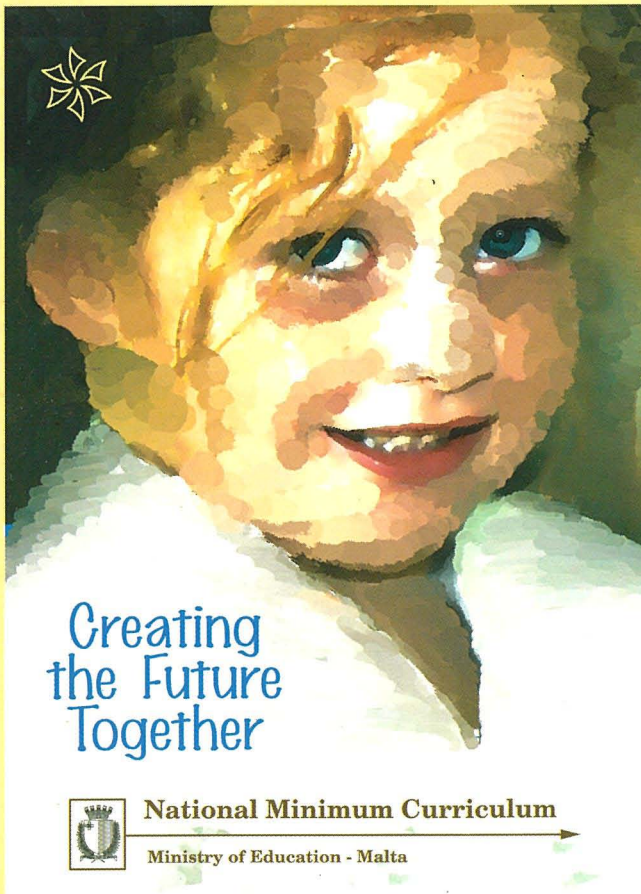


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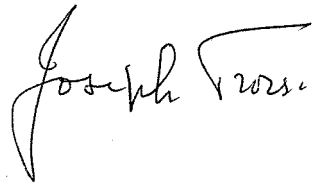
National Curriculum on its Way

Report of the National Steering Committee on the Implementation
of the National Minimum Curriculum



as adopted by
the Minister of Education

Malta
March 2001

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joseph Cross". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'J'.

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National Steering Committee
on the Implementation of the
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Minister of Education

March 2001

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ABSTRACT

The first of the three Parts of this document is a report on the activities of the National Steering Committee on the Implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum in relation to the terms of reference set for it by the Minister of Education in January 2000. In accordance with these terms of reference, the report is addressed to the Minister.

The second Part contains the Strategic Plan for the implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum, a Plan created by the Steering Committee with the aid of specialised action groups, a national conference, and a questionnaire sent to schools. The Strategic Plan is an instrument for the steering and the self-steering of the Curriculum implementation process at school and central levels. A number of Targets are given in the Plan. These must be carried out by schools and others before the end of June 2005; they represent minimal requirements that are being made legally obligatory on all state and non-state schools in the interests of implementing the National Minimum Curriculum. The Strategic Plan is not a substitute for the National Minimum Curriculum, nor is it a substitute for the creativity and autonomy of schools. Schools should follow the National Minimum Curriculum in other ways besides reaching the Targets listed in this Plan. The Targets allow and encourage a great deal of initiative and policy-making at school-level. For work outside these Targets, the Strategic Goals outlined in the present Plan, as well as the NMC itself, will provide the required guidance.

The third Part of this document contains a description of central-level bodies, especially the National Curriculum Council, that are to be set up to guide and stimulate the Plan implementation process. They include a number of theme-based Focus Groups that may be used by schools as resource persons in connection with the schools' own needs in curriculum implementation, and that will operate according to specific terms of reference.

CONTENTS

Abstract	iii
Detailed List of Contents	v
Foreword by the Minister of Education	xi
Introduction to the Report	xiii
PART A – THE STEERING COMMITTEE AND ITS WORK	1
1. Steering Committee: terms of reference, and composition	1
2. Working of the Committee	2
3. Some of the results of the work carried out by the Committee	3
A. Fulfilment of the six responsibilities of the Committee	3
B. Information meetings	5
C. Questionnaire for schools	6
D. Parents programmes	7
4. Specialised Working Groups set up by Committee	7
5. National Conference on Implementation of the Curriculum	9
6. How the Steering Committee prepared the Strategic Plan	10
PART B – STRATEGIC PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF NMC	13
1. Overview of the Strategic Plan	13
A. Vision and framework	13
B. Qualities required of a strategic plan	13
C. NCC and Focus Groups	13
D. School Development Plan	14
E. Implementation process	14
F. Decentralisation, school autonomy and School Councils	15
G. Training and professional development	15
2. Introduction to the Strategic Plan	15
A. The historical and legal context of this Plan	15
B. Who are the intended users of the Plan?	16
C. Period for implementation of the Targets	16
D. Guiding Principle for the Plan	16
3. How prescriptive is the Plan?	17

4. Policy actions fundamental to the overall strategy	18
5. Strategic Goals, and Strategies	21
A. General Overall Aim of this Plan	21
B. Strategic Goals of this Plan	21
Strategies for SG1 – Implementing NMC.	22
Strategies for SG2 – Generating commitment.	22
Strategies for SG3 – Improving quality.	23
Strategies for SG4 – Promoting key subjects.	23
Strategies for SG5 – Synergising NMC implementation.	23
Strategies for SG6 – Evolving the National Minimum Curriculum.	24
Strategies for SG7 – Enhancing student transitions.	24
Strategies for SG8 – Synergising school-community relations.	25
6. Strategic Plan Targets, listed by Phase	25
A. Important dates:	25
B. Focus Groups, listed by Acronym:	25
C. Chart of Plan Targets, by Phase	26
D. Targets spanning more than one Phase	28
E. Targets for Schools, for Phase 1	30
F. Targets not for Schools, for Phase 1	31
G. Targets for Schools, for Phase 2	34
H. Targets not for Schools, for Phase 2	37
I. Targets for Schools, for Phase 3	39
J. Targets not for Schools, for Phase 3	41
7. Strategic Plan Training Programme	42
A. Training Programme by Theme	42
B. Training Programme for Phase 1	47
C. Training Programme for Phase 2	48
D. Training Programme for Phase 3	51
PART C – THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM COUNCIL	53
1. The Terms of Reference and Functions of the NCC	53
A. Mission Statement of the NCC	53
B. Strategic Goals of the NCC	53
C. Terms of Reference of the NCC	54
2. Composition of the NCC	54
A. Council	54
B. Technical executive team	55
C. Support personnel	55
D. Institutional Context of the National Curriculum Council	55
3. Job Description of the Chairperson of the NCC	56
4. National Minimum Curriculum Focus Groups	58
A. Introduction	58
B. Roles	58

C. ... To keep themselves informed:	58
D. ... To develop new knowledge:	58
E. ... To support schools:	59
F. ... To manage research and project bids:	59
G. ... To integrate the different grass roots efforts	59
5. Department of Curriculum in relation to NCC	60
6. Schools in relation to the NMC, NCC, Strategic Plan, and Focus Groups	60
Appendix 1 – Questions being asked by Teachers and Heads	63
A. General List of Questions often asked by Teachers and Heads of School	63
B. Questions often asked by personnel of State Schools	64
C. Questions often asked by personnel of Church Schools	65
Appendix 2 – Brief for Steering & Training Committees & Working Groups	67
A. Extract from the brief for the National Steering Committee	67
B. Extract from the brief for Specialised Working Groups	67
C. Extract from the brief of the Training Strategy Formulation Team	68
Appendix 3 – Preparedness and Training Needs of Schools	71
A. The Questionnaire	71
B. Some general points regarding the Results	72
C. Response to Questionnaire	73
D. The Questionnaire	75
Appendix 4 – Parents Programmes	77
A. Rationale	77
B. Objectives	77
C. Parents Programme on the NMC: “Creating the Future Together”	77
D. Programme for Parents of Kindergarten Children: “Learning through play”	78
Appendix 5 – Members of the Specialised Working Groups	79
Appendix 6 – Recommendations of 18 Specialised Groups	85
A. Analysis of the Recommendations	85
B. Listing of the recommendations of the Working Groups	90
G01 – Early Childhood Education	90
G02 – Inclusive and Special Education	91
G03 – Assessment Policy Including Benchmarking	92
G04 – Bilingualism	93

G05 – Science in the Primary Curriculum	94
G06 – Technology Education in the Curriculum	94
G07 – Co-ordinated Science in the Secondary School	95
G08 – Creativity and Self Expression	96
G09 – Personal and Social Development	97
G10 – Information and Communications Technology in Education ..	97
G11 – Thematic and Interdisciplinary Teaching	98
G12 – Differentiated Teaching	99
G13 – The Curriculum and MATSEC	99
G14 – Links between School and the World of Work.	99
G15 – Schools as Community Centres	100
G16 – Gender in the National Minimum Curriculum	100
G17 – Parent Participation	101
G18 – Democracy in Schools	101
Appendix 7 – The NCC: An Early Proposal	103
A. A statement of principles governing its structure	103
B. The functions of the NCC	104
C. The powers of the NCC	104
D. The structure of the NCC	104
Appendix 8 – The NCC: a Proposal from the Chair	107
Appendix 9 – List of Required Focus Groups, with Acronyms	111
Appendix 10 – Decentralisation Plans of the Division of Education	113
A. Introduction	113
B. Key Success Factors	113
C. The School Level	114
D. Management Styles	114
E. Implementation	115
F. School Councils	115
G. The Role of the Division of Education	117
H. The Ministry of Education	117
Appendix 11 – Training and Staff Development Plans of the Division of Education	119
A. Preamble:	119
B. Brief review of Training strategies in use to date	120
C. Training Proposed to be given by NCC Focus Groups	125
Appendix 12 – Plan Targets for Schools & Others, listed by Theme	129
A. Explanation of the Chart of Plan Targets	129

B. Themes or Subject Areas for grouping the Targets	130
T00 – The National Curriculum Council (NCC)	131
T01 – Early Childhood Education	131
T02 – Primary Education	132
T03 – Secondary Education	132
T04 – Educational Assessment	133
T05 – Personal and Social Development	134
T06 – Information and Communication Technology in Schools	134
T07 – Language Development	135
T08 – Primary Science and Technology	135
T09 – Science in Secondary Schools	136
T10 – Technology Education in Secondary Schools	137
T11 – Inclusive Education	137
T12 – Parental Involvement	138
T13 – School and World of Work	138
T14 – Democracy in Schools	138
T15 – Schools as Community Centres	139

FOREWORD BY THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION

The National Curriculum - Creating the Future Together - published in December 1999, was a landmark event in the educational, political and cultural world of Malta. It was thus fitting that a national committee, formally charged with preparing for its dissemination and implementation, would be created to carry out its work in an extensive and effective manner.

The National Steering Committee on the Implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum, chaired by Prof. Kenneth Wain, former Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta, was appointed for such a purpose at the beginning of the first year of the new Millennium. Represented in it were the Ministry of Education, the Division of Education, the Faculty of Education, Church Schools and Independent Schools, the teachers through the Malta Union of Teachers (MUT), and the parents through the Association of School Councils (AKS).

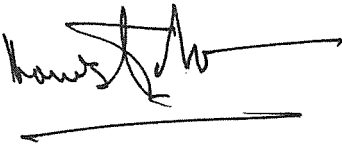
By the end of 2000, the Steering Committee has reached most educators, it has encouraged a thousand persons to contribute at a national conference, it has reached many hundreds of parents in face-to-face meetings in many localities, and it has challenged and informed many more thousands of citizens through the use of public communications media. Through the plan contained in this document, the Steering Committee has built the foundations of a systematic approach to the implementation of the new National Curriculum, with many specific targets and the proposed institutional instruments for implementation, for safeguarding equity and students' entitlement to quality education, and for promoting standards and excellence. It has attempted to ensure that decentralisation and participation, as well as the appropriate use of expertise would be, in the path ahead, the main features and the motivating factors as well as the basis for educational quality.

Since its submission to my Ministry on the 28th December 2000, the Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the National Curriculum has been considered by Government at Cabinet level and adopted with approved financial backing. A National Curriculum Council (NCC) has now been appointed. The Parliamentary Social Affairs Committee will also discuss the Strategic Plan.

The implementation of the Strategic Plan, barring obstacles of an extraneous nature, is being phased over a five year period - 2001 until 2005. However, the plan is not written in tablets of stone and circumstances may require changes to it as it evolves. The Ministry of Education intends to provide direction to the implementation process and to actively follow, reflect upon, support, and evaluate feedback regarding developments.

All this, of course, is just the beginning. Now and in the coming years the real work and ensuring the fulfilment of expected outcomes will be in the classrooms, in the schools as centres of learning, in teams of educators and parents, and hopefully as centres of administrative and pedagogic creativity and quality. The challenge therefore continues for the teachers and the children and the parents in all these schools and in the related School Councils, homes and localities.

While thanking the Steering Committee and all those who are contributing to the nurturing of the educational journey of our children, I augur that a dynamic movement is created whereby all the stakeholders, through their respective structures at central and local levels, work synergistically to ensure the effective implementation and evaluation of the plan presented to you through this document.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louis Galea', with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

Louis Galea

INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT

The Steering Committee addresses the present report to the Minister of Education and thanks him for his encouragement. When the Minister endorses this report, especially the Strategic Plan and the plan for the institutions described here as required for implementation, this report becomes a national document. Besides being available to the public it will then apply to all state schools, church schools, and independent schools teaching young persons of compulsory-education age. When endorsed by the Minister as an interpretation of the National Minimum Curriculum, the Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the NMC included in this report will become legally binding, but it will still require a great deal of enthusiasm and creativity for its successful implementation.

This document constitutes the overall report of the National Steering Committee on the Implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum appointed by the Minister of Education to function between January and December 2000. The Report consists of three parts. Part I describes the terms of reference and work of the Steering Committee and the outcome of such work. The outcome of this work has been a participatory process of awareness-raising and planning that has successfully prepared the way for the required implementation work in schools and central institutions as from January 2001. The Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the NMC is the major outcome of the work of the Committee; its main feature is a set of implementation targets that are expected to be achieved by schools and others before the end of June 2005. The major institution for overseeing the implementation of the Strategic Plan is also proposed in the present report: it is the National Curriculum Council. Major decisions now required are: (1) the endorsement of the Strategic Plan and the related recommendations of this report, including those relating to the setting up of the National Curriculum Council, (2) the funding of the targets and the implied training programme, including the new personnel required; (3) the taking of major policy actions that are fundamental to the strategy – as given in Section B4 of the present document; (4) the removal of any national-level obstacles to implementation, including obstacles standing in the way of teacher participation and teacher training.

The Steering committee recommends the Minister set up a special Commission to advise him of changes to the Education Act that will need to be made to bring that legislation in line with the spirit and intentions of the National Minimum Curriculum, and with policies and structures for its implementation proposed in the present document.

Teachers and Heads of School are concerned about a number of issues related to the Implementation of the NMC – the main such questions being asked have been included in this document. While some of them have been adequately replied to in the present report, the Steering Committee recommends that teachers and heads of school be encouraged and assisted in resolving these issues.

Are the social partners in our society to collaborate to the best of their ability in this task of giving birth together to the next generations, to our future? The Strategic Plan will clearly fail to be implemented if there is not sufficient funding, if teachers are not committed to it or do not rise to the challenge, if teachers are left untrained, or if the administrative bodies designed for its implementation are not sufficiently systematic and responsive. Such failure will cause enormous harm and cost a great deal in terms of lost opportunities, stunted economic and cultural advance, and frustrated human potential – consequences the country can ill afford.

28 December 2000

PART A
THE STEERING COMMITTEE AND ITS WORK

1. Steering Committee: terms of reference, and composition

Following the publication of the National Minimum Curriculum, the Minister of Education, Dr Louis Galea, appointed on 26th January 2000 a National Steering Committee on the Implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum. The Committee was given the following six responsibilities:

1. to draw up a national implementation strategy;
2. to set up and monitor a number of specialised working groups;
3. to decide modalities of disseminating NMC content to pupils, teachers, parents, schools, public, Local Councils, community-based organisations, national NGOs, and Government Departments;
4. to identify preparatory strategies that could be immediately implemented;
5. to recommend permanent structures for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of schools, research and NMC review;
6. to recommend decentralisation strategies including school management structures.

The following persons were appointed by the Minister to serve on this Steering Committee.

1. Prof. Kenneth Wain, Faculty of Education, University of Malta - *Chair of Steering Committee*
2. Dr Tony Macelli, Adviser, Ministry of Education – *Ministry Representative & Executive Secretary of Committee*
3. Mr John Bencini, President, Malta Union of Teachers (MUT)
4. Dr Christopher Bezzina, Faculty of Education, University of Malta
5. Dr Carmel Borg, Faculty of Education, University of Malta
6. Mr Frans Borg, President, Association of School Councils
7. Ms Carmelina Debono, Director (Operations), Division of Education
8. Mr Evan Debrincat, Head, San Andrea School, I-Imselliet
9. Bro. Saviour Gatt, Secretariat for Catholic Education, Archbishop's Curia
10. Mr Charles Mizzi, Director General, Division of Education
11. Dr Ronald Sultana, Faculty of Education, University of Malta

12. Ms Mary Vella, Director (Curriculum), Division of Education

The Minister set up a Training Strategy Formulation Team under the chair of the Director General concurrently with the Steering Committee with its own terms of reference regarding training strategy.

More information about the brief given to the Steering Committee, to the Training Strategy Formulation Team and to the Working groups by the Ministry of Education appears as *Appendix 2*.

2. *Working of the Committee*

The joint collective work of the Steering Committee itself was carried out through meetings and three seminars, which it organised for itself. These were held for the main part between 2nd February, and 12th December 2000. However, a great deal of work was carried out outside of such meetings. This was work that supported the Committee by preparing papers for it, analysing data, processing external documents, and so on. Eighteen Working Groups also carried out work for the Committee – this will be described later in the present report (see Section 4 below).

During this period there were 26 meetings of the Steering Committee, including three one-day, seminars. Participants attended on average 84.3% of these meetings. However, the industrial dispute of the Malta Union of Teachers with the Government conditioned its attitude towards the implementation of the NMC and towards the work of the committee. This affected its regular attendance.

There were no minority reports. Whenever there were differences of opinion, the Committee worked towards consensus, with the result that, at any meeting, all decisions taken were reached by a consensus of all persons present.

The following is an indicative selection from the main agenda items of the regular meetings of the Steering Committee: Specialised Working Groups: formation, functions, composition, themes; Dissemination of NMC; The National Conference on NMC; Decentralisation; Training Strategies; Strategic Plan Policy; Questionnaire to Heads of Schools; One-day Seminars for Steering Committee; Working Groups Report; The National Curriculum Council; Parliamentary Questions.

The three seminars were held on 20th March 2000, at the Suncrest Hotel in Qawra; on 5th July 2000, at the House of Representatives in Valletta; and on 1st September 2000, at the Dolmen Hotel in Qawra. The second seminar was addressed by Dr J. Fenech and Dr M. Darmanin both from the Faculty of Education. The agendas of the seminars were as follows:

Suncrest Seminar Agenda:

- Implementation and Management of a National Conference
- Decentralisation and School Ownership of the Curriculum
- Planning the National Conference

House of Representatives Seminar Agenda:

- Review of the Working Groups Reports
- Decentralisation Policy Implementation
- Questionnaires sent to schools: An Analysis
- Future Strategies and Planning

Dolmen Hotel Seminar Agenda:

- Review of the proposed action plans of eleven out of the 19 specialised reports of the Specialised Groups
- Development of a model for a National Curriculum Council for continued curriculum implementation and curriculum development work.

3. Some of the results of the work carried out by the Committee

A. Fulfilment of the six responsibilities of the Committee

The following is a brief report on the progress achieved by the Committee on each of its responsibilities as previously listed.

Fulfilment of Responsibility #1.

To identify preparatory strategies that could be immediately implemented.

Communications strategies were developed and implemented by the Committee. Training strategies for immediate implementation were developed by the Training Strategy Formulation Team and implemented from Summer 2000 onwards.

Fulfilment of Responsibility #2.

To set up and monitor a number of specialised working groups.

Through discussion among the members, a list was prepared of eighteen themes related to NMC areas identified as new and relatively problematic. Each of these themes required analytical and prescriptive work by a group of specialists and practitioners from the corresponding field. In the same manner, names of suitable members were proposed and identified, and corresponding invitations issued to them by the Committee. The specialised Working Groups were permitted to co-opt other appropriate persons as they saw fit and after informing the Committee.¹

Each of these groups produced a report that included a plan of action in their assigned area. These group reports were produced in a standardised format that included in each report a short- medium- and longer-term plan.² The reports were used as the basis for the June 2000 NMC Implementation Conference, and were augmented with the reports of discussions held during the conference. These and other features of these reports were then summarised and used for generating targets and recommendations as elements of the Strategic Plan, during the post-conference work of the Steering Committee.

The reports themselves were published on two Web sites by the Department of Curriculum of the Division of Education, and by the University. They are published in one volume in the form of *Proceedings* of the June Conference.

Fulfilment of Responsibility #3.

To decide methods of disseminating NMC content.

As part of the dissemination strategy, an intensive programme to raise the awareness and motivation of parents in relation to the NMC was planned and delivered to about 10,000 parents. Teachers, educational institutions, students and other categories were also reached with the aim of helping them to understand better the NMC and its implications.

An eight-page full colour parent-friendly brochure was designed and printed and distributed in 50,000 copies among Maltese families. Covered topics included: NMC and its Principles: Early Childhood Education; Primary Education; Secondary Education; Schools as Community Centres.

Radio Programmes on RTK named "Uljedna" were also used. A series of thirteen (13) of these programmes "Uljedna" were broadcast every Tuesday over a number of weeks between 16.00 and 17.00 hours. The programmes were broadcast live and phone-ins were invited. The series covered the following topics: General Introduction; Quality Education; Education for Diversity; Assessment; Bilingualism; Early Childhood Education, Primary Education, Secondary Education, Parental Participation, Schools as Community Centres; Inclusive Education and General Conclusion. The contributors were Frans Borg, Rose Galea, Kenneth Wain, Charles Mizzi, Bernadette Azzopardi, Mary Vella, Ray Camilleri, Monica Attard, Grace Izzo, M'Anne Spiteri, Salvina Muscat, Georgina Cachia, Lawrence Muscat, Nora Macelli, Edgar Busuttill.

