essential knowledge and key skills need to drive the curriculum progression section.*
- *Perceptions about lack of flexibility and prescription may not change.*
- *Cross-curricular studies are an important element of the curriculum but statements are too broad to be helpful to teachers.*

4. Languages

Participants responded to the following statements in the consultation.

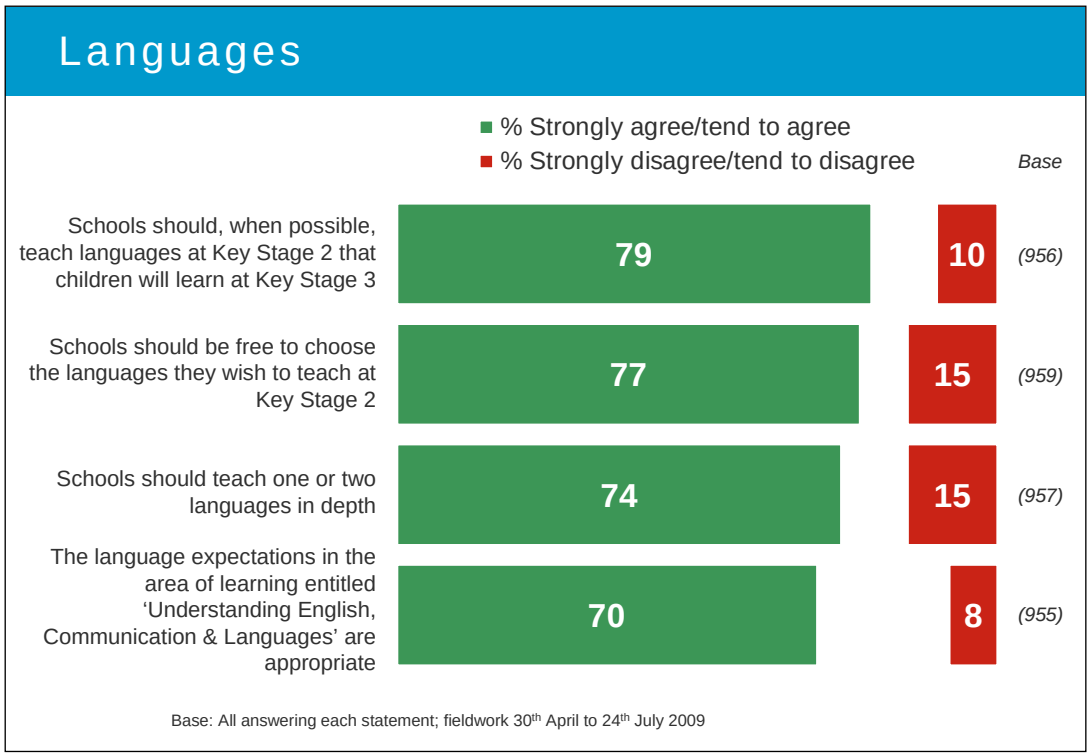
- *Schools should be free to choose the languages they wish to teach at key stage 2.*
- *Schools should, when possible, teach languages at key stage 2 that children will learn at key stage 3.*
- *Schools should teach one or two languages in depth.*
- *The language expectations in the area of learning entitled 'Understanding English, communication and languages' are appropriate.*

From the consultation survey

Over three quarters (77 per cent) of respondents believed that schools should be free to choose the languages they wish to teach at key stage 2, while one in seven (15 per cent) disagreed. However, a similar proportion (79 per cent) also believed that where possible, schools should endeavour to make sure the languages they teach at key stage 2 are those students will be able to learn at key stage 3.

Nearly three quarters of respondents (74 per cent) felt that schools should teach one or two languages in depth at primary school level, with fewer than one in five (15 per cent) saying they disagreed.

Seven in ten respondents (70 per cent) felt that the language expectations in the area of learning entitled ‘Understanding English, communication and languages’ are appropriate, while fewer than one in ten (8 per cent) felt they are not.



From free text responses, conferences, focus groups and written submissions

Responses were gathered from the survey free text box, focus groups, conferences and written submissions. Comments included the following.

- ~ *We welcome the move to make language learning compulsory.*
- ~ *We strongly support the statement 'may be one language or more'.*
- ~ *Children should be given the opportunity to learn new languages earlier in their education.*
- ~ *A wider range of foreign languages – not only the European ones – need to be taught at primary level – including community languages (*parent*).*
- ~ *When studying languages, children should also learn about other countries.*
- ~ *I (*child*) want to learn languages that help me talk with friends and relatives.*
- ~ *There needs to be close links with secondary schools at a local level.*
- ~ *The inclusion of intercultural understanding is good but could be even stronger.*
- ~ *Language learning should not necessarily be determined by the languages taught at secondary schools.*
- ~ *Schools should choose which languages they felt best met the needs of their learners (*parent*).*
- ~ *Finding confident and appropriately qualified language teachers will be a challenge.*

5. Transition

Participants responded to the following statements in the consultation.

