

WORLD > Global General

- Global General
- Special
- Newsmaker
- Asia Pacific
- America
- Middle East
- Europe
- Africa

- Slides
- Photos

Industry Info

China Logistics

In-depth Analyses, Forecasts & Investment Alerts Find Out More Online! www.bizchina.com.cn

China Gas

Get the latest Gas Market news and Project Info here! www.bizchina.com.cn

Ads by Google

Senior Education Jobs

Deliver Education policy regionally TDA, 2 year contract, £67K. Apply! Penna.com/Recruitment/

Special Educational Needs

Expert Advice for You & Your Child Get Help Today. Leading Law Firm. www.MaxwellGillott.com

School Art And Craft Suppliers

Model Making, Glass Painting, Foam Craft & More. Hours Of Fun For Kids www.BakerRoss.co.uk/Ar

Breaside Prep School

Developing potential both inside and outside the classroom 2½-13 yrs www.Breaside.co.uk

Stay on top of China and world news. Subscribe to China Daily today!

Study: Start kids in school at age 6

(China Daily) Updated: 2009-10-17 13:18

Comments(0) Print Mail

LONDON: Children should delay the start of formal schooling until the age of 6, a year later than at present, the largest review of primary education in England for 40 years recommended on Friday.

The 608-page Cambridge University study said introducing younger children into the constraint and discipline of a classroom - a throwback to Victorian days - provided little benefit and could even be harmful.

"They are not going to learn to read, write and add up if you have alienated children by the age of 4 and 5," said Gillian Pugh, chairwoman of the Cambridge Primary Review's advisory committee.

"That's the stage at which we are tuning children into learning ... If they are already failing by the time they are 4-and-a-half or 5, then it's going to be quite difficult to get them back into the system again," she added.

The government called the review "disappointing" and out of date.

The authors of the report stopped short of recommending a rise in the starting age of compulsory schooling from 5 but called for an "open debate" on the issue.

Related readings:

- Pricy tuition turns expats to home schooling
- Mobile phone sales to help schooling of poor
- China's compulsory education policy covers 160m students

They said children up to the age of 6 should instead be given the more informal, play-based education typically found in nurseries.

It said England's tradition of starting school at 5, shared in Europe only by Wales, Scotland and the Netherlands, dated from the requirements of Victorian factory owners.

Schooling starts at the age of 6 in 20 out of 34 European countries, with eight nations, including Sweden, waiting until children are 7.

The Cambridge review, based on three years' research and 31 interim reports, found that primary schools in England were "in good heart and in general doing a good job."

But it said that more than a decade of policy initiatives under three successive Labour governments had created a "state theory of learning".

"The principle that it is not for government or government agencies to tell teachers how to teach, abandoned in 1997, should be reinstated," it said.

National SATS exams taken by primary pupils should be replaced by teacher assessment and that the school league tables based on them should be abandoned, it said, adding that school performance and pupils' national attainment should instead be monitored by sample testing.

Schools Minister Vernon Coaker said abolishing SATS would be a backward step and that a school starting age of 6 would be counter-productive.

"The world has moved on since this review was started. We want to make sure children are playing and learning from an early age and to give parents the choice for their child to start in the September following their 4th birthday."

Teaching unions welcomed the review and criticized the government's response.

"It is absolutely extraordinary that the government has decided to ignore the Cambridge Review recommendations," said Christine Blower, General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers.

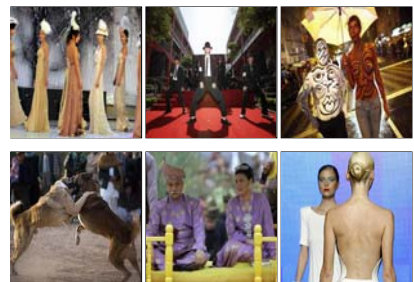
"Any government worth its salt, particularly in front of an impending general election, would have embraced this immensely rich report as a source of policy ideas."

Reuters

Comments(0) Print Mail Share

Popular in 24 Hours

Photo



Video



In this week's headlines: A/H1N1 casualties may be higher than we think, a car bomb kills 100 in Pakistan, and "This is it," a new Michael Jackson documentary opened on Tuesday

China



After one student was found to be infected with the H1N1 virus October 16, 2009 at Luzhou College of Chemical Technology, the school immediately quarantined students who had any close contact with the patient.

Bizchina



China's private equity (PE) fundraising and investments rebounded in the third quarter, with renminbi funds leading the trend, according to a new report from Zero2IPO.

Multimedia



Military parade was held at Tian'anmen