Education Channel radio programmes about the NMC were broadcast on the Public Broadcasting Services. A series of 13 half-hour programmes on the NMC were broadcast on Channel 22 (Education Channel) with repeats on PBS. A series of three other radio programmes assisted in tackling problems faced by students in secondary education. Topics covered included the transition from Primary to Secondary schooling, self-esteem and

communication. A series of 13 half-an-hour programmes were broadcast by Radju Malta (PBS).

Comments, interviews, and news items were broadcast on television. Use was also made of wide-audience television programmes including Pjazza Tlieta and Xarabank. A number of articles were written in the press, and various press releases were also issued.

Fulfilment of Responsibility #4.

To recommend permanent structures for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of schools, research and NMC review.

The Committee has designed, discussed, and agreed upon an apex structure called the National Curriculum Council (NCC). A major Part of the present report is devoted to this Council.

Fulfilment of Responsibility #5.

To draw up a national implementation strategy.

The Committee has orchestrated a national participatory process among major stakeholders to create the National Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum, which is presented as part of the present report.

Fulfilment of Responsibility #6.

To recommend decentralisation strategies including school management structures.

The Committee requested the Director-General of Education to produce, on behalf of the Division of Education, a report on planned decentralisation of the schooling system of the State. The Strategic Plan requires the School Development Plan to be used as a central instrument for the implementation of the NMC. The procedure of the School Development Plans (SDPs) exists already in all state schools and some others. The Strategic Plan requires that SDP procedures be made compulsory in all schools, for the purpose of NMC implementation.

B. Information meetings

A number of information meetings with interested parties were held during the year 2000, in fulfilment of the corresponding items in the Terms of Reference of the Steering Committee.

Meetings for all Heads and Assistant Heads of State, Church and Independent Schools were held in April as part of the Senior Staff Development Programme (SSDP) organised by the Department of Planning and Development of the Division of Education. The main subjects under discussion were: the work of the Steering Committee and the Questionnaire to be filled by the

respective schools. The first meeting was held on the 2nd April 2000. Heads of State Primary Schools of Region 2 and Region 3, Heads of Special Schools, Heads of Church and Independent Primary Schools, and Heads of State, Church and Independent Secondary and Trade Schools attended the meeting. The other two meetings were severely curtailed by the industrial actions ordered by the Malta Union of Teachers. These were for all Assistant Heads of State, Church and Independent Secondary Schools, Heads of Primary Schools of Region 1 and Region 4, Assistant Heads of Primary Schools of Region 2 and Region 3, Assistant Heads of Church and Independent Primary Schools, and Assistant Heads of Primary Schools of Region 1 and Region 4.

On one occasion in May, the three political parties were invited to meet with the Committee at the premises of the Institute of Water Technology, Luqa. Each party was invited to send 3 representatives of its choice. However, only Alternattiva representatives turned up. At this meeting the Steering Committee was represented by Prof. Kenneth Wain, Mr. Charles Mizzi, Ms Mary Vella and Mr. Frans Borg.

On 8th May, a meeting for Heads of Schools of Regions 1 and 4 was held at the Despott Hall, Floriana.

On 20th May, an information meeting for Local Councils was held at the Foundation for International Studies; 2 to 3 representatives represented each local council. Only a few Local Councils turned up.

On 23rd May, a meeting for Directors of Government Departments, NGOs and the Media was held at Project House, Floriana and was very well attended.

On 26th May, an open meeting was to be held in Gozo in collaboration with the Ministry for Gozo. Some difficulties resulted in the cancellation of the meeting.

C. Questionnaire for schools

A questionnaire was issued to all Heads of State, Church and Independent Schools. The main aims were to help the schools identify their state of preparedness, formulate their priorities, identify their training and support needs, and structure their time frames. Another aim of the questionnaire was to stimulate schools with the challenge of including provision for NMC implementation in their school development plans and in their training. This questionnaire was presented and explained to Heads of Schools during the information meetings referred to earlier.

Many schools replied, although there were a number of anomalies in the results. These anomalies suggested that a high percentage of the schools had not yet started thinking systematically or in detail about either widely implementing the NMC or equipping their own staff with the plans and skills required. However, a high proportion of the schools were clearly very

interested in obtaining training in both these areas. Many of these preferred such training to be mainly school-based and partly based at central locations. *Appendix 3* to the present report contains additional information about the results obtained.

D. Parents programmes

An extensive Parents Programme was designed and implemented. The rationale for this was Principle 14 of the National Minimum Curriculum: Increasing Participation in Curriculum Development, which specifies, "Parents are among the most important partners in the educational process." The aims of the Parents' Programme were, accordingly: (a) to help parents understand, own and consequently support the NMC; (b) to empower parents to be proactive as partners in the educational process.

Participation in the Parents' Programme was satisfactory at about 10,000 adults. Most of the state schools and various non-state schools participated and disseminated parts of the programme according to their needs. Directors and Assistant Directors of Education were informed of the programme; they helped in its dissemination in different ways including the issuing of a letter circular to schools.

Thousands of parents met in various localities to discuss the NMC and its implications. Among the various educators participating were: Hon Minister of Education – Dr Louis Galea, Mr Frans Borg, Ms Mary Vella, Ms Grace Izzo, Mr Philip Said, Dr Paul Bartolo, Dr Carmel Borg, Ms Josephine Saliba, Ms Dorothy Fenech, Ms Monica Attard, Mr Carmel Caruana, Ms Georgina Cachia. A description of the design of the Parents' Programme as implemented is given in *Appendix 4*.

Other schools organised follow-up activities and other activities on their own initiative.

4. Specialised Working Groups set up by Committee

Eighteen crucial areas – subject areas or overall themes or concerns – arising from the National Minimum Curriculum were listed by the Steering Committee. It was decided to set up working groups of experts, administrators and practitioners, for these areas. One Working Group was created for each such area. The Committee thought that this would be the best feasible manner of taking stock of current practice and of the possibility and need for changes of the type that were proposed or implied in the National Minimum Curriculum. It was also considered that this method was a suitable way of finding out what

support is needed by the schools and what specific proposals would be appropriate for implementing each of the crucial curriculum areas.

Through discussion within the Committee, a small number of persons were identified for each of these Working Groups. The members were chosen mostly for their expertise or experience in teaching or management in the particular area concerned, as well as their expected availability. For each of these eighteen working groups a chairperson was identified. Invitations to the prospective members of the working groups were issued by the Steering Committee. The working groups were subsequently assigned their tasks and terms of reference orally at a meeting, and also in writing. These were:

- To take into account current practice and how it affects the implementation of the NMC in the particular area assigned to them;
- To identify the challenges, faced by schools and teachers in implementing the NMC, related to the particular area and on the basis of current realities;
- To identify areas of support needed by schools that will enable them to implement the NMC effectively in relation to their area;
- To formulate an action plan for the short-, medium-, and long-term action plans in relation to their area.

The themes and assigned chairpersons of the Specialised Groups were as follows:

- G01: Early childhood education — Dr. Valerie Sollars, Lecturer Faculty of Education
- G02: Inclusion and special education — Mr. Michael King, Asst. Director of Education
- G03: Assessment policy including benchmarking — Ms Mary Vella, Director Curriculum Management, Division of Education
- G04: Bilingualism — Mr. Ray Camilleri, Education Officer English, Division of Education
- G05: Science in the primary curriculum – Mr. Joe Buttigieg, Education Officer Science, Division of Education
- G06: Technology education in the curriculum – Mr. David Purchase, Assistant Lecturer Faculty of Education, University of Malta
- G07: Co-ordinated Science in the secondary schools – Dr Paul Pace, Head of Department, Faculty of Education
- G08: Creativity and self-expression – Mr. Joe Psaila, Education Officer, Physical Education, Division of Education
- G09: Personal and social education – Mr. Lawrence Muscat, Education Officer, Personal and Social Education, Division of Education
- G10: ICT in education – Mr. Lawrence Zammit, Assistant Director, Division of Education
- G11: Thematic and interdisciplinary teaching – Ms Lina Ross, Head of Early School, San Andrea

- G12: Differentiated teaching – Ms Mary Rose Mifsud, Director Student Services, Division of Education
- G13: The curriculum and MATSEC – MATSEC Board chaired by Mr. Joe Falzon
- G14: Links between school and the world of work – Ms A Caruana, HRD Brand International
- G15: Schools as community centres – Mr. Frans Borg, President, Association of School Councils
- G16: Gender and NMC – Ms Bernie Mizzi, Head, Chiswick House School
- G17: Parent participation – Fr Gerald Bonello, Rector St. Paul's Missionary College later substituted by Dr. Joe Fenech, Lecturer Faculty of Education
- G18: Democracy in schools – Ms Denise Chircop, Teacher, Adelaide Cini Girls' Secondary School

The names and contact numbers of the members of these specialised working groups are listed in *Appendix 5*, in the hope that heads of school and teachers may request their services as resource persons. The reports of these Working Groups were submitted by the end of May 2000, and have been published on the Web site of the Department of Curriculum of the Division of Education, and the web site of the Socrates Office of the University of Malta. They also appear in January 2001 within a book entitled *National Minimum Curriculum – Proceedings of a National Conference* published jointly by the Ministry of Education and the Division of Education.

5. National Conference on Implementation of the Curriculum

The National Conference, co-ordinated by the Socrates Office, Malta, was held at the University of Malta from Friday 9th June to Sunday 11th June. About a thousand persons registered and attended the conference, many of them teachers, head-teachers, parents of school-age children, and other educators. Participants from the public, the schools, and a number of other institutions became more familiar with key concepts in the NMC as a result of the conference. Perhaps more importantly they had the experience of being consulted and felt part of the participatory national process of preparing for the implementation of the new curriculum.

The pre-conference specialised working groups submitted their papers to the conference, and also reported orally their contents, including their proposed action plans.

Keynote international speakers reviewed the presentations of these eighteen pre-conference specialised working groups, and then spoke at the conference about their comparative experiences in implementing national curricula. The

responses of these persons as critical friends to the proceedings were encouraging and informative, and contributed to enrich and add momentum to the participatory process.

Delegations from schools, among others, asked questions and made proposals regarding the various aspects of the NMC process. The theme-based discussion groups that were held during the conference developed the existing material from the working groups on their respective themes. Moderated discussions at the conference were stimulated by various people's diverse reactions to the NMC. The discussions highlighted concerns and difficulties felt by schools, teachers and parents. Aspirations of educators and parents were shared. Training and other pre-requisites of the future implementation of the NMC were also discussed. These discussions were recorded and subsequently used in addition to the working groups' reports for the purpose of extracting the main proposals, identifying the main issues, and formulating targets for the Strategic Plan later developed by the Committee.

6. How the Steering Committee prepared the Strategic Plan

For the purpose of designing the Strategic Plan the Committee used the material from the national conference, including the papers of the 18 working groups, the reports of the discussion groups, the talks delivered by the visiting speakers and the local experts serving as panel members. For this purpose the Steering Committee commissioned Dr. J. Fenech of the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta and assisted by Mr. E. Debrincat from the Committee, to summarise the different reports of the Working Groups into manageable form (see *Appendix 6*). This meant classifying all the recommendations into five categories, namely: policies, structures, processes, resources and research and setting them out according to the time frames for each specified by the Working Groups. Mr Debrincat was also requested to give the Committee a report on the findings of the questionnaire distributed in the schools (see *Appendix 3*).

All this material was analysed for consistency and for the required sequence, and converted into plan targets. During all this work, the Committee discussed the higher-level theoretical and practical issues that were involved.

These targets were reviewed in terms of practicality and their approximate envisaged cost, and were streamlined into a number of broadly similar approaches across the many different NMC-required areas of change. This was done within a perspective of involving the continued future use of the strengths of experts and practitioners, the experience of administrators, the nascent decentralisation process, and the school development plans. The implications of the entire set of targets for training were highlighted and placed in a separate training programme chart. The Training Programme Chart is

included in Section 7 of Part B of the present Report; one version lists the implied future training events by subject, while another version lists them by Phase, in approximate chronological order.

It was soon realised that a major requirement for the implementation of such targets would be the creation of a National Curriculum Council to oversee, guide, and monitor the process of implementation, and to focus the expertise where it will be needed. The early ideas regarding the possible and proposed National Curriculum Council were presented to the Steering Committee in the form of two papers. One of these was prepared by Dr Joseph Fenech of the Faculty of Education as a consultant; this appears as *Appendix 7*. The other paper was prepared by Prof Kenneth Wain as the Steering Committee Chair; this appears as *Appendix 8*.

Appropriate higher-level recommendations and strategic goals were also developed that were in the spirit of the National Minimum Curriculum and consistent with the strategic targets.

- 1 The terms of reference of the Working Groups appear in Appendix 2, and the list of their members appears in Appendix 5.
- 2 See Appendix 6 for the recommendations extracted from these Working-Group reports.

PART B

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF NMC

1. Overview of the Strategic Plan

A. Vision and framework

The National Minimum Curriculum document presented the vision and the framework for the educational provision in our country. The subsequent implementation of that provision requires a strategic plan that is in line with the principles and objectives of the National Minimum Curriculum. At the same time the strategic plan needs to be realistic in aspiration, feasible in time-frames and effective in direction.

B. Qualities required of a strategic plan

The Strategic Plan for the implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum also needs to have two qualities that characterised the process by which the Curriculum itself was built. First of all it has to be the co-ordinated result of a consultative and collaborative exercise among all the stakeholders. Thus, in designing this Strategic Plan, the Steering Committee held several meetings with different stakeholders, participated in many fora, sent a questionnaire to all schools, set up eighteen working groups each dealing with a curricular theme and organised a national conference in June (see Part A of this report). Secondly, the Strategic Plan has to offer a framework that provides sufficient direction for schools and teachers but allows them space for autonomous initiatives. The Strategic Plan should harmonise a commitment to give Maltese learners their entitlement with the equally important objective of facilitating school-based curriculum development.

C. NCC and Focus Groups

The National Curriculum Council that is proposed in Part C of the present

document will act: (a) as a guardian of the students' entitlement and of national educational standards, and (b) as a catalyst and supporter of programmes initiated and designed by the schools. The National Curriculum Council will carry out these functions through a number of Focus Groups using a range of instruments to reach their aims. A list of these required focus Groups appears as *Appendix 9*. Their operative methods will include among others: professional development for teachers and school management teams, research work, educational projects at school and national level, parent and community participation and an in-built system for evaluating and monitoring the Curriculum in schools. The National Curriculum Council will also work for the necessary support, including financial backing, to this national enterprise.

D. School Development Plan

A very encouraging element in this respect is the fact that the mainstay of all this endeavour is already in place in many of our schools. This is the School Development Plan (SDP), which state schools have learnt to produce, and which is addressing curricular issues with more and more commitment. Through this instrument schools are able to articulate their needs as also their priorities. The Strategic Plan requires that the creation and use of a School Development Plan become mandatory for all schools in Malta and Gozo, Church and independent schools included, as soon as possible and by not later than 1st October 2002. Schools still without a SDP are therefore advised to make preparations for the introduction of a SDP. The Division of Education should give whatever assistance is required to such schools. Apart from helping the schools to implement curriculum policies under their own initiative, the SDP will serve the purposes of monitoring their progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan as it is defined in this report. Assistance should be provided by the National Curriculum Council for these endeavours. The National Curriculum Council will also need to prepare a school evaluation document, which will enter into operation by not later than in September 2003.

E. Implementation process

The implementation process has been organised in three phases that are developmental over a period of four years. It is recognised (and this is borne out by the questionnaire sent to schools, see *Appendix 3*) that schools are already at different levels of preparedness for this coming process and they will also have different rates of progress through the different stages of the Strategic Plan. This is understandable, and it is hoped that the support offered by the National Curriculum Council as well as the examples of good practice, and the collaborative

and networking practices that will be nurtured between the schools will aid them to face the difficulties they may encounter along the way.

The Steering Committee is also aware that the implementation of much of the National Minimum Curriculum, in one form or other, is already on its way in most schools. However, officially, the programme of the strategic plan starts in March 2001. Moreover, while each school will be able to charter its own progress through the whole process, every school needs to reach the targets of the third phase by June 2005. This requires from all parties a sense of ownership and a commitment towards the strategic plan. It requires participation, professional growth, a spirit of sharing and collaboration. The test of success should be a leap in quality in the day-to-day learning experiences of our children.

F. Decentralisation, school autonomy and School Councils

In its very first meetings, the Steering Committee decided that since, in the main, the issue of decentralisation, which is essential for the implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum, concerned the state schools and their relationship with the Division of Education, its strategy should be left to the Division. The relevant report by the Division of Education on its decentralisation strategy is, therefore, included in *Appendix 10*. Included in this report is the role of the school council. Although the Division's report is addressed to state schools, the Committee recommends that all schools be encouraged to adopt the model of school management it describes by introducing schools management boards or councils where these do not as yet exist and abolishing the old PTAs.

G. Training and professional development

The Director General of Education submitted, on behalf of the Division of Education, a report on its Training Strategy in relation to the NMC. This report appears here as *Appendix 11*.

2. Introduction to the Strategic Plan

A. The historical and legal context of this Plan

This document contains the national plan of the Ministry of Education for the implementation of the published National Minimum Curriculum, which took

effect by Legal Notice 132 of 2000 on the 1st September 2000. The Education Act authorises the Minister of Education to guide the implementation of the Curriculum by endorsing documents such as the present one. Before official publication by the Ministry of Education, the Strategic Plan will have been endorsed by the Minister. It is to be distributed to all schools and to all stakeholders.

B. Who are the intended users of the Plan?

The Strategic Plan is intended to guide and support the implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum. It is explicitly aimed at School Councils, Heads of Schools and other school personnel and at individual teachers. Elements of the Plan are also aimed at organisations that provide administrative and training services to schools, and to associations or other groupings among schools. The National Strategic Plan for the implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum is, like the National Minimum Curriculum itself, applicable to State Schools and non-State Schools insofar as they are licensed to teach and provide other educational services to persons of compulsory school age.

C. Period for implementation of the Targets

The National Minimum Curriculum as published shall be fully implemented in the five scholastic years from year 00/01 to year 04/05 that is from January 2000 to September 2005. The present Strategic Plan contains a number of Targets grouped under three Phases, 1, 2, and 3, to indicate their appropriate implementation sequence. The Targets of the Strategic Plan, except as may be revised by the Ministry of Education in the form of a Revised Strategic Plan, shall be achieved by all schools before the end of June 2005. More calendar-related details appear in the subsection entitled “Important dates” in Section 6: *Plan Targets, listed by Phase*, in Part B of this Report.

D. Guiding Principle for the Plan

Fundamental to this Strategic Plan are the principle of subsidiarity and the strategy of decentralisation, which is in the spirit of the National Minimum Curriculum itself, and which imply that:

- (A) within the parameters already laid down in the published National Minimum Curriculum, whatever initiatives and changes can be undertaken at school level should be undertaken at school level rather than at more central levels; and that

- (B) items to be initiated or stipulated at more central levels are only those which must necessarily be taken at that level, for example to maintain standards, to protect children's rights, to conform to a national socio-economic policy direction, to avoid confusion, or to maximise the benefit of certain centrally-organised support or training programmes (e.g. those programmes that are very urgent or expensive or involve foreign visiting lecturers).

3. *How prescriptive is the Plan?*

Questions may arise about this Plan requiring clarification about what it is that the Plan simply recommends and what it is that the Plan requires, and whether schools are permitted or expected to innovate and take their own initiatives. The following is a clarification of these issues.

Parts of the Plan consist of (a) *specific requirements*, or instructions that must be carried out within the specified period. In the spirit of the Curriculum, which encourages school-level initiatives, these instructions are, however, kept to a minimum, rather than being as all-encompassing as the National Minimum Curriculum itself, and are included because of the need to achieve the interests of the child and the national interest. These instructions are considered to be essential, for example, to ensure the inclusion of national core elements indispensable to all children's personal and social development, or items required by national economic development. The *Plan Targets*, shown in the main body of the Plan by Phase, and shown also in *Appendix 12* by Subject Area or Theme, fall within this category. However, in order to take account of the different needs and strengths of different schools, and of what may already be taking place in them, schools are permitted to set their own pace in achieving these Targets, provided that all three Phases of the targets are completed in all schools by the end of June 2005. This flexibility permits customised and locally-relevant decision-making at school level by the School Councils, Heads of School, teachers, and others.

The Plan also contains (b) *recommendations and guidelines* that are neither obligatory nor exhaustive. These are intended to encourage timely and coherent patterns of change within many schools, while encouraging the innovation, the freedom, and the meeting of special needs, of any school.

The Strategic Plan is also (c) *open-ended*, in the sense that schools are invited to conceive of, and implement, additional targets and projects for themselves based on the broad Strategic Goals specified in the Plan. The successive phases of the Strategic Plan are intended to present obligatory items and also those other items in which national level co ordination is necessary. They are thus not intended to cover exhaustively all aspects of the National Minimum

Curriculum. Other items and aspects of the Curriculum are open to initiatives by schools.

This means that schools having special interest in specific National Minimum Curriculum themes, and schools with unique characteristics, strengths, or needs should go ahead and take steps to implement in their own way the particular curriculum themes, staying within the often-wide guidelines found in the National Minimum Curriculum itself. This they could do independently as single schools or as a group of same-region or same-interest schools, or as a project in collaboration with the local council, the local community or parents. This flexibility is not a concession; rather, schools are actively encouraged and requested to take such steps.

