

The Cambridge Primary Review Network is a direct response to requests from teachers and others who attended the regional and national dissemination events following publication of the CPR's final report in October 2009. Most of those who attended these events supported the CPR's ideas and recommendations and voiced their eagerness to take them forward, but many expressed the fear that they could not do so without 'permission' from government, national agencies and/or local authorities. The CPR final report strongly criticised this culture of prescription, compliance and dependency - while of course acknowledging that it is certainly not universal - and called for approaches to teaching, initial teacher education, continuing professional development and school leadership which work to re-empower teachers as thinkers as well as actors in the core professional fields of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment.

Although it responds to the way national educational policy has been conducted over the past two decades, and especially since 1997, our argument for re-empowerment is professional and educational rather than merely political. It rests on the belief that, in the words of the CPR's final report, 'Children will not learn to think for themselves if their teachers are expected to do merely as they are told.' That is why we have established the CPR National Primary Network. It is supported by the CPR's main sponsor, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, and has been given a boost by the new government's advocacy of greater professional freedom from external prescription and control. Here are its essentials.

**The network:**

- works with teachers and others to improve the quality and outcomes of primary education;
- supports well-founded reform in schools, local authorities and teacher education and training;
- engages fully in local and national policy development;
- has a serving primary head as national leader and operates through nine regional centres.

**The network aims to encourage, support and celebrate practice that:**

- builds on the ideas, evidence and proposals in the final report of the Cambridge Primary Review;
- builds on the research and practice of others who share the CPR's commitments to evidence, vision and quality in primary education;
- advances professional and community re empowerment;
- improves the quality of primary education experienced by the nation's children, especially those who suffer material, social or educational disadvantage.

**The network is committed to:**

- **equity**, both social and educational
- **empowerment** of both children and teachers
- **expertise** in childhood, pedagogy, curriculum, assessment and leadership
- **excellence** in learning and teaching.

## **THE NETWORK'S STRUCTURE**

### **The national office**

The CPR's overall director is Professor Robin Alexander of the University of Cambridge. He has led the Review since its inception and now fronts the CPR's continuing tasks of disseminating its findings nationally and internationally and engaging constructively but independently with those who shape, make and implement educational policy. The leader of the CPR network is Alison Peacock, Head Teacher of The Wroxham Primary School in Hertfordshire and a National Leader of Education (NLE). Alison works both with Robin Alexander on national activities and the regional centre co-ordinators listed below. The CPR's work is supported by Julia Flutter (Research Associate), Kelly Pickard (Network Secretary), Clare Yerbury (website manager), a steering committee chaired on behalf of Esmée Fairbairn Foundation by Hilary Hodgson, and liaison groups comprising representatives of a cross section of local authorities and subject associations. The CPR also has formal liaison arrangements with DfE and meets officials and ministers on a regular basis.

### **The regional centres**

With the generous support of the universities involved, the network now has twelve regional centres, each with a co-ordinator. These spearhead the network's task of energising, supporting and disseminating the work of those teachers, schools, local authorities, teachers educators and researchers who are keen to build on the work of the CPR and in other ways take forward the network's goals as set out above. Each centre's host institution has a good track record in initial teacher training, continuing professional development and/or research, and has established sound professional partnerships and other local links. By virtue of their location, these regional bases are able, between them, to cover most of the country.

## **THE NETWORK'S TASKS**

Among the main tasks of the network are the following:

- Identify and link, by electronic mailing and other means, those individuals and organisations that are interested in network membership and participation.
- Use a variety of strategies to encourage, identify and nurture thinking and practice which build on the findings and proposals of the Cambridge Primary Review and on other independent evidence likely to advance the quality of primary education.
- Publicise and disseminate such thinking and practice as widely as possible so as to advance the aim of professional and institutional re-empowerment which has been urged by both the Review and the wider professional community, and is now endorsed by the coalition government.
- Give particular support to those working in the Review's areas of high priority identified in the final CPR report and the subsequent briefing paper *Policy Priorities for Primary Education*.
- Support approaches to leadership and professional relations which liberate schools from narrow concepts of accountability and encourage creativity and originality while stressing the importance of evidence and justification.
- Explore opportunities for networking across the UK and internationally, as well as in England.
- Liaise with the DfE and other national bodies so as to ensure that they are fully aware of the work of the network and its members at a time when government itself has said it wishes to give teachers greater professional freedom, and in order to provide advice and case material which we hope will influence policy.