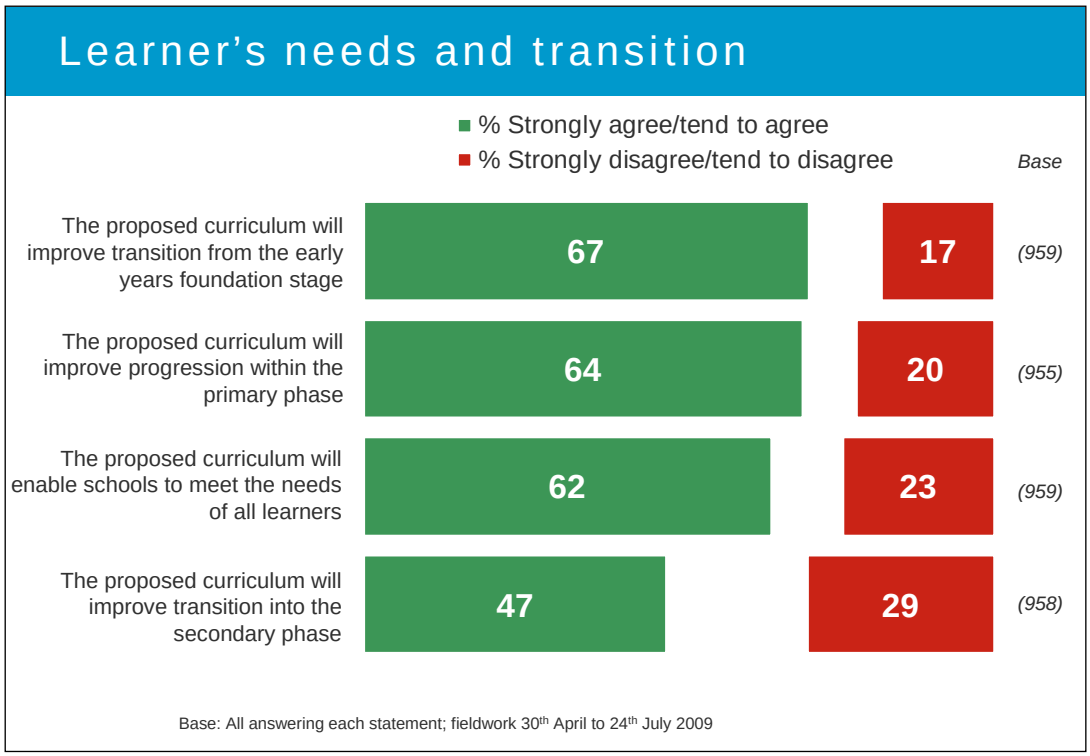
- *The proposed curriculum will enable schools to meet the needs of all learners.*
- *The proposed curriculum will improve transition from the early years foundation stage.*
- *The proposed curriculum will improve transition into the secondary phase.*
- *The proposed curriculum will improve progression within the primary phase.*

From the consultation survey

More than three in five respondents (62 per cent) thought that the proposed curriculum will enable schools to meet the needs of all learners. Nearly one quarter (23 per cent) did not believe this will be the case.

Two thirds of respondents (67 per cent) agreed that the proposed curriculum will improve transition from the early years foundation stage, while fewer than one in five (17 per cent) disagreed. A similar proportion (64 per cent) thought that the proposed curriculum will improve progression within the primary phase.

Nearly half of respondents (48 per cent) felt that the proposed curriculum will improve transition to the secondary phase. Nearly three in ten (29 per cent) did not think it will improve transition.



From free text responses, conferences, focus groups and written submissions

Responses were gathered from the survey free text box, focus groups, conferences and written submissions. Comments included the following.

- ~ *Transition will be enhanced by the new curriculum.*
- ~ *The proposed curriculum will be beneficial for all students.*
- ~ *We need to work harder at communication in the transition between learning stages.*
- ~ *I (*child*) am worried about safety and losing friends.*
- ~ *The benefits to learners' needs and transition depend on how the school and teachers implement the proposed curriculum.*
- ~ *Clear guidelines on how changes are to be implemented are needed.*
- ~ *Standards of teachers and assistants will need improving.*