4. Policy actions fundamental to the overall strategy

For the Strategic Plan described in detail below to succeed, the following steps and measures need to be taken:

1. The National Curriculum Council will need to be appointed by the Minister of Education immediately with full terms of reference as detailed in Part C of this report in order to start functioning in March 2001.
2. The National Curriculum Council, in turn, will need to set up the Focus Groups, also in March 2001, with the functions and terms of reference specified in Part C of this report. It is the Committee's recommendation that their membership during the first term be based on the Working Groups responsible for the reports prepared for this Strategic Plan.
3. The Curriculum Department in the Division of Education will need to be restructured immediately to incorporate the Focus Groups within its structure, and eventually to carry out the work of auditing schools to monitor the implementation process, unless the National Curriculum Council decides to commission this task from another agency.
4. The National Curriculum Council may need to create additional Focus Groups for any areas of the NMC that are not covered in this Plan.
5. Co-ordinators will need to be appointed as follows and in accordance with the Strategic Plan:
 - a) For the larger KG centres to co-ordinate programmes, monitor teaching, and co-ordinate with the receiving primary school.
 - b) For Primary Year Groups where there are three or more classes (eg. three Yr 3s in a particular school) from among the teachers of the Year Group themselves for the co-ordination of the topic-based teaching-learning programme across the particular Year Group.
 - c) For Primary ICT, language, and science and technology.
 - d) For PSD in the secondary schools, to supervise and co-ordinate the

PSD programmes (in accordance with the spirit of the NMC, the Committee feels that PSE in the primary school should be the sole responsibility of the class teacher).

e) Curriculum Co-ordinators are to be appointed in the secondary sector, specific to the particular school, and in proportion to the school population¹.

6. The peripatetic sections in the state schools should be slowly phased out to make place for subject specialists in the areas of creativity and self-expression, such as PE, drama, and arts and crafts.

7. Policies of gender, differentiated learning, inclusion, and educating for democratic citizenship set out in the NMC should permeate the curricula of both primary and secondary schools.

8. The Steering Committee feels that the following observations need to be made about MATSEC and the current system of SEC examinations:

a) The new National Minimum Curriculum has important implications for both the SEC and the University Matriculation Examination. One of the most direct and relevant are the NMC's prescriptions about assessment. But the whole spirit of the NMC and the targets it sets, its emphasis on obtaining skills rather than simply storing information, have clear repercussions on the style and content of these examinations. The NMC also introduces subjects that are not yet part of the SEC examination system and that will need to be catered for when the time comes.

b) The report of the group working on this theme, G13, namely the MATSEC board itself, gave no time frames for addressing these issues. It did, however, indicate a number of administrative and academic difficulties it is currently meeting with managing the current examinations efficiently and its problems with taking changes to its assessment policies on board. These difficulties are of great concern to the Steering Committee given that without a competent and effective agency or examining board, and without SEC and Matriculation Examinations that adopt its assessment policies, the NMC will be ineffective.

c) It is also important to note that, as things presently stand, the MATSEC board is responsible to the University Senate and that all its academic decisions are subject to Senate's approval. This relationship, potentially, creates a tension where its examination policies are concerned between satisfying Senate and satisfying the National Minimum Curriculum requirements. The question arises whether the University Senate's jurisdiction over these examinations empowers it to override dispositions and policies laid down in the National Minimum Curriculum. In short, there is a serious question regarding who has the last say on the examinations administered by the MATSEC Board.

d) In this context it should be remembered that the SEC examinations are

not University entrance examinations but national examinations that certify successful schooling. The Committee, therefore, recommends an immediate study of these different problems by a Board especially set up for the purpose by the Minister. One possibility is that the SEC examinations would pass under new administration, putting them under the joint jurisdiction of the National Curriculum Council and the University Senate. This will ensure continuity between the schooling programme prescribed by the NMC and the terminal examinations at the end of it, and the continued prestige of the examinations. Modifications to the present set-up would evidently require changes to the relevant parts of the Education Act of 1988. In any case the re-organisation of the MATSEC set-up with proper staffing and resourcing to render it a competent and efficient agency is *immediately required*.

9. With regards to policies of parental involvement, the National Curriculum Council should set up a Joint-Commission together with the Association of School Councils (AKS) to re-define the role and powers of the school councils in the light of a clear, and agreed-upon definition of democratic partnership between schools and parents. It should also explore together with the Church and Independent schools the possibility of extending the model on a more national basis (the report of WG 17 would be a good basis for this exercise).
10. The NCC should request the Parental Involvement Focus Group to undertake the task of providing certified courses in basic management and leadership skills for parents serving or aiming to serve on School Councils, and to produce a handbook for schools and parents on parental involvement and the meaning of school-home partnership in the education of children.
11. The strategy for bringing the worlds of school and work together requires closer collaboration between the three key agencies concerned with this objective, namely the Division of Education (mainly through its Guidance and Counselling Unit), the ETC (Employment and Training Corporation), and the World of Work Working Group (represented by the FOI and trade unions). A National Committee should therefore be set up between the partners to report to the National Curriculum Council with the following agenda: (a) strategies for building up school-workplace links, (b) strategies for introducing knowledge of the world of work and of the demands of the global economy onto the agendas of schools and into the curriculum, (c) studying the recommendations of Working Group 14 about creating work placements for teachers in industry, (d) studying and recommending strategies to make the transition from schooling to the workplace easier, more effective, and meaningful.
12. The transformation of our schools with their histories, cultures, and

management systems into Community Learning Centres (CLCs) will be a challenging enterprise fraught with difficulties and pitfalls, and requiring a great deal of delicate negotiation between the stake holders and potential partners. Therefore, the proposals made by WG 15 for the setting up of schools as community learning centres should be adopted as the basis for a national policy on the subject. The Minister of Education should set up a Joint-Commission consisting of representatives of the Division of Education (representing heads of school and teachers), the AKS (representing the school councils), representatives of Working Group 15, and the Association of Local Councils (representing the community) to prepare a policy and action document for policy decisions to be incorporated in a legal document on CLCs.

5. *Strategic Goals, and Strategies*

In this Section are listed the General Overall Aim, the Strategic Goals, and also the Strategies or overall planned approaches necessary to fulfil the Strategic Goals. Also in the Plan, a few pages ahead, are listed specific Targets for schools and others. The overall Strategies listed below will help to bring about the fulfilment of the specific Targets.

The central structures, especially the National Curriculum Council (described in Part C) and Ministry, Division of Education, and Focus Groups (see later), are expected to be guided by the Strategic Goals, and to implement the strategies listed below and others. Most of the strategies are approaches that ultimately help the schools to meet those specific Plan Targets that are applicable to schools.

A. **General Overall Aim of this Plan**

The *Overall Aim* of the Strategic Plan shall be as follows:

To achieve a participatory, dynamic, coherent and effective process of implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum.

B. **Strategic Goals of this Plan**

The *Strategic Goals* that the present plan intends to achieve are as follows:

SG1 – Implementing NMC. To promote the principles, purposes and objectives outlined in the National Minimum Curriculum through the implementation of concrete policies planned strategically over a reasonable span of time.

SG2 – Generating Commitment. To build upon, generate, and support high *commitment* and confidence among those who implement the National Minimum Curriculum; and to bring about their self-empowerment and capacitation.

SG3 – Improving Quality. To achieve, initially and rapidly, a visible and considerable *improvement in teaching and learning* in schools in relation to parts of the NMC; this is desired in order to give a boost to the whole implementation process.

SG4 – Promoting Key Subjects. To ensure that, in the interests of the child and the nation, basic study subjects are included as soon as this becomes feasible.

SG5 – Synergising NMC Implementation. To promote and achieve synergy, completeness, and effectiveness in the process of NMC Implementation.

SG6 – Evolving the National Minimum Curriculum. To promote active advance preparation at all levels for future phases of the five-year implementation of the NMC

SG7 – Enhancing Student Transitions. To help enhance, in terms of the school curriculum, the quality of the transitions of students into kindergarten, into primary school, into secondary school, into post-secondary institutions and into the world of work.

SG8 - Synergising School-Community Relations. Ensuring mutual interaction between the school and the community, with the community engaging itself in the life of the school and investing in and using its resources, and the school in turn using the community's resources.

Strategies for SG1 – Implementing NMC.

- .1 Creating and enabling the National Curriculum Council
- .2 Ensuring monitoring, evaluation and self-evaluation at all levels
- .3 Linking decentralisation with NMC implementation by schools

Strategies for SG2 – Generating Commitment.

- .1 Supporting special initiatives taken at school and community levels that are in the spirit of the National Minimum Curriculum.
- .2 Endorsing the specific central training and other support projects that serve such school-level special initiatives.
- .3 Endorsing the School Development Planning process as a major tool for implementation of the NMC, and formulating a strategy for the enhanced use of this tool (possibly involving training, sharing of good practice, a brochure, etc.).

- .4 Encouraging, supporting and financing internal action research.
- .5 Encouraging, supporting and financing staff development and school development programmes.
- .6 Endorsing staff meetings and seminars leading to site-based decision taking/ making and empowerment through delegation and accountability.
- .7 Enhancing the school ethos and identity.

Strategies for SG3 – Improving Quality.

- .1 Examining various manners of quality improvement through special questions posed with the Focus Groups.
- .2 Reviewing teacher training needs and central staff training needs, producing a revisable approximate calendar chart of the dates and durations involved, and meeting these needs under some framework of quality control and enhancement.
- .3 Giving financial or prestige incentives for excellence.
- .4 Identifying areas of deficient quality and facilitate collective work on them by the persons directly involved.

Strategies for SG4 – Promoting Key Subjects.

- .1 Removing uncertainty about the areas where Schools are obliged or free to make subject choices and omissions.
- .2 Arranging for quality training and self-training material and expertise on the new basic subjects to become available to teachers.
- .3 Identifying schools that have strengths and/or experience in each such subject, and assisting them to become a centre of excellence as an example and resource for other schools; facilitating communications and visits by personnel and perhaps students from other schools.
- .4 Using Web pages, international collaborative projects, access to lesson plans from other countries, and similar measures to stimulate local interest.

Strategies for SG5 – Synergising NMC Implementation.

- .1 Emphasising, in the initial implementation activities for the Strategic Plan, a number of selected elements that are visible and that are likely to bring about significant and rapid improvements in learning.
- .2 Disseminating information about school achievements among all educational partners.
- .3 Facilitating synergistic collaboration and communication by and with the

Focus Groups, using tools such as incentive systems, Web pages, and others.

Strategies for SG6 – Evolving the National Minimum Curriculum.

- .1 Encouraging and facilitating regional grouping of schools.
- .2 Encouraging and facilitating twinning-type or similar partnerships between each school and other schools abroad; and between each school and the local council.
- .3 Facilitating formal arrangements for the sharing of good practice in Curriculum-related teaching and learning.
- .4 Requesting representatives of state, church, and independent central-level education support institutions, preferably together to provide a phased plan for the implementation of all major elements of the National Minimum Curriculum within the five-year implementation period.
- .5 Setting up a Curriculum implementation evaluation mechanism to monitor and report regularly on the nature, geographical distribution, and scale of implementation activities in state and non-state educational sectors; and to evaluate the standards applied, achievements obtained, and the remaining implementation work to be carried out within the five-year implementation period.
- .6 Participating in European Union education and training programmes.

Strategies for SG7 – Enhancing Student Transitions.

- .1 Conducting dialogue or negotiations with the appropriate policy-makers, innovators and experts in relation to MATSEC, the new Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology, the University, and others to determine an acceptable profile of school leavers' desired knowledge, skills and attitudes compatible with the National Minimum Curriculum; subsequently conducting all required follow-up work in respect of secondary schools.
- .2 Organising an expert seminar on each of the various education-related transitions mentioned in this strategic goal, with terms of reference designed to produce the information needed for optimising these transitions through appropriate methods of National Minimum Curriculum implementation at the corresponding school level, i.e. kindergarten to late secondary school levels, and through schooling strategies and structures that ensure smooth and efficient transitions.
- .3 Transition strategies: To co-ordinate induction or orientation programmes tailor-made to meet the needs of each particular sector of students and their respective parents.
- .4 Exploring ways of reducing anomalies caused by excessive influence by University standards on the syllabi of many children who will not enter university anyway.

Strategies for SG8 – Synergising School-Community Relations.

- .1 Supporting and empowering the Association of School Councils in the area of school-community links.
- .2 Generating from community and school many ideas for school-community initiatives; implementing, publicising and rewarding many such ideas.

6. Strategic Plan Targets, listed by Phase

A. Important dates:

On 1st September 2000, the National Minimum Curriculum took effect by law in virtue of Legal Notice 132 of 2000 in accordance with Section 47 of the Education Act of 1988 (CAP. 327).²

In March 2001, the Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum became applicable.

The Scholastic Year September 2002 to June 2003 is the period in which the National Curriculum Council must resolve any serious anomalies in the national implementation process at school levels. The National Curriculum Council may need to identify for special support those schools whose School Development Plans appear to suggest that those schools will not reach the Plan Targets in time.

The 30th June 2005. This is the date by which all Strategic Plan Targets must be completed and documented in reports issued by all schools, by all Focus Groups, and by the NCC.

It is being assumed that the process of implementation of these targets over three years is monitored and researched. Monitoring and research are processes that must accompany the implementation process in an ongoing manner. In the fifth year of implementation, October 2004 – June 2005, the NMC document as a whole will be re-examined together with the current implementation strategy, to identify any significant changes that may need to be made to either. Meanwhile, strategic plans will be published by the National Curriculum Council sufficiently in advance of June 2005, for the continuation of the implementation process over the period September 2005 – June 2006, when, as contemplated in the NMC document itself, the life span of the NMC will end.

B. Focus Groups, listed by Acronym:

CEFG - Community Education Focus Group

CSFG - Co-ordinated Science Focus Group

DEMFG - Democracy Focus Group

EAFG - Educational Assessment Focus Group
 ECEFG - Early Childhood Education Focus Group
 ICTFG - Information and Communications Technology Focus Groups
 IEFG - Inclusive Education Focus Group
 LDFG - Language Development Focus Group
 PEFG - Primary Education Focus Group
 PIFG - Parental Involvement Focus Group
 PSDFG - Personal and Social Development Focus Group
 PSTFG - Primary Science and Technology Focus group
 SEFG - Secondary Education Focus group
 SWWFG - School and The World of Work Focus Group
 TEDFG - Technology Education Focus Group

C. Chart of Plan Targets, by Phase

In *Appendix 12*, there is a Chart of Plan targets listed by Theme; this helps to display conveniently all the targets related to any given theme. The following chart, by contrast, lists the Targets under each of three sequential Phases, 1,2,3. Thus, the following chart is useful (for example for schools) for showing all the targets that should be attended to at any time. The Targets are shown in the column headed "Targets", next to a reference number in the "Nr" column. The "Sch" or Schools column indicates the responsibility of the School. The "Ph" or Phase column indicates which Targets should logically be reached before others. Below is some additional explanation of these items.

The "Nr" or TARGET NUMBER Column. The numbers in this column are of the form [Tnn.mm] where Tnn is the Theme or Subject Area label, and mm indicates the target number. The Themes or Areas are labelled from T00, T01, T02...up to T15, while the Targets related to each Theme are numbered 01, 02, 03, ... etc. A Listing of the Themes or Subject Areas appears at the beginning of *Appendix 12*.

The "Sch" or SCHOOLS Column. An "S" in this column indicates that the Target shown on that row is one where the responsibility of achievement rests mainly with the school itself. This usually means that each school may determine its own pace according to its own needs, strengths, level of preparedness and priorities - but each school must complete all the targets before June 2005. In the same column the entry S* indicates that the school is to collaborate with a central body, normally the National Curriculum Council (NCC) or one of the Focus Groups that work within the framework of the NCC. This may imply that the school should if possible conform to the timetable, if any, proposed by the central body - in this way the school would be able to make best use of centrally-organised training and other resources, where applicable. Notwithstanding this, the school may choose its own pace in such cases as well, provided it plans to reach all Targets by June 2005.

While the initiative for certain targets belongs to a central body, schools

must act in a strong collaboration with the central body for that target. Clearly, schools are expected to collaborate, where necessary, in all targets even those that have been placed for convenience in the “Not for Schools” sections.

The “Ph” or PHASE column. This column indicates the Phase of each Target, either Phase 1, or Phase 2, or Phase 3. Within any Theme, the Phase number shows the appropriate sequence of the Targets. For example the formulation of a policy might be marked as Phase 1 and the execution of that policy would then be marked as Phase 2, to show a logical sequence (first 1, then 2, then 3) that should normally be respected by all bodies. In some cases two or three Phases are indicated for the same Target – this indicates that it may be appropriate to carry out ongoing and cumulative work on that Target over a long period such as two or three years.

Schools are requested to make their own plans and set their own pace depending on their needs and strengths, provided that all school-related Targets are complete by June 2005.

The TARGET Column. The Targets are self-explanatory. The acronyms used in the statement of the Targets, e.g. ECEFG for Early Childhood Education Focus Group, are defined in a list that follows the chart. In most cases they end in the letters FG and refer to the Focus Groups. These are groups of experts working within the framework of the National Curriculum Council. Their function is to act as a resource for the Schools that ask for their services. They also function, by agreement with the National Curriculum Council and in accordance with the present Strategic Plan, as central groups of experts for such central tasks as setting up a national research project, publishing a handbook, and so on.

The NCC or NATIONAL CURRICULUM COUNCIL Column. In this Column “N” indicates that the implementation of the Target shown is the main responsibility of the NCC itself. Also in this column “M” indicates that the Ministry of Education and the Division of Education have a major responsibility in relation to the Target shown.

A note on “T02 – Primary Education”: Targets for language, science, and technology teaching in Primary Schools are included under Bilingualism and Language Teaching, and Science and Technology.

The Targets in the chart below have been grouped by Phase. Thus the sections of the chart are as follows:

- a. Targets spanning more than one Phase
- b. Targets for Schools, for Phase 1
- c. Targets not for Schools, for Phase 1
- d. Targets for Schools, for Phase 2
- e. Targets not for Schools, for Phase 2
- f. Targets for Schools, for Phase 3
- g. Targets not for Schools, for Phase 3

Targ.Nr	[Theme] Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
a. Targets spanning more than one Phase				
T00.02	[T00 – The National Curriculum Council] The NCC, through the different Focus Groups, acts as a catalyst and provides support for the different initiatives for the implementation of the NMC.	N	S*	1,2,3
T03.01	[T03 – Secondary Education] SEFG looks at the objectives of Secondary Education as outlined in the NMC and co-ordinates the different initiatives of the various Focus Groups to design a relevant and effective learning programme for this sector.	N	S*	1,2,3
T03.02	[T03 – Secondary Education] SEFG liaises with PEFG and collaborates on initiatives of other Focus Groups such as EAFG to build a smooth transition between primary and secondary.	N	S*	1,2,3
T00.03	[T00 – The National Curriculum Council] At each of the three phases of the implementation process, all Focus Groups evaluate their programme and present their Annual Report to the National Curriculum Council, including a phased plan of action.	N		1,2,3
T11.02	[T11 – Inclusive Education] IEFG works with the ECEFG, the PEFG and the SEFG to recommend inclusion issues, policies, and teaching methods that should be included in the primary and secondary curriculum at different levels.	N	S	1,2
T02.03	[T02 – Primary Education] PEFG initiates and completes research project to study the current state of thematic and differentiated teaching in the primary schools identifying successful practices and problems with implementing these policies.	N	S*	1,2
T04.02	[T04 – Educational Assessment] EAFG explores with core groups of education officers, subject co-ordinators and teachers the kind of external assessment which should take place at the end of the third year of Primary and the second year of Secondary education and creates structures to research and make plans for Benchmarking.	N	S*	1,2
T04.05	[T04 – Educational Assessment] EAFG carries out its first phase of training aimed at ensuring that all teachers are aware of the new philosophy of educational assessment.	N	S*	1,2

Targ.Nr	[Theme] Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
T09.03	[T09 – Co-ordinated Science in Secondary Education] The CSFG organises workshop sessions for small groups of Form 3-5 Science Teachers (Biology, Chemistry, Physics teachers), from state, church and independent schools, preferably in the teachers' own schools, in order to: (a) ensure that teachers understand underlying philosophy (b) provide teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills for teaching the CS curriculum effectively.	N M	S*	1,2
T10.01	[T10 – Technology Education in Secondary Schools] TEDFG designs and constructs a general programme for technology education for the secondary schools and junior lyceums together with a strategic plan for its implementation at these levels in a number of pilot schools.	N	S*	1,2
T10.02	[T10 – Technology Education in Secondary Schools] TEDFG co-ordinates with the PSTFG to ensure that there is coherence between the primary and secondary curricula in technology education.	N		1,2
T15.02	[T15 – Schools as Community Centres] CEFG creates a two-year diploma course together with the University of Malta for training Community Learning Centre Co-ordinators.	N		1,2
T09.05	[T09 – Co-ordinated Science in Secondary Education] CSFG designs and constructs a detailed Form 1 curriculum.	N	S*	1,2
T09.04	[T09 – Co-ordinated Science in Secondary Education] CSFG designs the general Co-ordinated Science programme over the 5 years of secondary schooling and disseminates it to the public for information	N		1,2
T10.03	[T10 – Technology Education in Secondary Schools] TEDFG organises courses and workshops for trainers who will be charged with training technology teachers.	N		1,2
T07.09	[T07 – Language Development] LDFG holds meetings with secondary schools to discuss the role of the two languages in the secondary school curriculum, strategies for consolidating the different languages across the curriculum, attainment targets for language use, and the assessment of language across the curriculum.	N	S	2,3
T04.08	[T04 – Educational Assessment] EAFG carries out its second phase of training dealing with formative and summative modes of assessment.	N	S*	2,3

Targ.Nr	[Theme] Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
b. Targets for Schools, for Phase 1				
T02.01	[T02 – Primary Education] PEFG and schools define a philosophy of differentiated learning for primary schools in accordance with the NMC and incorporating policies for creative thinking and self-expression. The Steering Committee recommends that the principles that define differentiated teaching incorporated in the report of NMC Conference Working Group G12 should be the basis of this philosophy.	N	S	1
T04.06	[T04 – Educational Assessment] Following the evaluation exercise (T04.04) and the training (T04.05), decisions are taken by the EAFG and schools on the timeframes for the implementation of school-based formative and summative assessment.	N	S	1
T07.01	[T07 – Language Development] LDFG and schools conduct ongoing research on current language teaching and language use in primary and secondary schools.	N	S	1
T12.02	[T12 – Parental Involvement] School Councils begin to publish newsletters and information materials for parents during each scholastic year.		S	1
T01. 01	[T01 – Early Childhood Education] ECEFG holds information meetings with KG assistants to explore the requirements and implications of a new ECE programme.	N	S*	1
T04.01	[T04 – Educational Assessment] EAFG carries out a survey of early screening and profiling taking place in schools.	N	S*	1
T04.03	[T04 – Educational Assessment] EAFG explores the coursework, profiling and portfolio systems currently used internationally and involves teachers in the discussion of what is the best system for the Maltese classroom.	N	S*	1
T04.04	[T04 – Educational Assessment] EAFG carries out an evaluation of the support systems needed by schools to be able to develop their own means of assessment in line with the policies of the NMC and particularly in view of the decentralisation of examinations within the state schools.	N	S*	1

