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Primary network inspired by Alexander review starts work



News | Published in TES Newspaper on 22 October, 2010 | By: **Helen Ward**

Last Updated: 22 October, 2010

Section: News

The first meeting of a primary school network designed to promote ideas from the Cambridge Primary Review has held its first meeting, attracting interest from heads and teachers.

Alison Peacock, head of Wroxham Primary in Potters Bar, Hertfordshire, who has been appointed part-time network leader, hosted the seminar at her school, together with the National Education Trust.

The review, led by Professor Robin Alexander of Cambridge University, was the most wide-ranging study of primary education in 40 years.

Its final report, published in 2009, made 75 recommendations for reform of the curriculum, testing and teacher training regimes.

Mrs Peacock said: "It feels like a very optimistic time in terms of people seizing the agenda.

"This is about what we can do to make sure this generation of children have the best education ever.

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"Things have been moving so rapidly that rather than sit around and plan a launch we are just going on with it."

The nearest thing to an official launch of the network will be the Brian Simon memorial lecture, to be given by Professor Alexander at London University's Institute of Education next month - a year after the review was published.

The Alexander review was seen as a call to arms for a profession that had been at the sharp end of government policy.

It was addressed not only to politicians, but to teachers, parents and pupils as well.

The Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, which funded the original project, has agreed two years' further funding to get the network up and running.

There are plans for eight or nine regional centres to co-ordinate work locally and for demonstration schools that will share the work they are doing.

Mrs Peacock said: "We are really trying to empower the profession, asking how do we teach to a high quality?"

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