

Print article  Save to favourites   SHARE    ...

# Anti-Sats, pro-autonomy study to be trialled in thousands of schools

News | Published in TES Newspaper on 7 May, 2010 | By: Helen Ward

Last Updated: 7 May, 2010

Section: News

## Politicians have dismissed Cambridge Primary Review but network will allow teachers to experiment with its recommendations

The Cambridge Primary Review - a mammoth study that calls for an end to Government interference in schools and the abolition of Sats - is to be trialled around the country.

Professor Robin Alexander, director of the review, is setting up the network so teachers can experiment with the report's recommendations.

The study - into the state of primary education - is the biggest of its kind since the Plowden report in 1967. It was warmly received by professionals when it was published last October, but politicians from all parties were quick to dismiss its findings.

A national co-ordinator for the trial is currently being appointed and then eight regional hubs will be established. It is hoped the pilot will reach thousands of schools.



## Subscribe to TES magazine



Try TES Magazine FREE for 30 days

[Subscribe today](#)

## Related articles



### Disadvantage lies at heart of primary review

Robin Alexander praises schools as 'the centre that holds when things fall apart', but while rejecting media 'myths' of a generation in crisis he argues that more must be done to narrow the gap between vulnerable children and the rest. Helen Ward reports

► [Alexander Review: Give us back our schools](#)

Professor Alexander said the idea for a network came during a series of post-report conferences, where heads and teachers told him that they were supportive but were afraid to adopt the review's recommendations without permission from Ofsted and school improvement partners.

The study, which took three years to complete and drew on the work of more than 3,000 researchers, begins: "Ours is a public system of education which belongs to the people and is not the personal fiefdom of ministers and their unelected advisers."

It recommends that the current system of league tables and national tests should be scrapped.

Alison Peacock, head of Wroxham School in Potters Bar, said she was delighted by the prospect of the trial.

"It will be an opportunity to work in partnership with other schools, universities and local authorities and to be informed by research-based practice," she said.

"It's really about an imperative to make a new experience for our primary children. About finding new ways of working based on evidence.

"The Cambridge Primary Review asked the big questions - what do we know about what really works? Whatever political party is in power, they will want to work to give young people the best quality education possible."

Professor Alexander said he believed that the review, which was sent to every school in the country, was part of a "mood for change".

"There is what appears to be a growing groundswell of support for change in the direction we talked about: looking at a proper assessment system, looking properly at the curriculum.

"We went back and secured two years' grant. That is terrific and enables us to build a network of teachers eager to take forward the thinking.

"Not just our thinking but eager to start looking at professional empowerment. We do not want to encourage a new orthodoxy."

Meetings have also been set up between civil servants and Professor Alexander.

#### NICE IDEAS? THE REPORT'S KEY SUGGESTIONS

- End the "state theory of learning". The Government should not tell teachers how to teach.
- Extend the foundation stage to age six. Have a single primary key stage.
- Prioritise narrowing the gap between vulnerable children and the rest.
- Undertake a full review of special educational needs.
- Follow Professor Alexander's curriculum recommendations, including the creation of 12 aims and eight

▶ [Alexander Review: give us back our schools](#)

▶ [More Articles](#)

#### Related resources



**Young Journalist of The Year Material**

▶ [Why did Abolition take so long](#)

▶ [Fairies Refashioned - A Midsummer Night's Dream](#)

▶ [More Resources](#)

Join TES for free now



Four great reasons to join today...

1. Be part of the largest network of teachers in the world – over 2m members
2. Download over 600,000 free teaching resources
3. Get a personalized email of the most relevant resources for you delivered to your inbox.
4. Find out first about the latest jobs in education

▶ [It's free to join us on TES](#) and it only takes 30 seconds (we've timed it!)



**Unlimited online primary teacher recruitment advertising for 12 months.\***

domains.

- Reform assessment: stop current Sats; scrap league tables; assess all areas of the curriculum and use sampling to monitor national standards.
- Undertake a full review of primary school staffing.
- Reform initial teacher training.
- Protect rural and middle schools.
- Protect and expand school libraries.
- End primary/secondary funding differential.

[Click here](#)



\*Terms & conditions apply

**Climb the career ladder with TES**

SUBSCRIBE TO TES MAGAZINE - WEEKLY ADVICE AND GUIDANCE TO HELP YOU IN THE JOB YOU LOVE



Rate this story 

 as yet unrated

[Add your comment](#)

Submit 