Targ.Nr	[Theme] Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
T07.02	[T07 – Language Development] LDFG supports and advises the Early Childhood Education Focus Group (ECEFG) and the Primary Education Focus Group (PEFG) on language policies and practices across their respective curricula, and on suitable attainment targets in the 1 st and 2 nd language at the levels set by the NMC for both.	N	S*	1
T09.01	[T09 – Co-ordinated Science in Secondary Education] CSFG is set up with a proper brief to take charge of the introduction of Co-ordinated Science in secondary schools with all its implications for consultation with all stakeholders, curriculum design, training, dissemination of information and advice to teachers, preparation of teaching aids and materials, etc.	N M	S*	1
T09.02	[T09 – Co-ordinated Science in Secondary Education] The CSFG organises a familiarisation seminar to provide a professional forum during which the main issues concerning Co-ordinated Science are sorted out and a clear strategy for an in-service course is agreed upon.	N M	S*	1
T10.05	[T10 – Technology Education in Secondary Schools] TEDFG undertakes a stock taking exercise in secondary schools in order to identify deficiencies and problems of resources (building, tools and equipment, etc.) and to propose an action plan to prepare the schools for the introduction of technology education programmes as demanded by the new curricula.	N	S*	1
T11.01	[T11 – Inclusive Education] IEFG works with the ECEFG, the PEFG and the SEFG on a system to identify and make provision for children with special needs in KGs, primary and secondary schools.	N	S*	1
T15.01	[T15 – Schools as Community Centres] CEFG holds consultative meetings and workshops for heads of schools and school councils, School Boards, and PTAs on the formulation of a policy document.	N	S*	1

c. Targets not for Schools, for Phase 1

T00.01	[T00 – The National Curriculum Council (NCC)] The NCC sets up main Focus Groups: Early Childhood Education Focus Group (ECEFG), Primary Education Focus Group (PERG) and Secondary Education Focus Group (SEFG) with overall responsibility for educational programmes for the sector. The NCC also sets up specialised Focus Groups: EAFG, PSDFG, ICTFG, LDFG, PSTFG, CSFG, TEDFG, IEFG, PIFG, SWWFG, DEMFG and CEFG to address specific areas of the curriculum. (Refer to Glossary for Focus Group definition.)	N		1
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Targ.Nr	[Theme] Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
T01.02	[T01 – Early Childhood Education] ECEFG initiates survey of current resources in KG classes with the NMC's policy on inclusion in mind.	N		1
T01.03	[T01 – Early Childhood Education] KG co-ordinators are appointed for the larger KG centres.	M		1
T01.04	[T01 – Early Childhood Education] ECEFG and schools design a new learning programme for Early Childhood Education	N		1
T02.02	[T02 – Primary Education] Let Me Learn Centre is strengthened to manage the implementation of differentiated learning in primary schools in co-ordination with the PEF. This includes: (a) the preparation of a strategic plan to train teachers in-service, (b) disseminating materials and information about differentiated teaching, (c) advising on methods of assessing learning outcomes based on differentiated teaching, and (d) providing long term support for school-based initiatives in differentiated teaching.	N		1
T04.07	[T04 – Educational Assessment] EAFG initiates discussions with the Faculty of Education to ensure that pre-service teacher training covers all aspects and prepares teachers to carry out both formative and summative assessment.	N		1
T05.01	[T05 – Personal and Social Development] PSDFG designs a curriculum to cover Forms 1-5 of the secondary schools complete with attainment targets for Forms 3 and 5.	N		1
T05.02	[T05 – Personal and Social Development] PSDFG consults with PEF (Primary Education Focus Group) on the inclusion of PSD targets within the Primary Curriculum.	N		1
T05.03	[T05 – Personal and Social Development] PSDFG introduces new format for training PSD teachers in post as described in the NMC Conference Working Group 09.	N		1
T06.01	[T06 – ICT in Schools] ICTFG draws up policies on ICT and Computing across the spectrum of primary and secondary schools.	N		1
T06.02	[T06 – ICT in Schools] ICTFG co-ordinates with the Primary Education Focus Group (PEFG) to identify adequate ICT policies, including the use of Internet, for the new primary curriculum, relevant multimedia software, and attainment targets for	N		1

Targ.Nr	[Theme] Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
	IT competence in Yrs 3 and 6 of the primary school.			
T06.03	[T06 – ICT in Schools] ICTFG sets up a policy for basic ICT Proficiency Certification.	N		1
T06.04	[T06 – ICT in Schools] ICTFG sets up Conversion Diploma Course in co-ordination with Faculty of Education.	N		1
T06.05	[T06 – ICT in Schools] ICTFG initiates training programme for teachers of Computer Studies.	N		1
T06.11	[T06 – ICT in Schools] ICTFG initiates programme for upgrading the hardware and software in KGs, primary and secondary sectors.	N		1
T06.12	[T06 – ICT in Schools] ICTFG initiates programme to bring the student to computer ratio in line with leading European countries.	N		1
T07.03	[T07 – Language Development] LDFG issues guidelines for schools and holds advisory meetings on the preparation of school-based language policies and practices.	N		1
T07.06	[T07 – Language Development] Language co-ordinators are appointed in the primary schools.	M		1
T08.01	[T08 – Primary Science and Technology] PSTFG collaborates with the Primary Education Focus Group (PEFG): (a) to define a science and technology curriculum for the primary schools that coheres with the principles and policies of the new primary curriculum, and (b) to set up the methods of assessment and the attainment targets for science and technology for Yrs 3 and 6 in primary schools. PSTFG collaborates also with the CSFG and the TEDFG to ensure that there is coherence between the primary and secondary curricula in both science and technology education.	N		1
T10.04	[T10 – Technology Education in Secondary Schools] Suitable facilities are provided for the University of Malta for the training of primary and secondary teachers in technology education.	M		1
T12.01	[T12 – Parental Involvement] PIFG publishes handbook on parental involvement.	N		1

Targ.Nr	[Theme] Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
T13.01	[T13 – School and World of Work] SWWFG prepares a strategic plan to implement its agenda.	N		1
T14.01	[T14 – Democracy in Schools] DEMFG collaborates with the Primary Education Focus Group (PEFG) to determine how issues of democracy can be brought into the primary curriculum (especially through the reorganisation of the social studies programme) and how the skills and values of democratic citizenship can be cultivated through the general pedagogy and classroom management.	N		1
T14.02	[T14 – Democracy in Schools] NCC makes proposals to the Minister of Education on the appropriate legislation for the setting up of Student School Councils in all secondary level schools.	N		1
T15.06	[T15 – Schools as Community Centres] NCC publishes procedures required to apply for the funding of projects, and its criteria for prioritising applications.	N		1

d. Targets for Schools, for Phase 2

T01.06	[T01 – Early Childhood Education] ECEFG and schools organise school-based information meetings with parents on the new ECE programme, introducing also the school's parental support plan.	N	S	2
T01.07	[T01 – Early Childhood Education] ECEFG liaises with EAFG on the beginning of policy of transferring records of pupils to Primary Year 1 and scheduled meetings between the Kindergarten Assistants in charge of KG2 and the receiving Primary Yr. 1 teachers.	N	S	2
T02.08	[T02 – Primary Education] Schools include their school-based policies on thematic and differentiated teaching, assessment and record keeping, language and IT, gender and inclusion, in their SDPs.		S	2
T04.09	[T04 – Educational Assessment] EAFG and schools pilot and evaluate profiling and portfolios through action research projects.	N	S	2
T06.10	[T06 – ICT in Schools] ICTFG helps schools develop ICT in education policies in their SDPs.	N	S	2
T07.05	[T07 – Language Development] LDFG and schools, in collaboration with the ECEFG and PEFG, holds meetings for parents explaining the importance	N	S	2

Targ.Nr	[Theme] Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
	of language at home and in the school, and explaining language policies and practices in the respective curricula.			
T07.07	[T07 – Language Development] Primary Schools include their school-based language policies and practices in their SDPs.		S	2
T07.08	[T07 – Language Development] LDFG and schools commence a long-term campaign to sensitise teachers in secondary schools and the general public on the importance of language across the curriculum and in the home, identifying correct practices for language use.	N	S	2
T08.04	[T08 – Primary Science and Technology] PSTFG and schools collaborate with PEFG to set up meetings with parents in schools to explain the role of science and technology in the new curriculum.	N	S	2
T08.05	[T08 – Primary Science and Technology] Primary schools include their science and technology policies and plans in their SDPs.		S	2
T10.07	[T10 – Technology Education in Secondary Schools] TEDFG implements a first phase pilot project in a select number of secondary schools.	N	S	2
T11.03	[T11 – Inclusive Education] IEFG initiates a programme of seminars and meetings for primary heads, assistant heads, curriculum co-ordinators, and school councils on different aspects of inclusion in the curriculum and in school policy. This programme should help the Focus Group identify support strategies and requirements to help schools implement their inclusion programmes.	N	S	2
T11.04	[T11 – Inclusive Education] Primary and Secondary Schools include their school-based inclusion policies and programmes in their SDPs.		S	2
T11.05	[T11 – Inclusive Education] Schools initiate a programme of meetings, and workshops for teachers and parents on their inclusion policies.		S	2
T12.03	[T12 – Parental Involvement] Schools introduce policy of holding open days for parents and the community.		S	2
T12.06	[T12 – Parental Involvement] Schools include their parental involvement policies in the SDPs.		S	2

Targ.Nr	[Theme] Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
T13.05	[T13 – School and World of Work] Schools identify their school-based policies and programmes, if any, for linking up with the world of work.		S	2
T15.05	[T15 – Schools as Community Centres] Pilot project with the first batch of Community Learning Centres commences.	N	S	2
T00.04	[T00 – The National Curriculum Council] The NCC creates instrument for monitoring schools and sends it to the schools for information and feedback.	N	S*	2
T01.05	[T01 – Early Childhood Education] ECEFG holds information and training meetings with KG assistants on the implementation of the new ECE programme.	N	S*	2
T02.05	[T02 – Primary Education] Introduction of once weekly one-hour time-tabled sessions for teachers teaching the same Year group. This will give them time to plan, co-ordinate, and evaluate the themes together in an ongoing manner.	M	S*	2
T02.07	[T02 – Primary Education] PEFG begins a programme of workshops and training sessions for Yr 1-6 teachers on the different aspects of the new primary curriculum.	N	S*	2
T04.10	[T04 – Educational Assessment] EAFG explores with core groups of education officers, subject co-ordinators, teachers, parents, employers and University alternatives to the Junior Lyceum/Common Entrance Examinations.	N	S*	2
T04.11	[T04 – Educational Assessment] EAFG explores with core groups of education officers, subject co-ordinators, teachers, parents, employers and University representatives the impact of the changes in assessment practices on entry into tertiary education and employment. The EAFG disseminates among educators and parents the results and recommendations of all research projects.	N	S*	2
T08.03	[T08 – Primary Science and Technology] PSTFG collaborates with the PEFG to organise workshops for primary school teachers to introduce them to the new science and technology curriculum.	N	S*	2
T09.06	[T09 – Co-ordinated Science in Secondary Education] CSFG implements a programme of training for Form 1 teachers.	N	S*	2

Targ.Nr	[Theme] Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
T09.07	[T09 – Co-ordinated Science in Secondary Education] CSFG designs and constructs a detailed Form 2 curriculum.	N	S*	2
T10.06	[T10 – Technology Education in Secondary Schools] TEDFG creates certificate/diploma courses to train teachers in the identified pilot schools, which will have been provided with the resources, required to implement the programme. (NMC Conference Working Group G.06 suggests appropriate strategy in its report).	N	S*	2
T13.02	[T13 – School and World of Work] SWWFG issues proposals on how workplace related themes could be incorporated into the school curriculum at secondary level.	N	S*	2
T14.03	[T14 – Democracy in Schools] DEMFG identifies a number of pilot schools for the Student School Council project, including training of students and teachers in democratic procedures, organising a campaign, canvassing committee work.	N	S*	2
T14.05	[T14 – Democracy in Schools] DEMFG commences a programme of seminars, meetings, and workshops for teachers and parents on the content of the handbook.	N	S*	2
T15.03	[T15 – Schools as Community Centres] A policy document on Community Learning Centres will be published.	N M	S*	2

e. Targets not for Schools, for Phase 2

T02.04	[T02 – Primary Education] PEFG formulates a strategic plan to support those schools that have not started considering the thematic approach to make a start.	N	S*	2
T02.06	[T02 – Primary Education] Appointment of co-ordinators for each Year group, which has three or more classes (eg. YR 3 in a particular school has four classes) from within the group for horizontal integration of the curriculum.	M		2
T02.09	[T02 – Primary Education] PEFG collaborates with the EAFG to identify changes required in Junior Lyceum and Common Entrance Examinations to render them conformable with the new curriculum policies on teaching and assessment methods.	N		2

Targ.Nr	[Theme] Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
T05.04	[T05 – Personal and Social Development] Extension of PSD teaching to Form 3 in Junior Lyceums and Form 4 in Secondary Schools after appropriate teacher training.	N		2
T06.06	[T06 – ICT in Schools] ICTFG initiates a continuous training programme for all primary teachers in the use of ICT as a cross-curricular teaching and learning resource.	N		2
T06.07	[T06 – ICT in Schools] ICTFG commences continuous programme for training secondary school teachers in the use of ICT as teaching and learning resources in their subject areas.	N		2
T06.08	[T06 – ICT in Schools] ICTFG starts advanced training programmes for subject co-ordinators in secondary schools and ICT primary school co-ordinators on the use of ICT in education.	N		2
T06.09	[T06 – ICT in Schools] ICTFG begins familiarisation programmes for secondary and primary school heads and assistant heads on the use of ICT in education.	N		2
T07.04	[T07 – Language Development] LDFG co-ordinates with the ECEFG and PEFG in organising a programme of seminars and workshops for teachers in post in language and language teaching strategies in line with the language policies, practices, and attainment targets set by the kindergarten and primary curricula.	N	S*	2
T08.02	[T08 – Primary Science and Technology] Science and technology co-ordinators are appointed in the primary schools.	M		2
T11.06	[T11 – Inclusive Education] IEFG recommends ways of re-grading and re-organising facilitators and kindergarten assistants already in post, and initiates programme of training and retraining of same.	N		2
T11.07	[T11 – Inclusive Education] IEFG commences project to help regular schools develop a liaison strategy with the special schools.	N		2
T11.08	[T11 – Inclusive Education] IEFG sets up a resource centre for educational materials and teaching resources for diversity.	N		2
T12.04	[T12 – Parental Involvement]	N		2

Targ.Nr	[Theme] Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
	PIFG encourages schools to introduce a policy of having a home-school diary for all pupils and students.			
T12.05	[T12 – Parental Involvement] The NCC assigns responsibility for home-school liaison.	M		2
T14.04	[T14 – Democracy in Schools] DEMFG produces a handbook for teachers and parents on the promotion of democratic environments and teaching-learning styles in schools, classrooms and homes.	N		2
T15.04	[T15 – Schools as Community Centres] Community Learning Centre Co-ordinators appointed in a number of pilot communities.	M		2
T15.07	[T15 – Schools as Community Centres] CEFG receives and assesses project proposals from Community Learning Centres and advises NCC on funding.	N		2

f. Targets for Schools, for Phase 3

T01.08	[T01 – Early Childhood Education] Schools include their programme of ongoing information and education meetings for parents in their annual SDP		S	3
T04.12	[T04 – Educational Assessment] EAFG and schools decide on the format of profiling and portfolios and on the plan for their implementation. The implementation of Profiling and Portfolios begins with its first phase and subsequent phases follow according to set policy and plans	N	S	3
T04.13	[T04 – Educational Assessment] Decisions are taken on (a) Benchmarking (b) Policy regarding Junior Lyceum/Common Entrance Examinations.	N M	S	3
T04.14	[T04 – Educational Assessment] Training begins in monitoring of standards procedures.	N M	S	3
T05.07	[T05 – Personal and Social Development] Primary and Secondary Schools include school-based PSD policies in SDPs.		S	3
T07.10	[T07 – Language Development] Secondary schools include school-based language policies and practices in their SDPs.		S	3
T07.11	[T07 – Language Development] LDFG and schools carry out a research project to evaluate the impact of its efforts in both Primary and Secondary Schools.	N	S	3

Targ.Nr	[Theme] Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
T08.07	[T08 – Primary Science and Technology] PSTFG and schools carry out a research project to evaluate the impact of its efforts in both primary and secondary schools.	N	S	3
T09.08	[T09 – Co-ordinated Science in Secondary Education] CSFG designs and constructs a detailed Form 3 curriculum, implements a programme of training for Form 2 & Form 3 teachers. Form 1 starts the Co-ordinated Science programme.	N	S	3
T09.09	[T09 – Co-ordinated Science in Secondary Education] CSFG designs and constructs a detailed Form 4 curriculum, implements a programme of training for Form 3 & Form 4 teachers. Form 2 starts Co-ordinated Science programme.	N	S	3
T09.10	[T09 – Co-ordinated Science in Secondary Education] Schools start including their Co-ordinated Science policies in their SDPs.		S	3
T10.08	[T10 – Technology Education in Secondary Schools] TEDFG and schools assess their pilot project and construct the second phase of its implementation strategy, meanwhile schools targeted for the second phase are prepared for the introduction of technology education.	N	S	3
T13.03	[T13 – School and World of Work] Beginning of first phase in the implementation of the SWWFG's strategic plan, which should commence with meetings and workshops with schools and teachers on the strategic plan, and its curriculum implementation.	N	S	3
T14.07	[T14 – Democracy in Schools] Schools include their policies and programmes for democratic education and the creation of democratic environments (school, classroom and home) and teaching-learning styles in their SDPs.		S	3
T15.08	[T15 – Schools as Community Centres] CEFG and schools research and evaluate the pilot project with the first Community Learning Centres. CEFG plans the next phase of implementation.	N	S	3
T00.05	[T00 – The National Curriculum Council] The NCC begins its programme for monitoring and assessing schools	N	S*	3
T06.13	[T06 – ICT in Schools] ICTFG carries out a research project to evaluate the	N	S*	3

Targ.Nr	[Theme] Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
T08.06	impact of its efforts in both Primary and Secondary Schools. [T08 – Primary Science and Technology] PSTFG collaborates with the PEFG to start holding meetings for the science and technology co-ordinators to discuss methods of support for science and technology in schools, including training of teachers, equipment, and teaching and learning resources. These meetings will be sustained on-goingly.	N	S*	3
T14.06	[T14 – Democracy in Schools] DEMFG evaluates the pilot Students' Councils project and creates a strategic plan to extend it to other schools.	N	S*	3

g. Targets not for Schools, for Phase 3

T03.03	[T03 – Secondary Education] Curriculum Co-ordinators are appointed in the secondary sector, specific to the particular school, and in proportion to the school population.	M		3
T05.05	[T05 – Personal and Social Development] Extension of PSD teaching to Form 4 in Junior Lyceums and Form 5 in secondary schools after appropriate teacher training.	N		3
T05.06	[T05 – Personal and Social Development] Appointment of PSD co-ordinators in secondary schools.	M		3
T05.08	[T05 – Personal and Social Development] PSDFG carries out a research project to evaluate the impact of its efforts in both Primary and Secondary Schools.	N		3
T10.09	[T10 – Technology Education in Secondary Schools] TEDFG trains technology teachers for the second phase of the implementation process.	N		3
T13.04	[T13 – School and World of Work] SWWFG organises workshops and seminars for school guidance and Form 5 teachers to discuss the planned strategies for bridging the school-workplace gap in Form 5.	N	S	3
T15.09	[T15 – Schools as Community Centres] Second Diploma Course for Community Learning Centre Co-ordinators starts.	N		3

7. Strategic Plan Training Programme

The following are the training implications derived from the Plan Targets given above. The material is in the form of items such as training courses and information meetings, which according to the Strategic Plan are to be held in order to fulfil the Plan Targets.

The column headed "Min" or Ministry indicates (with an X) when the event mentioned includes a strong Ministry or Division responsibility. Similarly the NCC and Sch (Schools) column refer respectively to the responsibilities of the NCC and Schools.