## **NETWORKING NETWORKS**

We do not want to be reinventing wheels, and the network – like the CPR as a whole up to this point – benefits from links with other networks, both virtual and actual. The CPR's database already includes numerous organisations and individuals from the following constituencies:

- The teaching unions
- Subject associations

- Religious, community and voluntary groups
- Local authorities and others with statutory responsibility for aspects of the work of primary schools
- Other educational and professional bodies.

We devote considerable efforts to fostering partnerships with such organisations as well as to working with teachers, government and official agencies.

## **BACKGROUND: THE CAMBRIDGE PRIMARY REVIEW**

Following nearly three years of consultation and planning, the Cambridge Primary Review (CPR) was launched in October 2006 as an independent enquiry into the condition and future of primary education in England. Since then, the CPR has been supported by grants from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, one of Britain's largest charities. The scope of the CPR and the depth of its evidence make it the most comprehensive enquiry into English primary education since the Plowden report of 1967. Between October 2007 and February 2009 CPR published 31 interim reports, including 28 surveys of published research. The 608-page final report *Children, their World, their Education: final report and recommendations of the Cambridge Primary Review* was published on 16 October 2009, together with an 850-page companion volume, *The Cambridge Primary Review Research Surveys*.

The Review's work has fallen into four main phases:

January 2004 – September 2006:	consultation and planning.
October 2006 – September 2009:	implementation and interim reporting.
October 2009 – September 2010:	publication, dissemination and discussion of the final report.
October 2010 – September 2012:	building on the CPR through professional networking and continuing dissemination and policy engagement.

## **NETWORK CONTACTS: NATIONAL OFFICE**

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*Note that the regional boundaries are flexible: contact whichever centre you wish.*

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## TO FIND OUT MORE

**THE CPR NETWORK, AND HOW TO JOIN IT.** Go to [www.primaryreview.org.uk](http://www.primaryreview.org.uk) or contact Network Secretary Kelly Pickard: [enquiries@primaryreview.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@primaryreview.org.uk). We want to hear from you!

**THE FINAL REPORT.** *Children, their World, their Education: final report and recommendations of the Cambridge Primary Review*, 608 pp, Routledge, October 2009. ISBN 978-0-415-54871-7 (pb), 978-0-415-54870-0 (hb). Editor: Robin Alexander. Authorial team: Robin Alexander, Michael Armstrong, Julia Flutter, Linda Hargreaves, Wynne Harlen, David Harrison, Elizabeth-Hartley-Brewer, Ruth Kershner, John MacBeath, Berry Mayall, Stephanie Northen, Gillian Pugh, Colin Richards and David Utting. Order a copy at <http://www.routledge.com/9780415548717>. Royalties from the final report are being placed in trust to support the education of some of the country's most marginalised and disadvantaged children.

**COMPANION RESEARCH VOLUME.** *The Cambridge Primary Review Research Surveys*, 850 pp, Routledge, October 2009. ISBN 978-0-415-54869-4 (hb only). Editors: Robin Alexander, with Christine Doddington, John Gray, Linda Hargreaves and Ruth Kershner. 66 contributing authors from 21 university departments. Order a copy at <http://www.routledge.com/9780415548717>.

**BOOKLET.** *Introducing the Cambridge Primary Review*, 42pp, October 2009, ISBN 978-1-906478-9. Edited by Diane Hofkins and Stephanie Northen. Download at [www.primaryreview.org.uk](http://www.primaryreview.org.uk).

**LEAFLET.** *The Final Report*, October 2009, 4pp. The bare essentials. Download at [www.primaryreview.org.uk](http://www.primaryreview.org.uk).

**INTERIM REPORTS AND BRIEFINGS.** 31 interim reports were published between October 2007 and February 2009. Those which have not been revised for inclusion in the research volume may still be downloaded from the Review website, as may individual briefings on every report published to date. There are also special briefings on the curriculum and the CPR's post-election policy priorities. Download at [www.primaryreview.org.uk](http://www.primaryreview.org.uk).

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**Note: the views expressed in Cambridge Primary Review reports and briefings do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Esmée Fairbairn Foundation or the University of Cambridge.**