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IN WORLD

Cambridge Primary Review – Too much, too young

Posted by: Marc Palmer on Feb 8, 2008 | No Comments

The UK media is covering the release of another part of [the Cambridge Primary Review](#) which is researching the issues behind primary school education in the UK.

We have serious literacy problems here in the UK, demotivated and stressed young children, and a culture that seems to be losing social cohesion each year.

The review backs up other experts that say that children in the UK are being tested far too much, receiving formal schooling too early (4yrs in most cases, age 5 by law) and that Steiner schools and home-schooled children are doing much better.

[View the BBC TV news report on it](#)

Also [listen to the discussion on Radio 4 Today programme this morning](#) - Note the ridiculous

About Marc Palmer



Marc is a contributor to the [Grails application framework](#). This is his old blog. He has a new [blog about tech, programming and business](#). He [consults for people like you](#) and is also a founder of the [free notice boards startup NoticeLocal](#)

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comment from the woman criticizing the research, who says that children in home or alternative (i.e. Steiner) schools fare better because they are "middle class". The evidence clearly shows entire countries do better – e.g. Sweden – with this kind of approach. Is everyone in Sweden middle class?

The government seems to be desperately fighting their indefensible corner while they constantly increase the pressure on our children, teachers and schools to "perform" by reaching ever increasing numbers of goals and targets. The government seems to be extremely keen on helping the disadvantaged, by forcing them to give up their childhood early, in under funded schools, with constantly changing methodologies that are effectively experimentation on a national scale. Which of these changes is actually producing better results? Are they not aware of [amazing people like Bill Strickland](#) who works wonders with the disadvantaged in America?

If you think the [new EYFS \(Early Years Foundation Stage\) policy](#) which makes it law to start teaching children to read and write from the ages of 4 years is too much, [please sign up to the Open Eye petition on the Downing Street website](#). [Open Eye](#) is a group of academics and [childhood experts](#) who are making a stand against the Government's increasingly testing-led and high-pressure education policies for young children.

If you're interested in this subject, watch out for the media coverage and see how many times you can count the government ministers or representatives saying how EYFS is "a flexible framework". It's flexible as long as you work within it.

Our [school campaign](#) has taken a new twist, with an almost derisory response from the DCSF (education department) which fails to address several of the specific legal issues we raised in [our letter requesting full exemptions for Steiner schools](#). We are now about to make our next move...

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