A. Training Programme by Theme

Theme	Target	Information or Training Event	Min	NCC	Sch	Phase
T01 <> Early Childhood Education	T01.01	ECEFG holds information meetings with KG assistants to explore the requirements and implications of new ECE programme.		X	X	1
T01 <> Early Childhood Education	T01.05	ECEFG holds information and training meetings with KG assistants on the implementation of the new ECE programme.		X	X	2
T01 <> Early Childhood Education	T01.06	ECEFG and schools organise school – based information meetings with parents on the new (KG) ECE programme, introducing also the school's parental support plan.		X	X	2
T01 <> Early Childhood Education	T01.08	Schools include their programme of ongoing information and education meetings for parents in their annual SDP			X	3
T02 <> Primary Education	T02.02	Let Me Learn Centre is strengthened to manage the implementation of differentiated learning in primary schools in co-ordination with the PEFG. This includes: (a) the preparation of a strategic plan to train teachers in-service (b) disseminating materials and information about differentiated teaching, (c) advising on methods of assessing learning outcomes based on differentiated teaching, and (d) providing long term support for school-based initiatives in differentiated teaching.	X	X	X	1

Theme	Target	Information or Training Event	Min	NCC	Sch	Phase
T02 <> Primary Education	T02.07	PEFG begins a programme of workshops and training sessions for Yr 1-6 teachers on the different aspects of the new primary curriculum including: attainment targets, policies and methods of assessment, profiling and record keeping, strategies of differentiated learning for these years.		X	X	2
T04 <> Education Assessment	T04.05	The EAFG carries out its first phase of training aimed at ensuring that all teachers are aware of the new philosophy of educational assessment.		X	X	1, 2
T04 <> Education Assessment	T04.08	The EAFG carries out its second phase of training dealing with formative and summative modes of assessment.		X	X	2, 3
T04 <> Education Assessment	T04.14	Training begins in the monitoring of standards procedures.	X	X	X	1, 2
T05 <> Personal and Social Development	T05.03	PSDFG introduces new format for training PSD teachers in post as described in the NMC Conference Working Group 09		X	X	1
T06 <> ICT in Schools	T06.04	ICTFG set up Conversion Diploma Course in co-ordination with Faculty of Education.		X		1
T06 <> ICT in Schools	T06.05	ICTFG initiates training programme for teachers of Computer Studies.		X	X	1
T06 <> ICT in Schools	T06.06	ICTFG initiates a continuous training programme for all primary teachers in the use of ICT as a cross-curricular teaching and learning resources.		X	X	2
T06 <> ICT in Schools	T06.07	ICTFG commences continuous programme for training secondary school teachers in the use of ICT as teaching and learning resources in their subject areas.		X	X	2
T06 <> ICT in Schools	T06.08	ICTFG starts advanced training programmes for subject co-ordinators in secondary schools and ICT primary school co-ordinators on the use of ICT in education.		X	X	2
T06 <> ICT in Schools	T06.09	ICTFG begins familiarisation programmes for secondary and primary school heads and assistant heads on the use of ICT in education.		X	X	2

Theme	Target	Information or Training Event	Min	NCC	Sch	Phase
T07 <> Language Development	T07.03	LDFG issues guidelines for schools and holds advisory meetings on the preparation of school-based language policies, and practices.		X	X	1
T07 <> Language Development	T07.04	LDFG co-ordinates with the ECEFG and PEFG, in organising a programme of seminars and workshops for teachers in post in language and language teaching strategies in line with the language policies, practices and attainment targets set by the kindergarten and primary curricula.		X	X	2
T07 <> Language Development	T07.05	LDFG and schools, in collaboration with the ECEFG and PEFG, hold meetings for parents explaining the importance of language at home and in the school, and explaining language policies and practises in the respective curricula.		X	X	2
T07 <> Language Development	T07.08	LDFG and schools commence a long-term campaign to sensitise teachers in secondary schools and the general public on the importance of language across the curriculum and in the home, identifying correct practices for language use.		X	X	2
T07 <> Language Development	T07.09	LDFG holds meetings with secondary schools to discuss the role of the two languages in the secondary school curriculum, strategies for consolidating the different languages across the curriculum, attainment targets for language use, and the assessment of language across the curriculum.		X	X	2,3
T08 <> Primary Science and Technology	T08.03	PSTFG collaborates with the PEFG to organise workshops for primary schools teachers to introduce them to the new science and technology curriculum.		X	X	2
T08 <> Primary Science and Technology	T08.04	PSTFG and schools collaborate with PEFG to set up meetings with parents in schools to explain the role of science and technology in the new curriculum.		X	X	2
T09 <> Co-ordinated Science in Secondary Education	T09.02	The CSFG organises a familiarisation seminar to provide a professional forum during which the main issue concerning Co-ordinated Science are sorted out and a clear strategy for an in-service course is agreed upon.	X	X	X	1

Theme	Target	Information or Training Event	Min	NCC	Sch	Phase
T09 <> Co-ordinated Science in Secondary Education	T09.03	The CSFG organises workshop sessions for small groups of Form 3-5 Science Teachers (Biology, Chemistry, Physics teacher), from state, church and independent schools, preferably in the teachers' own schools, in order to: (a) ensure that teachers understand underlying philosophy (b) provide teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills for teaching the CS curriculum effectively		X	X	1,2
T10 <> Technology Education in Secondary Schools	T10.03	TEDFG organises courses and workshops for a select group who will be charged with training technology teachers.		X	X	1,2
T10 <> Technology Education in Secondary Schools	T10.06	TEDFG creates certificate/ Diploma course to train in the identified pilot schools, which will have been provided with the resources required to implement the programme (NMC Conference Working Group G06 suggests appropriate strategy in its report).		X	X	2
T10 <> Technology Education in Secondary Schools	T10.09	TEDFG trains technology teachers for the second phase of the implementation process.		X	X	3
T11 <> Inclusive Education	T11.03	IEFG initiates a programme of seminars and meetings for primary heads, assistant heads, curriculum co-ordinators, and school councils on different aspects of inclusion in the curriculum in school policy. This programme should help the Focus Group identify support strategy and requirements to help schools implement their inclusion programmes.		X	X	2
T11 <> Inclusive Education	T11.05	Schools initiate a programme of meetings, and work shops for teachers and parents on their inclusion policies			X	2
T11 <> Inclusive Education	T11.06	IEFG recommends ways of re-grading and re-organising facilitators and kindergarten assistants already in post, and initiatives programme of training and retraining of same.	X	X		2

Theme	Target	Information or Training Event	Min	NCC	Sch	Phase
T13 <> School and world of work	T13.03	Beginning of the first phase in the implementation of the SWWFG's strategic plan, which should commence with meetings and workshops with schools and teachers on the strategic plan, and its curriculum implementation.		X	X	3
T13 <> School and world of work	T13.04	SWWFG organises work shops and seminars for schools guidance and Form 5 teachers to discuss the planned strategies for bridging the school-workplace gap in Form 5		X	X	3
T14 <> Democracy in Schools	T14.03	DEMFG identifies a number of pilot schools for the Students School Council project, including training of students and teachers in democratic procedures; organising a campaign, canvassing committee work.		X	X	2
T14 <> Democracy in Schools	T14.05	DEMFG commences a programme of seminars, meetings and workshops for teachers and parents on the content of the handbook on the promotion of democratic environments and teaching-learning styles in schools, classrooms and homes.		X	X	2
T15 <> Schools as Community Centres	T15.01	CEFG holds consultative meetings and workshops for heads of schools and School Councils, School Boards, and PTAs on the formulation of a policy document		X	X	1
T15 <> Schools as Community Centres	T15.02	CEFG creates a two-year diploma course together with the University of Malta for training Community Learning Centre Co-ordinators.		X		1,2
T15 <> Schools as Community Centres	T15.09	Second Diploma Course for Community Learning Centre Co-ordinators starts.		X		3

In the next three sections below, the Training programme implied in the Strategic Plan for Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3 respectively are shown. The information in these sections is the same as that of the above chart, but while the above chart is organised by Theme or Subject Area, the charts below are organised by Phase, in order to facilitate calendar planning.

B. Training Programme for Phase 1

Theme	Target	Information or Training Event	Min	NCC	Sch	Phase
T01 <> Early Childhood Education	T01.02	ECEFG holds information meetings with KG assistants to explore the requirements and implications of new ECE programme.		X	X	1
T02 <> Primary Education	T02.02	Let Me Learn Centre is strengthened to manage the implementation of differentiated learning in primary schools in co-ordination with the PEFG. This includes: (a) the preparation of a strategic plan to train teachers in-service (b) disseminating materials and information about differentiated teaching, (c) advising on methods of assessing learning outcomes based on differentiated teaching, and (d) providing long term support for school-based initiatives in differentiated teaching.	X	X	X	1
T05 <> Personal and Social Development	T05.03	PSDFG introduces new format for training PSD teachers in post as described in the NMC Conference Working Group 09		X	X	1
T06 <> ICT in Schools	T06.04	ICTFG set up Conversion Diploma Course in co-ordination with Faculty of Education.		X		1
T06 <> ICT in Schools	T06.05	ICTFG initiates training programme for teachers of Computer Studies.		X	X	1
T07 <> Language Development	T07.03	LDFG issues guidelines for schools and holds advisory meetings on the preparation of school-based language policies and practices.		X	X	1
T09 <> Co-ordinated Science in Secondary Education	T09.02	The CSFG organises a familiarisation seminar to provide a professional forum during which the main issue concerning Co-ordinated Science are sorted out and a clear strategy for an in-service course is agreed upon.	X	X	X	1
T15 <> Schools as Community Centres	T15.01	CEFG holds consultative meetings and workshops for heads of schools and school councils, School Boards, and PTAs on the formulation of a policy document		X	X	1

Theme	Target	Information or Training Event	Min	NCC	Sch	Phase
T04 <> Education Assessment	T04.05	The EAFG carries out its first phase of training aimed at ensuring that all teachers are aware of the new philosophy of educational assessment.		X	X	1,2
T04 <> Education Assessment	T04.14	Training begins in the monitoring of standards procedures.	X	X	X	1,2
T09 <> Co-ordinated Science in Secondary Education	T09.03	The CSFG organises workshop sessions for small groups of Form 3-5 Science Teachers (Biology, Chemistry, Physics teacher), from state, church and independent schools, preferably in the teachers' own schools, in order to: (a) ensure that teachers understand underlying philosophy (b) provide teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills for teaching the CS curriculum effectively		X	X	1,2
T10 <> Technology Education in Secondary Schools	T10.03	TEDFG organises courses and workshops for a select group who will be charged with training technology teachers.		X	X	1,2
T15 <> Schools as Community Centres	T15.02	CEFG creates a two-year diploma course together with the University of Malta for training Community Learning Centre Co-ordinators.		X		1,2

C. Training Programme for Phase 2

Theme	Target	Information or Training Event	Min	NCC	Sch	Phase
T01 <> Early Childhood Education	T01.04	ECEFG and schools organise school – based information meetings with parents on the new ECE programme, introducing also the school's parental support plan.		X	X	2
T01 <> Early Childhood Education	T01.05	ECEFG holds information and training meetings with KG assistants on the implementation of the new ECE programme.		X	X	2
T02 <> Primary Education	T02.07	PEFG begins a programme of workshops and training sessions for Yr 1-6 teachers on the different aspects of the new primary curriculum including: attainment targets, policies and methods of assessment, profiling and record keeping, strategies of differentiated learning for these years.		X	X	2

Theme	Target	Information or Training Event	Min	NCC	Sch	Phase
T06 <> ICT in Schools	T06.06	ICTFG initiates a continuous training programme for all primary teachers in the use of ICT as a cross-curricular teaching and learning resources.		X	X	2
T06 <> ICT in Schools	T06.07	ICTFG commences continuous programme for training secondary school teachers in the use of ICT as teaching and learning resources in their subject areas.		X	X	2
T06 <> ICT in Schools	T06.08	ICTFG starts advanced training programmes for subject co-ordinators in secondary schools and ICT primary school co-ordinators on the use of ICT in education.		X	X	2
T06 <> ICT in Schools	T06.09	ICTFG begins familiarisation programmes for secondary and primary school heads and assistant heads on the use of ICT in education.		X	X	2
T07 <> Language Development	T07.04	LDFG co-ordinates with the ECEFG and PEFG, in organising a programme of seminars and workshops for teachers in post in language and language teaching strategies in line with the language policies, practices and attainment targets set by the kindergarten and primary curricula.		X	X	2
T07 <> Language Development	T07.05	LDFG and schools, in collaboration with the (KGAC and PEAC) ECEFG and PEFG, holds meetings for parents explaining the importance of language at home and in the school, and explaining language policies and practises in the respective curricula.		X	X	2
T07 <> Language Development	T07.08	LDFG and schools commence a long-term campaign to sensitise teachers in secondary schools and the general public on the importance of language across the curriculum and in the home, identifying correct practices for language use.		X	X	2
T08 <> Primary Science and Technology	T08.03	PSTFG collaborates with the PEFG to organise workshops for primary school teachers to introduce to the new science and technology curriculum.		X	X	2
T08 <> Primary Science and Technology	T08.04	PSTFG and schools collaborate with PEFG to set up meetings with parents in schools to explain the role of science and technology in the new curriculum.		X	X	2

Theme	Target	Information or Training Event	Min	NCC	Sch	Phase
T10 <> Technology Education in Secondary Schools	T10.06	TEDFG creates certificate/Diploma course to train in the identified pilot schools, which will have been provided with the resources required to implement the programme (NMC Conference Working Group G06 suggests appropriate strategy in its report).		X	X	2
T11 <> Inclusive Education	T11.03	IEFG initiates a programme of seminars and meetings for primary heads, assistant heads, curriculum co-ordinators, and school councils on different aspects of inclusion in the curriculum in school policy. This programme should help the Focus Group identify support strategy and requirements to help schools implement their inclusion programmes.		X	X	2
T11 <> Inclusive Education	T11.05	Schools initiate a programme of meetings, and work shops for teachers and parents on their inclusion policies			X	2
T11 <> Inclusive Education	T11.06	IEFG recommends way of re-grading and re-organising facilitators and kindergarten assistants already in post, and initiatives programme of training and retaining of same.	X	X		2
T14 <> Democracy in Schools	T14.03	DEMFG identifies a number of pilot schools for the Students School Council project, including training of students and teachers in democratic procedures, organising a campaign, canvassing committee work.		X	X	2
T14 <> Democracy in Schools	T14.05	DEMFG commences a programme of seminars, meetings and workshops for teachers and parents on the content of the handbook on the promotion of democratic environments and teaching-learning styles in schools, classrooms and homes.		X	X	2
T04 <> Education Assessment	T04.08	The EAFG carries out its second phase of training dealing with formative and summative modes of assessment.		X	X	2,3
T07 <> Language Development	T07.09	LDFG holds meetings with secondary schools to discuss the role of the two languages in the secondary school curriculum, strategies for consolidating the different languages across the curriculum, attainment targets for language use, and the assessment of language across the curriculum.		X	X	2,3

D. Training Programme for Phase 3

Theme	Target	Information or Training Event	Min	NCC	Sch	Phase
T01 <> Early Childhood Education	T01.08	Schools include their programme of ongoing information and education meetings for parents in their annual SDP			X	3
T10 <> Technology Education in Secondary Schools	T10.09	TEDFG trains technology teachers for the second phase of the implementation process.		X	X	3
T13 <> School and world of work	T13.03	Beginning of the first phase in the implementation of the SWWFG's strategic plan, which should commence with meetings and workshops with schools and teachers on the strategic, plan its curriculum implementation.		X	X	3
T13 <> School and world of work	T13.04	SWWFG organises work shops and seminars for schools guidance and Form 5 teachers to discuss the planned strategies for bridging the school-workplace gap in Form 5		X	X	3
T15 <> Schools as Community Centres	T15.09	Second Diploma Course for Community Learning Centre Co-ordinators starts.		X		3

1 For Curriculum Co-ordinators in Secondary schools, see Target T03.03

2 The Legal Notice states "2. The National Curriculum of studies for schools in Malta for the purposes of Section 47 of the Education act shall, with effect from 1st September, 2000, be that set out in the document entitled "Creating the Future Together" published by the Ministry of Education in December 1999. 3. The implementation of the National Curriculum shall proceed in stages according to guidelines to be adopted by the Minister."

PART C

THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM COUNCIL

1. The Terms of Reference and Functions of the NCC

A National Curriculum Council shall be appointed by and be accountable to the Minister of Education with the following mission statement and strategic goals.

A. Mission Statement of the NCC

The NCC is a national instrument for ensuring transparency, participation, and quality in compulsory education. It is empowered to safeguard equity, to promote standards and excellence, to safeguard students' entitlements to education, and to indicate and promote essential national educational priorities in relation to the National Minimum Curriculum.

B. Strategic Goals of the NCC

The NCC aims to exercise these responsibilities especially by adopting the following approaches that implement, or ensure the development and implementation of the NMC:

- (a) supporting schools in keeping teaching-learning standards high,
- (b) setting up incentive systems,
- (c) promoting good practice and taking corrective measures against bad or indifferent practice,
- (d) promoting self-evaluation at all levels and auditing schools,
- (e) creating and supervising benchmarking and other national evaluation and educational audit systems for schools,
- (f) monitoring and researching key factors and areas of concern relating to the National Minimum Curriculum,
- (g) keeping schools up to date on the latest developments in pedagogical and school innovations abroad.

C. Terms of Reference of the NCC

1. To issue directives regarding the implementation of the NMC according to a well-defined strategic plan.
2. To ensure that schools are implementing these directives by receiving and assessing School Development Plans that will be mandatory for all schools and by undertaking school audits.
3. To disseminate information about the NMC.
4. To produce national benchmarks and other quality indicators at different levels and in different areas of primary and secondary schooling.
5. To ensure that effective quality assurance and academic audit mechanisms are put in place.
6. To fund school or regional projects based on improving quality or implementing the NMC according to a clear, fair, and transparent system.
7. To fund any research on the NMC required for its future assessment and development.
8. To organise and fund national or regional training projects, as well as seminars and fora.
9. To organise and fund an annual national conference related to the NMC.
10. To present an annual report on its own activities and work and on progress in the implementation of the NMC to the Director General.

2. Composition of the NCC

The National Curriculum Council shall consist of a Council, a technical executive staff team, and a secretarial support team. Most of the technical executive staff team members and of the secretarial support team are expected to be posts within the Curriculum Department. The NCC shall carry out its work through these internal components, through the Focus Groups, and through commissioning of work to other agencies. The three internal components of the NCC shall be made up as follows,

A. Council

- Director Curriculum (as Chairperson of NCC)
- Two representatives of the Minister of Education.
- Director Operations, Division of Education
- Director Student Services, Division of Education
- Dean of Faculty of Education University of Malta, or representative
- Representative of Association of School Councils

- Representative of Malta Union of Teachers
- Representative of Church Schools
- Representative of the Independent Schools
- Parent representative of non-State school sector
- Person nominated by the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development
- Person nominated by the Association of Local Councils

B. Technical executive team

- Director Curriculum
- Asst. Director Curriculum Development,
- Asst. Director Curriculum Implementation,
- Asst. Director Student Assessment
- Asst. Director Information and Communications Technology in Education
- Asst. Director Training
- Education Officers

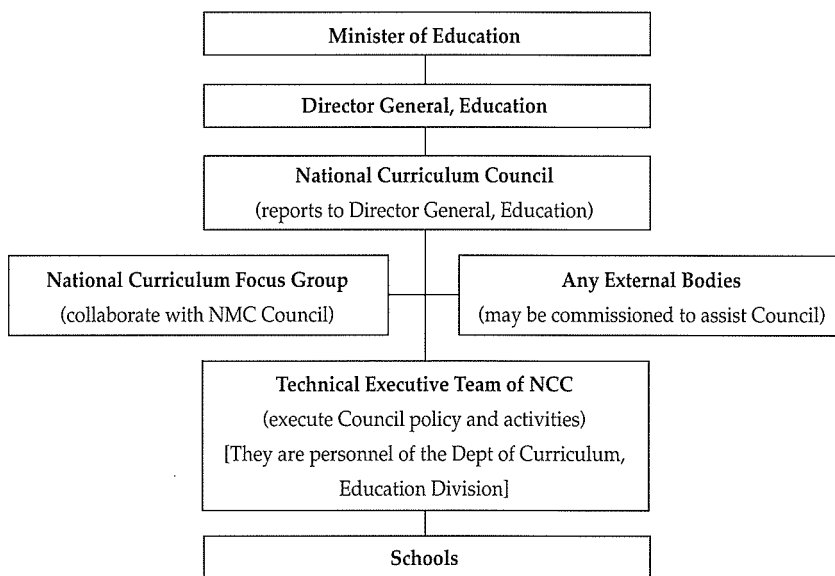
C. Support personnel

The National Curriculum Council needs to be supported by a core of professionals of the competencies and calibre required by the important tasks entrusted to the Council. A minimum of 4 full time posts are to be included here, with one high level person being dedicated exclusively to the work of the NCC itself.

D. Institutional Context of the National Curriculum Council

The links between the NCC and the main related bodies or posts shall be as shown in Figure 1. It is to be noted that the Chairperson of the National Curriculum Council is to be the Director Curriculum in the context of the Division of Education.

Fig. 1 The Institutional Context of the National Curriculum Council



3. Job Description of the Chairperson of the NCC

A Chairperson will head the NCC. His or her job description is given below.

Job Title or Position: Chairperson National Curriculum Council

Level: Director Curriculum

Key Purpose: To monitor and keep under review all aspects of the curriculum for 3-16 year olds; to be responsible for programmes of curriculum development in areas of identified priority; to co-ordinate the National Curriculum Council's work; to support schools in relation to the curriculum; to promote school improvement and the raising of standards of attainment through all aspects of the Council's curriculum-related work.

Reporting to: Director General (Education)

Scope: Budget manager with responsibility for expenditure of vote for all the programmes and initiatives and for recurrent expenditure of the NCC.

Key Responsibilities:

- Contributing to the development, promotion and implementation of the National Curriculum Council's policies, and the effective direction, management and utilisation of resources, as a member of the Division of Education and representative of the Ministry.
- Developing on an on-going basis an overview of young people's curriculum needs across the age range 3-16.
- Monitoring and reviewing all aspects of the curriculum for 3-16 year olds, identifying aspects where advice or information to the Curriculum Council, and through it the Director General (Education) and Minister of Education, may be needed.
- Organising programmes of curriculum development in priority areas defined by the National Curriculum Council agreed with the Director General (Education) and Minister of Education.
- Developing strategies to ensure that the National Curriculum Council's work in supporting the school curriculum is used to maximum effect in promoting school improvement and the raising of standards of attainment and entitlement.
- Ensuring a co-ordinated strategy for all aspects of the National Curriculum Council's work in relation to the early years, primary education and secondary education as well as the programmes of the various focus groups.
- Developing and maintaining arrangements to secure the best use across the organisation of the expertise in school subjects of the National Curriculum Council's Technical Staff.
- Developing and disseminating information and guidance on the curriculum.
- Establishing productive relationships with other agents of national education policy and national bodies such as the University of Malta; gaining and preserving the confidence of teachers, parents, employers and the community.
- Ensuring close working links with the other Departments within the Division of Education and with other relevant government departments.
- Taking initiatives at national level in order to ensure the simultaneous development of the curriculum and assessment in schools, and working closely with the MATSEC Board on curriculum and qualifications for 16 year olds.
- Encouraging, developing and motivating staff and promoting close and co-operative working between departments, teams and individuals.
- Planning and directing activities and resources, including staff resources, to ensure they are managed and administered effectively and that the National Minimum Curriculum secures value for money.

4. National Minimum Curriculum Focus Groups

A. Introduction

NMC Focus Groups will be set up by-and will be directly accountable to-the National Curriculum Council.

Each Focus Group will have, as its mission, the facilitation of the overall implementation of the NMC, and will specialise in one particular aspect, or a set or related aspects, that are central to the NMC, without losing sight of the integrated nature of the vision behind the National Minimum Curriculum.

The NMC Focus Groups will generally be made up of persons who have a background of experience and expertise in the area they are responsible for. They will generally include persons from the Division of Education (particularly Education Officers), the Faculty of Education, teachers, and, wherever possible, parents.

The NMC Focus Groups will be funded for the tasks they set themselves according to an annual budget approved by the NCC. Such tasks can include the carrying out of research, the writing up of reports, the development and maintenance of web sites, editing and publication of newsletters & professional journals, training, organising meetings and fora etc.

B. Roles

NMC Focus Groups will be required to take up the following roles and responsibilities:

1. To keep themselves informed:

- About the educationally relevant issues related to their focus area, including cutting edge research, texts, and practices;
- About the needs of the different school communities in view of the issue related to their focus;
- About commendable and innovative practices developed by different school communities in Malta, and which are linked to their area of focus;
- About the initiatives that are taken by the other Focus Groups in order to enhance a holistic and synergetic approach to innovation and change.

2. To develop new knowledge:

- Through action research carried out collaboratively in school communities, together with teachers;

- Through constant contact with school communities, as these attempt to grapple with the different challenges they face in implementing the NMC;

3. To support schools:

- By being reliable sources of knowledge and expertise in the area of focus and generally disseminating good practice through all media;
- By organising school-based in-service training initiatives;
- By creating *thematic networks* between schools - state and non-state - in order to facilitate the communication of knowledge, ideas, innovations, and good practice generally. Such thematic networks can be internet-based;
- By developing a Focus Group web-page on the NMC National council web site, with international links to other sites related to the designated theme of the Focus Group;
- By creating web-based *Resource Data Banks* related to the designated themes
- By organising e-mail links and 'chat rooms' to encourage teachers to talk to each other about common challenges;

4. To manage research and project bids:

- By developing a Focus Group web-page on the NMC National Council web site, with international links to other sites related to the theme or themes assigned to the Focus Group;
- By creating web-based *Resource Data Banks* related to the theme they are responsible for;
- By organising e-mail links and 'chat rooms' to encourage teachers to talk to each other about common challenges;

5. To integrate the different grass roots efforts

- By joining other Focus Groups and collaborating with the NMC National Council is organising and leading the annual, standing national NMC conference.

6. *Department of Curriculum in relation to NCC*

For the Curriculum Department of the Division of Education to provide sufficient appropriate personnel for the work of the National Curriculum Council, it is essential that the Curriculum Department have its Assistant Directors in place.

It is recommended that:

- the post of Assistant Director Curriculum Development be redefined to include the monitoring and administration of the different Focus Groups;
- the post of Assistant Director Curriculum Implementation be redefined so that the incumbent's duties will involve the monitoring aspects of the NMC; the vetting of the School Development Plans and the direct auditing of the schools on a once every five years basis.
- there should also be an Assistant Director to co-ordinate the training programme and to organise the meetings, fora and conferences scheduled by the National Curriculum Council.
- that the post of Assistant Director Training be transferred from the Department of Planning and Development to the Department of Curriculum.
- an Assistant Director be appointed for Student Assessment, to co-ordinate assessment policies over the whole age-range (3-16) at national level.

This structure evidently requires the support of adequate numbers of Education Officers – many of the present posts are vacant as there are few applicants for these posts. The factors that contribute to this state of affairs must be remedied before one can expect to have sufficient persons on the NCC Technical Executive Team. In any case, there should be a reassessment of the number of EOs required and their distribution in the Curriculum Development Section where they will form part of the Focus Groups, and in the Curriculum Implementation section. The EOs in the Curriculum Implementation section will need to have training or qualifications in the work of curriculum and school evaluation and sufficient numbers will have to be recruited to ensure that, as was stated above, each school is evaluated at least once every five years on the basis of its approved School Development Plan beginning from the scheduled commencement of this programme as identified in this Strategic Plan.

7. *Schools in relation to the NMC, NCC, Strategic Plan, and Focus Groups*

Schools will be able to get extra funding for important or imaginative activities aimed at fulfilling parts of the National Minimum Curriculum or the Strategic Plan. Schools will be eligible for an agreed upon sum every year to the extent that their project application forms are accepted. For this purpose, the National

Curriculum Council should publish procedures required to apply for funding projects, and its criteria for prioritising and accepting or rejecting applications received from schools. It should also assist schools that run into difficulties during implementation

Schools will be able to use the Focus Groups as resources, and call upon their services for assistance, for example when a school needs the latest information world-wide about some educational approach, or when it needs advice about some items being inserted into the school development plan, or when the school's own custom-built syllabus on a subject needs to be expertly examined. Focus Groups will also supply various training courses for school and central personnel; they will do this whenever the Strategic Plan requires them to, when they are requested by the National Curriculum Council, or when they are requested by any school. Schools should be able to access information compiled by the Focus Groups, and information made available by the NCC, by visiting Web sites that will be designed for such purposes.

Schools in the state, church, and independent sectors are equally bound to follow the National Minimum Curriculum. They are also bound by any implementation targets or guidelines issued officially by the Minister of Education or by the National Curriculums Council, the National Curriculum Council and any implementation targets or guidelines issued by the Minister of Education as interpretations of the Curriculum. The Strategic Plan and the proposed National Curriculum Council are being endorsed by the Minister in this respect.

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONS BEING ASKED BY TEACHERS AND HEADS

The National Steering Committee on the Implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum has taken note of a number of questions that have been raised, and in many cases are still being raised, about the implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum. Committee members who were in touch with school-based personnel were asked to submit a list of such questions. The Committee has been able to consider most of these issues during its deliberations. A list of such questions was compiled within the Division of Education, and another list arose out of the replies to a questionnaire sent to Church schools by the representative of Church Schools on the Steering Committee. Below are all these lists of crucial questions being asked. Appropriate entities, such as the Division of Education and the Secretariat for Church Schools, are already aware of these questions and it is hoped that they can now respond appropriately.

While the Steering Committee has taken note of these questions and even answered many of them in the present report, the Committee considers it important that the appropriate bodies communicate directly to schools. Three subheadings follow. The questions listed under the first two of these, (a) and (b), were compiled mostly by the representatives of the Division of Education on the Steering Committee, and submitted to the Committee. The list of questions being asked in Church schools, grouped under subheading (c), was extracted from the replies to a questionnaire sent by the Secretariat for Catholic Education of the Archbishop's Curia to all Church Schools. All schools replied to the questionnaire.

A. General List of Questions often asked by Teachers and Heads of School

1. Should all NMC provision start immediately?
2. Can a school choose to ignore any of the provisions?
3. Does the National Minimum Curriculum bind the state and the private sector in the same way?

4. Will there be support for schools? In which form?
5. Will there be monitoring of schools? In which form?
6. Will there be different treatment in support and in monitoring for state/church/independent schools?
7. Will training be provided centrally? Will there be funding for training initiatives taken by schools?
8. Will current funding to schools be increased to reflect increase in curricular initiatives? If yes, what criteria will be used in the distribution of funds?
9. Is the centre strong enough to take on the demands for support and the monitoring responsibilities, for both the state and the private sectors?
10. Are all schools state/church/independent bound to offer all the subjects listed as basic subjects?
11. Can a school decide to delay the introduction of a basic subject?
12. Is a school in line with NMC provision if all subjects appear on the curriculum at one time or other over the primary /secondary school course but never all together?
13. Will students be offered elective subjects?
14. Will students who wish to specialise in Science be able to drop Co-ordinated Science and study Physics, Chemistry and Biology in forms 3,4 and 5?
15. Will the NMC offer parents more formal redress if they feel that their children are not getting their entitlement?
16. Will any changes ever happen in MATSEC examinations? Will it be fair on students to be in one system and be judged on another?

B. Questions often asked by personnel of State Schools

1. Can state schools now have their own syllabuses?
2. If yes: (a) will they need to clear them with the Education Officers first (b) will there be any guidelines?
3. How can schools have their own syllabuses if the centre keeps the present system of textbook acquisition and distribution?
4. How can there be different syllabuses when in state schools there will be (i) the external assessment at the end of year 3 primary and form 2 secondary (ii) the J.L. Examination (iii) the form 5 annual examination?
5. When will state schools take responsibility for the annual examinations? Will they get help from the Education Officers in setting their papers? Will the centre monitor examinations in schools?
6. What benchmarking will there be at the end of year 3 primary and form 2 secondary? Baseline Assessment was offered to church and independent schools, will this external assessment be available to them as well?
7. Will there be indications when the curriculum will include the subjects

that have been listed as basic subjects or will individual heads negotiate this when they work the classification exercise with the Operations Department?

8. Will there be indications of the number of lessons for each subject or will individual heads again negotiate this when they work the classification exercise with the Operations Department?
9. Where will we, teacher and Heads of School, find the time to meet, discuss, design, train, collaborate on projects, network, evaluate?
10. Will there be a collective effort, on a national level, to build a culture of change or will?

C. Questions often asked by personnel of Church Schools

- What time are we going to have for organising and planning work? At what time are we going to have the training required?
- Which part of the NMC are we to implement first?
- When are all the changes in the NMC going to be enforced?
- How will all these changes affect us?
- Position of single subject specialists in Science, History, and Geography
- Strategies: Immediate - short / medium / long term.
- What does it actually involve? NEED FOR FURTHER COMMUNICATION.
- When can we do all the tasks required? TIME
- Who will train us? TRAINING
- Is it another experiment in education? CREDIBILITY and FEASIBILITY
- Can we do it alone? SUPPORT
- How, when, and using what means can we implement the NMC? What about the new forms of assessment? We'll have to start the small things first.
- Teachers have been put in a much worse predicament since the issue of the MUT directives. Do we go on to implement suggestions of the NMC? Do we obey the directives and perhaps get the funding we need (in the case of Church Schools which has for a long time been coming from the donations of the parents)? This is a dilemma. Then there is the other unresolved question of teaching of Combined Science vs. the separate Science(s).
- How can the NMC be implemented when the educational system is still exam-oriented and how can it be adopted when there is so much to be covered in the syllabus?
- When are the proposed changes going to come into force?
- The NMC is demanding. Teachers' perception of the NMC is that it demands of them additional responsibilities. Teachers are asking for a lesser number of hours in contact with children to have more time allotted to their added paper work such as profiling and portfolios.
- A major concern is whether financial means will be available to fund all the

changes required (e.g. the use of computers as a medium of teaching, and access to the Internet. Church Schools fear they will have to depend on their own fund-raising - something already started - while State Schools will be given all the necessary help required.

- To put into practice what has been proposed in the NMC there is need for time, reflection and resources.
- The main concern would have to be the demands that this NMC places on sometimes strained financial and human resources. Even though some of the points mentioned in this document have already been implemented to some extent, the need for (immediate) retraining in practically all areas of the curriculum is going to create a situation where there will be more teachers training than teachers teaching.
- Too many changes are being presented for teachers to implement. Commitment to such changes may be lacking due to teachers being accustomed to the traditional way of teaching.
- Staff may become discouraged if they perceive that too much pressure is being put on them to undertake work additional to what they are already doing such as the adoption of a thematic approach to teaching, differentiated teaching and group-based work.

APPENDIX 2

BRIEF FOR STEERING & TRAINING COMMITTEES & WORKING GROUPS

The following are extracts from the Terms of Reference given by the Ministry of Education to two temporary Committees, the National Steering Committee on the Implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum and the Training Strategy Formulation Team. The briefs were given in January 2000.

A. Extract from the brief for the National Steering Committee

Functions

1. to draw up a national implementation strategy;
2. to set up and monitor a number of specialised working groups;
3. to decide modalities of disseminating NMC content to pupils, teachers, parents, schools, public, Local Councils, community-based organisations, national NGOs, and Government Departments;
4. to identify preparatory strategies that could be immediately implemented;
5. to recommend permanent structures for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of schools, research and NMC review;
6. to recommend decentralisation strategies including school management structures.

B. Extract from the brief for Specialised Working Groups

Composition and working procedure

The Steering Committee shall establish a number of Specialised Working Groups to assist it in the fulfilment of its functions.

Committee members will be specialists in the particular field representing teachers, education officers, Heads of Schools, University, and others.

Each Working Group shall be composed of not more than six members, one of who shall be appointed by members to chair the Group.

Each Group shall hold regular minuted meetings and determine their own working procedures within the boundaries of their terms of reference.

Functions

1. To take into account current practice and how it affects the implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum in particular areas assigned to them.
2. To identify the challenges, faced by schools and teachers in implementing the National Minimum Curriculum, related to the particular theme and on the basis of current realities.
3. To identify areas of support needed by schools that will enable them to implement the National Minimum Curriculum effectively.
4. To formulate an action plan for the short-, medium-, and long-term plan.

C. Extract from the brief of the Training Strategy Formulation Team

Terms of Reference:

The Training Strategy Formulation Team shall:

1. recommend an overall training strategy that includes a plan which would, in part, effectively decentralise the professional staff development function of the Division of Education to the region and school levels;
2. incorporate, within the plan, strategies that support schools to meet the requirements of the new National Minimum Curriculum through the formulation of a professional staff development programme that would upgrade pedagogical capacities and competencies;
3. focus on meeting training needs for the implementation of educational reforms that include, among others, inclusive education, information technology, technology education, and school management.

The team shall work in close liaison with the National Steering Committee on the Implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum and shall report to it.

The proposed strategy shall include:

1. *a.* training plan for different categories of centrally-based Division of Education personnel, the training objectives and, separately, an outline of the training content required;
b. for each category of personnel, the recommended channels to be used, i.e. type of courses, training methods, self-training materials, etc.
c. the recommended training programme schedule comprising the title, location, target participation category, and duration of all training courses for all categories of personnel;
2. a proposal for a realistic method of decentralising the planning and management, by schools or groups of schools, of their own professional

staff development programme. The proposal should include the provision of initial planning support and monitoring;

3. the recommended source for the creation or compilation of any required training material and the recommended trainers or training organisations; and
4. an implementation plan including schedule of work & a detailed budget.

APPENDIX 3

PREPAREDNESS AND TRAINING NEEDS OF SCHOOLS

The following is an account, prepared by Mr E. DeBrincat, of an investigation conducted by the Steering Committee early in 2000, soon after it started its work. The intention was to establish roughly the level of preparedness of schools for implementing the National Minimum Curriculum, and also to discover the schools' own perceived training needs.

A. The Questionnaire

Aims of the questionnaire

At an early stage the committee decided that a questionnaire was needed in order to start schools thinking about the National Minimum Curriculum. Apart from this the aim was to obtain information from school based personnel about their perceptions and priorities in relation to the NMC. This would permit the determination of overall national patterns in terms of needs, any misgivings, time frames, preparedness, and so on. Information about such patterns was, in turn, expected to enable the central structures, especially the Steering Committee, the Division of Education, and the Working Groups of the Steering Committee, to formulate realistic national priorities for action, including training and support work.

The questionnaire would also help all stakeholders in schools to feel included, and to realise that their perceptions, ideas and needs are important from the perspective of central structures, and would be taken into account. This in turn would give rise to more ownership at schools level, and more realistic planning and support activities at central level. A copy of the questionnaire appears at the end of the present Appendix, below.

Method of Dissemination

The questionnaire was handed out to heads and assistant heads during special meetings for the purpose. The questionnaire as well as the NMC was discussed during these meetings. The general reaction was a very positive one. Some of these meetings were disrupted due to MUT directives. Questionnaires were

posted to the schools that did not attend. State, Church and Independent schools were invited to these meetings.

Structure of Questionnaire

A list of National Minimum Curriculum Themes was prepared investigating the schools preparedness, training needs as felt at school level and desired time scales. The questionnaire was a simple ticking list done purposely so as to make it simpler and easier for those filling it in. *Preparedness* was divided into three categories: 'already taking place', 'being planned' and 'no plans yet'. *Training needs* was categorised in the following manner: 'central training' or 'in-house training'. *Time-frames* were categorised as follows: 'starting September 2000', 'within the next three years', 'within the next five years', and 'beyond'.

B. Some general points regarding the results

1. An average of 40% of respondent schools feel that much of the requirements of the NMC is already taking place. Nearly 95 % boast of excellent home-to-school links. Portfolios and the global classroom are two NMC elements for which were most schools are not prepared. In fact only 6% state that it is already taking place.
2. The global classroom is the item for which 22% of schools have no plans yet. Inter-disciplinary approach seems to be the item which most schools understand and there are an equal percentage of them that have it already taking place, planned in the pipeline, and no plans yet.
3. Whilst an average of 25% of schools are keen to start in-house training, a high proportion of schools are still keen on centralised training. Whilst 95% of all schools have chosen to discuss preparedness in an inter-disciplinary approach, and 35% have said that it is already happening, 41% of schools are asking for centralised training. Differentiated learning and critical creative thinking are also high on the list requiring centralised training.
4. With regards to time frames on many occasions we have met up with anomalies. A large percentage of schools have reported that a number of NMC elements are already being implemented. In general most schools put most items on the first year time-frame. As regards preparedness, most state that they are prepared. Most schools are inclined to put the majority of elements as either starting in September 2000 or within the next three years.
5. There was a problem in that a number of schools invented new rows for e.g. P4 or T5. There is a possibility that a number of respondents may not have understood or rather misinterpreted some of the items. For example

it would be interesting to find out which schools are those 6.3% that have portfolios already taking place.

6. A summary of the responses to the school questionnaire appears in the charts below.

C. Response to Questionnaire

A total of 233 questionnaires were sent out to different schools from different sectors. A total of 143 schools responded. The breakdown of these two figures follows:

	State Primary	State Secondary	State Trade	Independent	Church	Special	TOTAL
No. of Schools	80	33	10	42	61	7	233
No. of Responses	67	26	4	8	31	6	143
%	78.8%	78.8%	40%	19%	45.9%	85.7%	57.9%

NMC - School Questionnaire Results

A.

Training / Learning Strategies	Preparedness			Training		Time Frame			
	P1	P2	P3	In-hse	Cent	T1	T2	T3	T4
Differential learning.	32.9	16.1	23.8	28.0	34.3	17.5	22.4	11.9	11.2
Co-operative learning	39.2	19.6	13.3	29.4	27.3	16.1	18.9	11.2	9.8
Thematic approach	30.8	21.0	21.0	28.7	25.9	18.9	19.6	13.3	11.9
Interdisciplinary approach (sec)	35.9	25.0	34.4	35.9	40.6	23.4	32.8	21.9	20.3
Independent learning	29.4	15.4	25.2	27.3	32.2	14.0	18.2	14.7	13.3
Critical and creative thinking	34.3	19.6	17.5	28.0	37.1	17.5	20.3	14.0	11.2

	Preparedness			Training		Time Frame			
	P1	P2	P3	In-hse	Cent	T1	T2	T3	T4

B. Assessment

Early screening	25.2	8.4	9.8	16.8	18.9	9.1	9.8	2.1	2.8
Formative assessment	23.1	11.9	11.9	20.3	20.3	8.4	15.4	4.2	1.4
Summative assessment	32.9	4.2	7.7	18.2	16.1	13.3	5.6	2.1	2.8
Profiling	14.0	18.9	14.7	15.4	28.7	11.2	10.5	10.5	2.1
Portfolio	6.3	21.7	18.2	15.4	25.9	10.5	16.1	6.3	5.6

C. Curriculum Issues

Bilingualism	36.4	3.5	7.0	18.9	17.5	12.6	7.0	1.4	2.8
Technology education	18.2	9.8	17.5	13.3	26.6	9.1	12.6	8.4	3.5
IT across the curriculum	24.5	11.9	11.2	16.8	30.1	8.4	14.0	7.0	3.5
The global classroom	10.5	10.5	22.4	14.7	25.9	3.5	15.4	10.5	6.3
Expressive arts	36.4	7.0	3.5	20.3	17.5	15.4	4.9	2.8	2.1
Learning support programmes	21.7	10.5	14.7	19.6	22.4	9.8	12.6	5.6	2.1
Facilitating transition	32.9	7.7	6.3	17.5	18.9	11.2	7.7	3.5	2.8
Personal and social development	34.3	8.4	3.5	19.6	22.4	9.8	10.5	2.1	1.4

D. General Aims

Gender equity across the curriculum	28.7	2.1	14.0	16.1	16.1	6.3	7.7	4.9	4.2
Education for democratic citizenship	32.9	7.7	7.7	14.7	22.4	8.4	8.4	2.8	5.6
Education on human sexuality	23.8	4.9	17.5	10.5	25.9	7.0	9.8	2.1	7.0
Consumer education	23.1	4.9	17.5	10.5	25.2	5.6	8.4	8.4	4.9
Media education	25.2	9.1	13.3	14.7	24.5	9.1	11.9	4.9	4.2
Education for leisure	30.8	5.6	11.2	18.2	16.8	9.1	9.8	3.5	3.5
Health education	36.4	8.4	3.5	17.5	19.6	14.0	7.7	0.7	1.4
Pastoral care	43.4	3.5	1.4	21.0	12.6	16.1	2.8	0.7	0.7
Environmental education	43.4	2.8	2.1	21.7	14.7	16.1	2.1	0.7	1.4

	Preparedness			Training		Time Frame			
	P1	P2	P3	In-hse	Cent	T1	T2	T3	T4

E. Professional Development

Teachers as curriculum developers	21.0	17.5	9.8	16.1	29.4	14.7	12.6	5.6	2.1
Teachers as researchers	14.0	11.9	21.0	15.4	30.8	8.4	16.1	8.4	2.1
Teachers as change agents	18.9	17.5	11.2	18.2	28.7	11.2	16.1	4.2	3.5
Teachers as resource producers	28.0	10.5	9.1	21.7	23.1	12.6	11.2	2.8	2.1

F. Social Relations

Home-school links	47.6	0.7	0.0	21.7	9.8	13.3	2.8	0.7	0.7
School-local community links	32.2	9.8	4.9	17.5	17.5	12.6	9.1	2.1	0.0
School-international community links	16.1	16.1	16.1	11.2	25.2	8.4	12.6	9.1	2.8

D. The Questionnaire

National Steering Committee on the Implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum

School Questionnaire

School Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

A checklist of NMC themes is provided below. Near each theme mark as follows:

- a) For **Preparedness**: P1 – already taking place P2 – planned in the pipeline P3 – no plans yet
- b) For **Training Needs**: mark Yes in appropriate column
- c) For **Time Frame**: T1 - starting Sept 2000 T2 - within next 3 Years T3 - within next 5 Years T4 – beyond

Kindly return the questionnaire by not later than Tuesday 18th April 2000 to:

The Secretary, NMC Steering Committee, Ministry of Education, Floriana

Theme	Level of Preparedness	Training Needs In-house	Time Frame Central
A. Training/Learning Strategies			
Differentiated learning			
Co-operative learning			
Thematic Approach			
Interdisciplinary Approach (Secondary)			
Independent learning			
Critical and creative thinking			
B. Assessment			
Early screening			
Formative assessment			
Summative assessment			
Profiling			
Portfolio			
C. Curriculum Issues			
Bilingualism			
Technology Education			
IT across the Curriculum			
The Global Classroom			
Expressive Arts			
Learning Support Programmes			
Facilitating Transition			
Personal and Social Development (PSD)			
D. General Aims			
Gender equity across the Curriculum			
Education for Democratic Citizenship			
Education on Human Sexuality			
Consumer Education			
Media Education			
Education For Leisure			
Health Education			
Pastoral Care			
Environmental Education			
E. Professional Development			
Teachers as Curriculum Developers			
Teachers as Researchers			
Teachers as Change Agents			
Teachers as Resource Producers			
F. Social Relations			
Home-School Links			
School-Local Community Links			
School-International Community links			

Name of Head of School _____

Signature of Head of School _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 4

PARENTS PROGRAMMES

Below are two course frameworks aimed at parents. Several instances of each type of course were organised at various locations in Malta as part of the work of the Steering Committee. In this respect, the work consisted in disseminating the National Minimum Curriculum and also preparing the way for parents to be actively involved in the implementation process.

A. Rationale

Principle 14 of the NMC - *Increasing Participation in Curriculum Development* - states that, "Parents are among the most important partners in the educational process." Furthermore, the National Minimum Curriculum regards parents as an important source of support for the curriculum. Parents can support the curriculum by showing interest in the educational process and engaging in dialogue with teachers and educational authorities. They can also prepare themselves better to be able to provide their children with the best possible help and to be able to participate in a most effective manner in the educational process.

B. Objectives

- To enable parents to understand, own and consequently support the NMC.
- To empower parents to be pro-active as partners in the educational process.
- To encourage parents to continue developing themselves.

C. Parents Programme on the NMC: "Creating the Future Together"

Day 1: *Opening Session: NMC: The Future - Discussion on NMC Principles and Parental Participation*

- Day 2: *Early Childhood Education*: The Psycho-Social Development of Children from Birth to 4 years; The NMC and early childhood education.
- Day 3: *Primary Education*: The Psycho-social Development of children from age 4 to 11; NMC and Primary Education
- Day 4: *Secondary Education*: The Psycho-Social Development of children from age 11- 16; NMC and Secondary Education
- Day 5: "Skolafamilja" (Schoolfamily): Open Day at School.
- General: Family Project/Exhibition: Families are encouraged to work on a project centring round a specific theme. Projects are to be exhibited.

D. Programme for Parents of Kindergarten Children:

"Learning through play"

- Day 1: Psycho-social Development of Children from birth to age 4
- Day 2: The Holistic Development of Children
Theoretical background re. the NMC aims in this area of development
Practical Session for Parents and their children that focused on equipping parents with practical play and storytelling skills.

APPENDIX 5

MEMBERS OF THE SPECIALISED WORKING GROUPS

The following are the 18 Specialised Working Groups that were set up by the Steering Committee and their composition. In the case of MATSEC, however, the group already existed as the MATSEC Committee. These groups each discussed their assigned NMC special theme and presented a report outlining current practice, making recommendations, and outlining a short- medium- and longer term plan for the implementation of the corresponding aspect of the National Minimum Curriculum.

The first person listed under each group name has served as the Chair of the group.

G01 – Early childhood education and transition to primary	Education Faculty of Education University of Malta, Msida Tel: 32902930 Fax: 317938 Email: vsol1@educ.um.edu.mt
G02 – Inclusion and special education	Ms Monica Attard , Education Officer, Division of Education
G03 – Assessment policy including benchmarking	The Curriculum Centre The Mall, Floriana Tel: 224933 Fax: 248694 Email: monica.m.attard@magnet.mt
G04 – Bilingualism	Ms Maria Bartolo , Assistant Head of School, San Andrea School
G05 – Science in the primary curriculum	L-Imselliet , L/O Zebbiegh Tel: 438800 Fax: 438801 Email: info@sanandrea.edu.mt
G06 – Technology education in the curriculum	Ms Marthese Cini , Teacher, St Benild School Church Street , Sliema Tel: 313647 Fax: / Email: /
G07 – Co-ordinated Science in the secondary schools	Ms Grace Izzo , Head, Pre-School Education Centre, Pre-School Education Centre Junior College Premises Guze Debono Square, Msida Tel: 233084 Fax: 233087 Email: preschool.centre@magnet.mt
G08 – Creativity and self-expression	Ms Josephine Magro , Assistant Head, St. Paul's Bay Primary School C School Street, St. Paul's Bay Tel: 573194 Fax: 576390 Email: stpaulboy.primary.c@magnet.mt
G09 – Personal and social development	
G10 – Information and communications technology in education	
G11 – Thematic and interdisciplinary teaching	
G12 – Differentiated teaching	
G13 – The Curriculum and MATSEC	
G14 – Links between school and the world of work	
G15 – Schools as community centres	
G16 – Gender in the NMC	
G17 – Parent Participation	
G18 – Democracy in Schools	
Composition of Working Groups	
G01 – Early childhood education and transition to primary	
Dr Valerie Sollars , Lecturer, Dept of Primary	

Mr Mario Schembri, Teacher, St. Paul's Bay Primary School, St. Paul's Bay.

Tel: 573194 Fax: / Email: /

Ms M'Rose Cefai, KG Assistant, Victoria Primary School Victoria, Gozo

Email:victoria.primary.c@magnet.mt

G02 – Inclusion and special education

Mr Michael King, Asst. Director, Division of Education

Great Siege Road, Floriana

Tel: 25982141 Email: michael.a.king@magnet.mt

Dr Paul Bartolo, Lecturer, Department of Psychology University of Malta Tal -Qroqq, Msida

Tel: 32902927 Email: pbar1@educ.um.edu.mt

Mr George Borg, Head of school, San Miguel School Silver City Falaise Road, St. Andrews

Tel: 373763/374224 Email:sanmiguel.sns@magnet.mt

Mrs Theresa Bugeja, Facilitator, Primary School Alexander Str, Cospicua

Tel: 823701 Email: cospicua.primary.c@magnet.mt

Mr Joseph Camilleri, Chairperson, National Commission Persons with Disability

Centru Hidma Soċjali, Santa Venera

Tel: 441280/487789 Email: knpd@kemmnet.net.mt

Ms Carmen Cascun, Head of School, Helen Keller School, Qrendi

Tel: 642398 Email: hkeller.sns@magnet.mt

Mrs Luisa Grech, Parent,

Mr Frank Mallia, Education Officer, Division of Education

Special Education Section, Floriana

Tel: 231567/233698 Email: frank.mallia@magnet.mt

Ms Pauline Sammut, Head of school, Guardian Angel Farsons Street, Hamrun

Tel: 223496 Email: guardianangel.sns@magnet.mt

Fr Dominic Scerri, Curia representative (disability issues in Church Schools), Archbishop's Curia, Floriana

Tel: 226911

Dr Elena Tanti Burlo', Programme Co-ordinator for Inclusive Education, University of Malta

Tal-Qroqq, Msida

Tel: 32902742 Fax: etan1@educ.um.edu.mt

Ms Judith Torre, Teacher, San Miguel School Silver City Falaise Road, St. Andrews

Tel: 373763/374224 Email:sanmiguel.sns@magnet.mt

G03 – Assessment policy including benchmarking

Ms Mary Vella, Director, Division of Education

Great Siege Road, Floriana

Tel: 245178 Email: lilyofvalley.gss@magnet.mt

Ms Doris Aquilina, Head of School, Secondary School Lily of the Valle , Mosta

Tel: 418264 Email: mary.doris.aquilina@magnet.mt

Mr Gerald Briscoe, Head, retired,

Dr Deborah Chetcuti, Lecturer, Faculty of Education University of Malta Tal -Qroqq, Msida

Tel: 32902939 Email: dche@educ.um.edu.mt

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APPENDIX 6

RECOMMENDATIONS OF 18 SPECIALISED GROUPS

Presented below is a *standardised and classified summary of the recommendations* of the 18 Specialised Working Groups set up by the Steering Committee. This listing of recommendations, as well as the *analysis* that appears in another Appendix, were carried out by Dr Joseph Fenech, of the Faculty of Education with the assistance of Mr. Evan Debrincat, member of the Steering Committee. This work was carried out on behalf of the Steering Committee, on the basis of the final reports of the 18 Specialised Working Groups.

He extracted, classified and standardised the recommendations from these reports, analysed them, and presented them to the Steering Committee on 5th July 2000 at a seminar for the Committee at the House of Representatives.

Many of the recommendations were then used by the Steering Committee in developing the final version of the Targets of the Strategic Plan. The Steering Committee then of course took a holistic overview before creating the overall list of targets for the Strategic Plan. This explains the differences between on the one hand the recommendations given below, as made by individual Working Groups, and on the other hand the final combined version of the Targets and the recommendations appearing in the Strategic Plan.

The text that follows consists of (a) the analysis, followed by (b) the recommendations extracted from the working group reports.

A. Analysis of the Recommendations

Preamble

This report takes as its brief the verbal request made by the Chairman of the Steering Committee on the implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum, Prof. Kenneth Wain. This request was elaborated in conversations with him as to consist of the following three tasks:

- To conduct an analysis of the recommendations made by the working groups;
- To classify them; and
- To present them in a way as to facilitate the task of decision-making,

It was not my brief either to conduct an evaluation or establish some order

of priorities.

Before I discuss each one of these, I would like to make some preliminary observations.

1. Any curriculum document is always a political document and for three reasons:
 - It is an answer to the question: "What kind of society do we want?"
 - It involves the distribution of power in the community: "Who gets what?"
 - It requires political decisions for its implementation.
2. There are no contradictions between the recommendations made by the different groups and what the NMC document stipulates. All the recommendations fall within the framework of values underpinning the main document, i.e. the National Minimum Curriculum.
3. Some of the recommendations made are already actual practice in a few schools. This means that there are already some patterns and experiences to follow, learn from, strengthen and disseminate. Hence the cultural milieu is already changing in some ways and this facilitates implementation.
4. On the basis of the review of recommendations, some of the groups can be clustered as follows:
 - I G01– Early childhood education
G08 – Creativity and self-expression
G11 – Thematic and interdisciplinary teaching
 - II G15 – Schools as community centres
G17 – Parent participation
G18 – Democracy in schools
 - III G03 – Assessment policy including benchmarking
G13 – The Curriculum and MATSEC
G14 – Links between school and the world of work

The implication is that implementation decisions have to consider what integrative structures should be set in place in order to disseminate policy, facilitate strategies, monitor the use of resources efficiently and stimulate policy-driven research.

5. Nearly all the working groups include at least one representative from the teaching ranks. It is assumed that the recommendations are, therefore, tempered by the demands of actual practice.

I can now turn to an amplification of the three tasks in my brief.

Analysis

The analysis was conducted in the light of the position the groups took in each particular area as well as the rationale they articulated for it. The purpose was to facilitate the classification of the various recommendations and identify elements of correlation.

Classification

All the recommendations were classified into the following categories:

- Policies
- Structures
- Processes
- Resources
- Research

I. Policies

The report takes policies to be what Ball (1990:3) calls “the operational statements of values” or what Kogan (1975:55) defines as “statements of prescriptive intent”. Such statements entail what Prunty (1985:136) refers to as “the authoritative allocation of values” which “draws attention to the centrality of power and control in the concept of policy”. In this document recommendations classified in this category are addressed either to politicians or holders of key positions in the administration of the educational system. Recommendations regarding assessment, equity and inclusion are evident examples.

II. Structures

This category refers to those mechanisms or systems, which need to be set in place in order to implement the changes recommended. These include both institutional positions as well as physical locations. Recommendations that dealt with the following were classified in this category:

- Committees
- Teams
- Coordinators
- Panels
- Teachers’ Centres
- Time-tabling arrangements

Structures are distinguished either by type or duration. They can be classified as either task specific or multi-purpose and they can have either a temporary or permanent duration.

III. Processes

The following recommendations are included in this category:

- Consultations
- In-service teacher training
- Initial teacher training
- Meetings
- Dissemination strategies
- Education programmes
- Curriculum development exercises
- Courses
- Teaching Strategies

IV. Resources

This category refers to demands for:

- Funds
- Materials
- Facilities

V. Research

The research recommended by all the groups can be classified as

- An exercise in evaluation
- Action research for the improvement of practice

All of it is policy-directed.

Presentation

The task for the presentation format was, therefore, to assemble the following elements and dimensions.

Elements

18 Themes of the Working Groups

Dimensions:

- Policies
- Structures
- Processes
- Resources
- Research
- Time-frames

It was considered important for the presentation (a) to inter-relate the recommendations of the different groups; (b) to be as schematic as possible in the sense of visual display; and (c) to facilitate implementation decisions.

Afterward

At this point, I am going to take the liberty to make a few reflections on what I consider to be important issues in the study of educational change. The first one regards the importance of the historical perspective and the second the process of implementation.

The Historical Perspective

A curriculum document like the present one is always a political statement located at a particular historical juncture and implemented in a particular socio-cultural milieu. What is happening today echoes what was happening exactly 150 years ago this summer.

It was at that time that provision for mass schooling was planned and the structural basis for the administration of education in Malta began to be set in place. The establishment of the Education Department with administrative personnel (albeit rudimentary), the management of the schools through a prescribed syllabus, a rigid system of inspection and assessment and a normal school for the training of teachers constituted the beginnings of a system of education which has developed over the decades, generating in the process a tradition which, to a large extent, has provided the parameters for decision-making ever since.

It was also during the autumn of 150 years ago that Canon P. Pullicino began to take steps to change the prevailing educational tradition in Malta by closing down the schools and calling the teachers, together with new recruits, for an in-service programme in Valletta. It was at this time that the foundations for a new culture of educational administration began to be laid whose legacy has impacted so strongly on educational development in Malta. It can be said that this educational culture was able to accommodate all the changes introduced into the system over this century and a half except one, namely, the introduction of comprehensive education in 1972.

Implementation

Up until now, the present exercise has been one of articulation and elaboration of ideas. From now on these ideas have to be translated into an inter-related series of concrete practices where it matters most, that is, schools and classrooms. For this change to succeed, there needs to be put in place what Michael Fullan, the guru in the educational change literature, calls "the infrastructure" in order to support and sustain it (TES, 23 June, 2000). "Success can only happen", he says, "at school level, but it is also unlikely to happen on any scale, and cannot be sustained if the infrastructure is not dramatically strengthened". He identifies the elements of this infrastructure as

- The development of collaborative cultures
- The creation of new alliances between schools and community

- The recruitment of school leaders
- The co-ordination between centre and peripheries
- The setting up support mechanisms for schools within a system of accountability.

I think that in translating these ideas in the National Minimum Curriculum document and the reports into concrete practices, it is important that these recommendations are heeded.

B. Listing of the recommendations of the Working Groups

The recommendations extracted by Dr Fenech from the reports of the Working groups are now presented below.

G01 — Early childhood education

Policies

- To set up National Curriculum Attainment Targets

Resources

- To set up modern school Libraries in primary schools.
- To provide proper resources for all classrooms.
- To equip schools with appropriate apparatus that is important for children's overall development.

Processes

- To ensure co-ordination within and across schools.
- To develop a full learning programme for young learners.
- To ensure regular in-service training.
- To assign a curriculum co-ordinator for large KG centres.
- To train KG assistants & teachers to maintain written records of achievements and progress.
- To encourage teachers to shift to individual activities.
- To educate parents and teachers to accept children's initial attempts at using language.
- To ensure professional development in assessment procedures.
- To encourage schools to draw up their own assessment policy.

- To ensure formulation of kindergarten transfer sheet.
- To formulate a more detailed assessment sheet from KG2 to Y1.
- To introduce portfolios for each child.
- To update and revise assessment policy.
- To enhance communication links between schools and department
- To encourage exchange of ideas and practices between schools.
- To organise in service courses in Inclusion.
- To initiate "MAPS" programme.
- To involve parents more regularly in various way.
- To ensure more parent education.

G02 – Inclusive and special education

Policies

- To phase out academic streaming completely.
- To involve parents during psychometric tests.
- To ensure that children with special needs are still allowed to go to school when facilitator is absent.
- To formulate official procedures regarding the dispensing of medicine to students at school.
- To revise current practices in national and school based exams.
- To ensure that no segregationist practices infringe on the disabled child's educational entitlement.
- To have a clear written manual outlining the policy and listing all procedures re rights and responsibilities of stakeholders.
- To have a Code of Good Practice for all staff.
- To encourage school councils to make written commitments to the school's Inclusive Education Programme
- To publish a Manual of Support for Learning

Resources

- To produce educational material for diversity.

Structures

- To set up an effective public relations office for Inclusive Education.
- To appoint Co-ordinators for Inclusion Support Services.
- To develop existing special schools into centres of human and material resources.

Processes

- To organise IEP's for all students.
- To ensure ongoing support and guidance from professionals.
- To ensure the physical accessibility to school premises.
- To encourage parents and educators to work in partnership.
- To timetable more time for preparation and planning.
- To organise therapy sessions on school premises.
- To plan teaching staff placements with a more effective time frame.
- To revise the process of statementing.
- To ensure continuous development of all personnel

Research

- To have regular qualitative and quantitative audits and evaluations.

G03 – Assessment policy including benchmarking*Policies*

- To decide on end of year examinations for Y4, 5 & F1, 3, 4.
- To decide on format and implementation of Profiling & Portfolios.
- To decide on Benchmarking
- To finalise policy regarding Junior Lyceums.

Structures

- To create an Educational Assessment Unit Board.
- To appoint project managers for each research project.
- To create networks to set up co-ordination meetings, mark schemes, mark scripts and process results.
- To create a system to externally audit both internal and external assessment systems.

Processes

- To disseminate among educators and parents a glossary of terms related to assessment.
- To ensure that all in-service training covers all aspects of assessments.
- To disseminate among educators and parents the results of assessments

Research

- To survey forms of early screening and profiling taking place in schools.
- To explore possibilities of external assessment at Yr3 and F2.
- To explore use of course work, profiling and portfolios internationally.
- To evaluate the support needed by schools to develop their own assessment systems.
- To explore alternatives to Junior Lyceum & Common Entrance Exams.
- To explore impact of changes in assessment practices on entry into tertiary education and employment.
- To ensure on going evaluation of the systems in place.

G04 – Bilingualism*Policies*

- To encourage teachers to develop individual language policies.
- To develop focussed language policies.

Resources

- To give schools necessary resources to carry out needs analysis.
- To focus on materials development to meet specific needs.

Structures

- To set up a unit to advise on language policy building.
- To set up centre to organise diagnostic testing.

Processes

- To organise seminars to enable teachers to reflect critically on language practice.
- To devise ways to recognise and reward good practice.
- To ensure parents are aware of linguistic needs of children.
- To ensure exposure of children to both Maltese and English.
- To use different rooms for Maltese and English.
- To ensure continual professional development of teachers.
- To provide language enrichment programmes.
- To strengthen co-ordination between all stakeholders.
- To make more effective use of media facilities.

Research

- To investigate issues using teachers questionnaire.
- To carry out a needs analysis.
- To carry out a pilot study where specialist teachers teach L1 & L2.

G05 – Science in the Primary Curriculum

Policies

- To have a written policy for Science Education

Structures

- To have a science advisor for every school or cluster.

Processes

- To organise a variety of INSET opportunities.
- To organise in service for Senior Management.
- To provide Diploma Courses in Primary Science.
- To ensure Science is taught by class teachers and not by specialists.
- To encourage a science portfolio for each child.
- To review current primary syllabus.
- To encourage schools to invest in science schemes of their own choice.
- To take steps to provide a science education that is equally encouraging, supportive and challenging to both girls and boys, of all aptitudes and abilities.
- To draw up whole school approach to Environmental Education.
- To inform parents on the importance of primary science.
- To consider possibilities of running twilight sessions.
- To ensure student teachers understand how children learn science.
- To ensure a closer link with the Science Centre.

Research

- To evaluate and ensure that policies are meeting the requirements of the National Minimum Curriculum.

G06 – Technology education in the curriculum

Resources

- To set up suitable physical facilities at the University for the training of technology teachers.
- To plan for new structures in schools to house technology.
- To address physical resources needed for Technology Education.
- To plan for rectification of space requirements.
- To identify staff to teach technology education.
- To equip schools for teaching technology education.

Structures

- To set up a working group to construct a curriculum and syllabus for technology education.
- To establish structure for bulk purchasing of tools and equipment.
- To appoint education officers.

Processes

- To discuss with MATSEC to provide terminal examination.
- To have foreign critical friends evaluate the syllabus
- To identify trainers for training technology education teachers.
- To deploy trainers for their own training.
- To establish training course as a diploma course of the U of Malta.
- To identify six pilot schools for technology education.
- To start staff training in both primary and secondary sectors.

Research

- To monitor and evaluate using the trainers throughout implementation.

G07 — Co-ordinated science in the secondary school*Policies*

- To change name from “Co-ordinated Science” to “Science”.

Resources

- To ensure availability of resources needed to initiate and maintain implementation.

Structures

- To set up a curriculum development team. (CDT)
- To set up syllabus development panels.
- To identify professional consultants to support CDT.

Processes

- To develop an implementation strategy.
- To set up a Web page about CS curriculum.
- To offer a two track Science programme.
- To organise in-service teacher education courses.
- To initiate discussions on the reform proposed at post secondary level.
- To initiate the restructuring of the B.Ed (Hons) science programme.

Research

- To develop a comprehensive evaluation of the project.

G08 – Creativity and self expression*Policies*

- To change “Art” to “Art & Design”
- To integrate assessment and profiling in Art & Design.
- To ensure MATSEC exam reflects Art & Design.
- To ensure opportunity of participation in Drama is offered to all students.
- To continue regular participation in European Theatre Education.
- To empower teachers to continue their good practice.
- To establish Drama as a subject on the Curriculum leading to MATSEC.
- To promote theatre as an Art Form.
- To have Drama feature as part of students’ holistic education.
- To encourage exchange programmes with students from other countries.
- To reserve a place for Drama on the timetable.
- To have the members of the Unit function as Drama advisors.
- To introduce Drama as a teaching medium in the B.Ed course.
- To teach Music at primary level using specialist teachers.
- To examine Physical Education and Music at MATSEC level.

Resources

- To equip every school with a sound proof music room
- To provide schools encouraging creative and expressive arts additional funds.

Structures

- To appoint an expert working group to devise strategies for initiating and sustaining curricular change.
- To offer PE, Drama and Music as an option at Secondary level.
- To improve the peripatetic teacher system.
- To have Drama timetabled.
- To have a number of places turned into Centres of Excellence.

Processes

- To consider a dynamic focus on all senses.
- To have children participate in creative workshops.
- To promote Drama in class and Theatre in education.
- To encourage teachers to organise theatre productions in schools.
- To organise regular in-service training for teachers.
- To create a roving Theatre in Education troupe.
- To devise a syllabus for Music.
- To encourage opportunity for children to experience Music through hands on situations.
- To ensure that every student participates in a musical production once a

year.

- To ensure that cross curricular links are established with class teachers.
- To expose students to regular Music performances.
- To encourage a teaching approach that nurtures creativity.
- To increase the number of lessons for PE in the upper forms.
- To improve quality of Midweek project on Wednesday afternoons.

G09 — Personal and social development

Policies

- To have PSD in all five years of secondary schooling

Structures

- To appoint subject co-ordinators for PSD.
- To appoint PSD teachers on a peripatetic basis.
- To set up a PSD working group.
- To establish a PSD resource centre.
- To set up a committee to further develop the proposed Home Economics core.

Processes

- To finalise PSD syllabus for both primary and secondary.
- To continue training process for PSD teachers.
- To ensure PSD teachers get involved in profiling.
- To market and publicise PSD.

Research

- To ensure that research is ongoing and continuous.

G10 – Information and communications technology in education

Policies

Resources

- To increase funds for the implementation of Internet project.
- To increase computer/student ratio in secondary.

Structures

- To set up National Commission in ICT.
- To establish an ICT training unit.
- To set up a multimedia & coursework production unit.
- To set up a National Web-based education resource centre.

Processes

- To ensure that children & teachers have access to Internet.
- To offer Computer Studies as an option in Secondary.
- To establish a certificate system for ICT.
- To train and retrain teachers in ICT.

Research

- To audit and investigate if ICT resources are being used effectively and efficiently.

G11 – Thematic and interdisciplinary teaching*Policies*

- To change assessments to reflect NMC.
- To set up benchmarks within national parameters for different age-groups.

Resources

- To make available libraries/internet in schools for teachers.
- To ensure reference persons available for curricular support.

Structures

- To make planning time available for teachers.

Processes

- To organise workshops for teachers and Heads.
- To advertise good practice and success.
- To have each school attempt at least one topic for a few weeks.
- To link the existing syllabi.
- To give more importance to parent education.
- To organise development days for teachers.
- To make teacher exchanges abroad more possible.

G12 – Differentiated Teaching

Structures

- To set up a committee to generate awareness of differentiation.
- To set up 2 training agencies - one for primary and one for secondary.

Processes

- To set up a massive training programme.
- To maintain and support the Let Me Learn Project.

Research

- To gauge level of awareness re differentiated teaching/learning through a national survey.
- To evaluate what is happening in the Let Me Learn Project.

G13 – The Curriculum and MATSEC

Policies

- To decide whether bilingual papers should be offered to candidates.
- To identify skills to be assessed formatively.
- To decide on percentage component for formative assessment.

Resources

- To provide much better human & financial resources.

Structures

- To introduce a national concept of bench marking.

Processes

- To consult with MATSEC board regarding assessment procedures.
- To ensure a structured programme of teacher training in assessment procedures.

Research

- To review and evaluate existing structures for assessment.

G14 – Links between school and the world of work.

Structures

- To set up a unit within the Division of Education charged with the responsibility of supporting schools in their endeavours to introduce the world of work across the curriculum.
- To set up a National Association for Industry-Education Co-operation.

Processes

- To forge close links with the University of Malta to introduce developments in the programmes relating to teacher training as a result of the desired closer linkages with the world of work across the curriculum.

G15 – Schools as community centres*Resources*

- To increase investment for this initiative.

Structures

- To appoint a monitoring panel.
- To employ special co-ordinators.

Processes

- To make a call for project proposals from School Councils.
- To train Heads to accept Schools as community learning centres.
- To train co-ordinators and teachers.

Research

- To commission a professional external evaluation.

G16 – Gender in the National Minimum Curriculum*Policies*

- To prepare legislation to ensure gender equity.
- To ensure that the deployment of administrative and teaching staff is gender sensitive.
- To safeguard staff by a Code of Practice.
- To require Schools to have in-house gender equity policy.
- To have a written policy statement on equal gender opportunities.
- To set up guidelines for elimination of gender stereotyping.
- To establish framework to ensure that gender equity permeates all new NMC programmes.

Structures

- To establish post of gender equity officer.

- To establish an education committee in gender equity.
- To establish monitoring committees.

Processes

- To organise in-service training on gender.
- To develop a joint programme with differentiated learning.
- To organise an awareness programme for School Council members.

G17 – Parent participation

Policies

- To present parents with detailed progress reports.
- To formulate clear guidelines for parents consultations regarding IEP's.

Resources

- To grant adequate on site infrastructure.

Processes

- To prepare parents to work more closely within the greater autonomy of the school.
- To provide concrete strategies that will truly make it possible for working parents to approach the school and teachers.
- To introduce information technology to enhance home – school links.
- To develop confidence building strategies between teachers and parents.

Research

- To carry out research on parent participation.

G18 – Democracy in schools

Policies

- To involve all interested in the formulation of School policies and Codes of Conduct.
- To increase decentralisation particularly with regard to curriculum development.
- To abolish streaming.
- To have selection of Heads by school councils.

Resources

- To provide training, books and information on citizenship education.

Structures

- To set up a Students Council Co-ordinating Team.
- To set up Class Councils.
- To timetable PSD sessions for Y5 & Y6.
- To time table Year teachers weekly meetings.
- To organise regular staff meetings.
- To revise the School Council Regulations, 1993.
- To organise regional meetings.
- To establish a core group of teachers to offer peer support.
- To set up an autonomous monitoring board.

Processes

- To train teachers to deal with mixed ability teaching.
- To train teachers in the use of technology.
- To train teachers and administrators in the application of democratic approaches.
- To prepare students to contest elections.
- To provide parenting skills programmes.
- To provide a holistic and relevant curriculum.
- To provide ongoing courses in basic management.

Research

- To analyse the present situation in schools.
- To ensure ongoing evaluation of the democratic processes within schools.

APPENDIX 7

THE NCC: AN EARLY PROPOSAL

This paper was submitted to the Steering Committee early in 2000, during its work by Dr Joseph Fenech of the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta. He had been invited to make such a submission by the chair of the Steering Committee.

The National Curriculum Council

- a Proposal

Dr Joseph Fenech

It is recommended that, for the an effective implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum in the Maltese education system in September 2000, a proper structure with clearly identified functions and powers should be set up as soon as possible. This can be called a *National Curriculum Council (NCC)*.

A. A statement of principles governing its structure

- It should be a governmental but non-departmental structure, housed in the Division of Education having close links with it, but with responsibility to the Minister of Education.
- It should have a dual role: a *regulatory one*, with the necessary powers, commendably through amendments in the existing legislation, to enable it to perform its functions, as well as one of *consultation* with the most important partners both in education and in the economic system of Malta.
- Its oversight should be the National Minimum Curriculum and an assessment system compatible with it.
- It should have adequate budgetary allocations to enable it to function efficiently.

B. The functions of the NCC

- To build consensus around curriculum policies;
- To oversee the implementation of the NMC in Maltese schools;
- To keep under constant review the provisions of the NMC;
- To advise the Minister of Education on matters concerned with the NMC and educational assessment;
- To advise the Minister of Education on the research and development programmes required for the effective implementation of the NMC;
- To advise the Minister of Education on the pre-service and in-service requirements of teachers;
- To review and evaluate its own activities in order to improve its own efficiency and effectiveness;
- To liaise with the Division of Education and other educational partners in order to ensure the quality of educational provision in Malta;
- To prepare curriculum guidelines to facilitate the implementation of the NMC.

C. The powers of the NCC

- It should be assigned all those powers necessary to enable it to perform its functions.
- It should have powers to set up what it considers appropriate structures (e.g. Committees, research teams, etc.) in relation to its functions.
- Its powers should be limited by the provisions of the Education Act 1988.
- It should have the power to collect evidence from any agency (government or otherwise) to enable it to make informed decisions.

D. The structure of the NCC

- It should be made up of not less than twelve and not more than sixteen members;
- It should be composed of partly *nominated* and partly *ex-officio* members; *Nominated* members should include: (i) persons who the Minister considers as having the necessary expertise and experience to carry out their responsibilities;
- *Ex-officio* members should include: (i) The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education; (ii) the Director General of Education; (iii) Chairperson of ETC; (iv) Chairperson of the Matsec Board; (v) MUT President; (vi) President of the Association of Private Schools; and (vii) President of the Association of School Councils.

- It should have an office with appropriately recruited staff to enable it to perform its functions.

Schematically, its structure can be represented as follows:

Minister of Education

National Curriculum Council

Committee

Committee

Committee

There is no limit to the number of committees. They are established to perform a specific curriculum and assessment task and disband once the task has been accomplished.

THE NCC: A PROPOSAL FROM THE CHAIR

This paper was produced by Prof Kenneth Wain, who is Chair of the Steering Committee on the Implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum. Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta. It was distributed to the members, and led to the discussion, and later the adoption, of the idea of a National Curriculum Council as a central mechanism for ensuring the proper implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum, and even to ensure the development of the Curriculum and its eventual replacement by a renewed or different one.

1. The Minister's brief requires the Steering Committee to recommend 'permanent structures for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of schools, research and NMC review'
2. It is my view, given that what is at issue is a National Minimum Curriculum, that these functions would be best carried out by a National Curriculum Council (henceforth NCC), under the Ministry, with roughly the following functions:
 - to issue directives regarding the implementation of the NMC according to a well-defined strategic plan;
 - to ensure that schools are implementing these directives (by receiving and assessing SDPs which would be mandatory for all schools, and through the reports of its technical staff who would conduct monitoring visits in the schools);
 - to disseminate information and directives about the NMC;
 - to produce national bench marks and quality indicators at different levels of the primary and secondary schooling system;
 - to take charge of the SEC level exams;
 - to fund school or regional based research projects on the basis of a bidding system;
 - to identify and fund research projects on the NMC that ensure that it is kept under constant review;
 - to fund national training projects that correspond with its own curriculum implementation policies;
 - to organise and fund regional fora and seminars (a minimum of one annually per region);

- to organise and fund an annual standing national conference with published proceedings;
 - to present an annual report to the Minister and/or parliament.
3. For the purpose of carrying out these responsibilities the NCC would require a technical staff with the following functions:
- to monitor the implementation of the NMC in all Maltese schools;
 - to research the implementation process;
 - to do comparative research with other NMC experiences abroad, particularly in Europe;
 - to prepare and present technical reports, studies, and evaluations to the NCC for its consideration;
 - to publish and keep under review national bench marks and performance indicators;
 - to organise and monitor the SEC examinations;
 - to organise and conduct the conferences, seminars and other activities sponsored or organised by the NCC;
 - to advise the NCC on training projects and implement them.
4. The setting up of the NCC would mean that the Division of Education and its Curriculum Department would concentrate on the state schools exclusively, by:
- planning, supervising, and facilitating the devolution of the control over the curriculum to the state schools in accordance with Principle 15 of the NMC and the section (pp. 85-87) on Schools and the Interpretation of the Curriculum according, to a well-set plan;
 - giving state schools the technical assistance (in the form of training and human resource development, assessment, and syllabus design), resources and advice they require to implement the Curriculum;
 - organising conferences, seminars, meetings etc., to bring state schools together on common themes, problems and issues;
 - commissioning or organising research into facets or aspects of the state schooling system in general.
5. The above means that when we speak about 'the centre' for the purposes of the NMC we are referring to the NCC. Accordingly, what I propose is:
- a strong, rather than a weak centre, its powers backed with appropriate legislation;
 - broad representation of all stake holder as well as the Minister's direct appointees on it;
 - separate funding and housing under the Ministry of Education.

6. How prescriptive will the implementation strategy be? This was a question raised with some urgency at the last meeting. My belief is:
- that it should be prescriptive to the extent of defining general objectives all schools will be expected to meet annually;
 - that for the present purposes and in the absence of the NCC this Committee should set these objectives for the first 3-5 years;
 - that to do this it should revert to the reports submitted to it by the specialised teams presented and debated in the National Conference;
 - that the first set of objectives be operable for scholastic year 2001- 2002 and that these be included in every SDP for the period;
 - that the first SDPs be submitted in March 2001 for approval in May, this will give breathing space for the NCC to be set up and start operating;
 - that for immediate purposes, for the year 2000-2001, schools should be encouraged to implement those aspects of the NMC that already fall within their SDP for this year.
7. The Minister's brief to the Steering Committee specifically enjoins it 'to recommend decentralisation strategies including school management structures', and 'to identify preparatory strategies, including training strategies, that could be immediately implemented'.
- With regards to the first, it was agreed at an early meeting, on my proposal that defining a decentralisation strategy for the state schools should be left to the Division of Education since the issue concerns state schools. But that the Division should provide a strategic decentralisation plan for inclusion in the committee's strategic plan to the Minister as required in the brief;
 - Such a plan should define the model of decentralisation the Division thinks appropriate, which means defining school autonomy, and the plans for enabling it over the life of this curriculum;
 - With regards to the second the Hon Minister set up a separate Training Strategy Formulation Team with the Director General as chairperson. This Team was (1) to decide on training strategies to be 'immediately implemented', and (2) to formulate strategies that are long term according to its detailed brief of 25/01/00;
 - The brief says on page 2 that 'The Training Strategy Formulation Team should finalise its work and submit a report to the NMC National Steering Committee by the end of February 2000'. This date was obviously unrealistic. (2) will obviously have to wait until the Steering Committee has identified the NMC targets for the schools from October 2001. My view is that it should concentrate its plans on the coming scholastic year (2000-2001) and the following (2001-2002) and present them to this committee as soon after as is realistically possible, on the other hand it should be able to present a report on (1) immediately.

8. The full strategic plan must be ready for publication in early October. Dr. Tony Macelli's [and Mr Frans Borg's] model seems to be a good basis to work on and I think it should be studied to see how all the items of the Steering Committee's brief could be included in it. This requires, in accordance with its brief:
- a report on the Steering Committee's activities over these months to disseminate information about the NMC (this can now be prepared by the secretary);
 - a report on the specialised groups; how they were set up, for which areas of the NMC, their composition and their final reports (all this is available and can now be put together by the secretary);
 - a report on training strategies in accord with 7 bullet 3 above (to be made available by the Training Strategy Formulation Team after 8 bullet);
 - a report on decentralisation strategies including school management structures (to be made available by the Division of Education by first week in September since there is nothing that should delay it);
 - drawing up the implementation strategy in terms of 6 above, which should be the immediate and urgent aim of this committee.

Kenneth Wain

August 2000

APPENDIX 9

LIST OF REQUIRED FOCUS GROUPS, WITH ACRONYMS

The following list of Focus Groups is in alphabetical order of their acronyms. The Focus Groups are to be created by the National Curriculum Council and accountable to it. Their required functions are described in the section on National Minimum Curriculum Focus Groups in Part C of this report, entitled National Curriculum Council.

- CEFG - Community Education Focus Group
- CSFG - Co-ordinated Science Focus Group
- DEMFG - Democracy Focus Group
- EAFG - Educational Assessment Focus Group
- ECEFG - Early Childhood Education Focus Group
- ICTFG - Information and Communications Technology Focus Groups
- IEFG - Inclusive Education Focus Group
- LDFG - Language Development Focus Group
- PEFG - Primary Education Focus Group
- PIFG - Parental Involvement Focus Group
- PSDFG - Personal and Social Development Focus Group
- PSTFG - Primary Science and Technology Focus group
- SEFG - Secondary Education Focus group
- SWWFG - School and The World of Work Focus Group
- TEDFG - Technology Education Focus Group

DECENTRALISATION PLANS OF THE DIVISION OF EDUCATION

This report was submitted by the Director General of Education to the Steering Committee on the Implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum during December 2000

A. Introduction

The 1988 Education Act laid the first foundations for decentralisation by establishing School Councils and the possibility of schools becoming legal entities. The Division of Education in line with the government's policy of decentralisation underscored by the concept of subsidiarity has been, since the early nineties, implementing a strategy of administrative/managerial decentralisation. Heads of school have been given the responsibility to manage segments of school finances. School development plans also feature as another area of decentralisation, whereby schools, as bodies' corporate, identify their priority areas and draw up plans to achieve these objectives. The successful fruition of these initiatives can be traced to the commitment and ownership of all those concerned and underpinned by an extensive training agenda.

It is proposed that the decentralisation process will lead to the next development, whereby each school can develop its curriculum, within the framework of the NMC. Heads of school together with their staff and in partnership with the parents will be empowered to develop areas of the curriculum as an instrument to attain the school's objectives.

B. Key Success Factors

In implementing further decentralisation the central organisation together with its decentralised units must promote an analysis of both their internal and external environment. Such a task will assist the identification of those crucial factors that will make or break the thrust of decentralisation. Management is a key player in decentralisation of decision-making. The managers at the central

agency must believe in this process, they must see it as an opportunity to facilitate decision-making power in schools. This would increase the level of efficiencies in the provision of the education service. Other key issues that must be analysed and addressed during the formulation and implementation of a policy of further decentralisation include:

- National policies and direction (e.g. EU membership, globalisation)
- The organisation's recent history and its track record in promoting participation.
- An assessment of risks and costs (e.g. political, financial).
- The abilities of school managers to make high quality decisions.
- The ability to manage diversity of personnel and organisations.
- The ability to manage change and its effects on the input/output relationship.
- The schools' climate

C. The School Level

Decentralisation means also greater responsibility for the Head of School as the leader of the school community. In this context, the managerial competencies and leadership skills of the Head of School come into play. No amount of goodwill from the central agency will redress weakness in management at school level. As the process of decentralisation gathers momentum, the Head of School, together with the management team, will be called on to make higher order and higher quality decisions. The Head must also create a social milieu that facilitates the management of change and attenuates the anxieties that may develop among the various members of the school community. The Head is the linchpin for successful school-based management. She/he must be able to forge the school's stakeholders into a community driven by a core ideal. The whole decentralisation process must be underscored by the values of; authenticity; collegiality, leadership, interest, belonging; trust, empowerment; participation, risk taking, pride, sharing and respect.

D. Management Styles

A consultative style of management should be cultivated to ensure the nurturing of decentralization. Decision-making processes have to ensure whole staff involvement based on effective top-down and bottom-up lines of communication. Within the school community a culture of self-assessment has to be cultivated and developed to ensure continuous improvement. The Head of School will be required to share responsibilities through real delegation. This will involve the passing on to the management team and other ranks key

tasks that many heads are reluctant to let go. A management approach with these characteristics would ensure ownership of decision-making and enhance levels of staff motivation.

E. Implementation

It is important to nurture both the values and the management approach underpinning decentralisation. The way ahead requires:

- Setting clear goals
- Moving in small steps and one step at a time
- Extending the number of participants gradually
- Striving for ownership
- Introducing different activities
- Celebrating success

In developing and adopting strategies for implementing further decentralisation one must have a clear understanding of a number of factors. These factors have a bearing on the path the decentralisation process can precede and the extent to which it can develop. Therefore a factual evaluation is required of:

- The interdependence of the different units in an organisation
- The effect of environmental influences
- The actual situational nature of management
- The need to respond to unique situations

F. School Councils

Composition:

Either:

A legally constituted Council (based on a new Legal Notice) made up of a Chairman (*replaces President*) appointed as per Legal Notice No.135; 1993, an Executive Secretary/Treasurer (the Head of School), parents/students' representatives, teachers' representatives and representatives of local community.

Or:

A legally constituted Council (based on a new Legal Notice) made up of a President/Treasurer (the Head of School with executive powers) Secretary, parents/students' representatives, teachers' representatives and representatives of local community.

Term Of Office:

The Term of Office of a School Council shall be two calendar years

Responsibility (Area of Authority)

It is envisaged that School Councils will have increased authority in SDPs, school finance, and recruitment, as well as new roles related to school premises, to refurbishment and other works, and to links with the local community.

School Development Plan (SDP)

The School Council will involve itself in the creation and nurturing of the school's vision. This will entail that the council participates in the identification of the aims and objectives of the school and ways how to achieve them.

The School Council will contribute to the discussions relating to a school's educational issues. This will be done in the context of the school development plan including its formulation and implementation keeping in perspective the educational and financial implications. Discussions would cover the development of a school curriculum including the choice of textbooks and extra-curricular activities.

The Head of School, as educational leader within the school would proffer his professional advice during these discussions and will have a bearing on any decisions taken as well as on their implementation.

Finance

The current regime of school financial management should be changed to one whereby a lump sum is located to each school to finance its expenditure. These funds would cover capital expenditure, maintenance and materials and supplies. The Council will draw up an annual school budget that becomes mandatory and executable. The Head will be personally responsible for its implementation.

Staff Recruitment/ Development

The Council will be involved in the recruitment and deployment of non-teaching staff (school secretaries, part-time clerks and cleaners).

Additional functions

- Strengthen contacts with the local community
- Manage the school after school hours
- Assume responsibility for minor/major works.

Strengthening the Association of School Councils

The National Association of School Councils (Assocjazzjoni Kunsilli ta' l-Iskejjel – Malta) was established in 1995. It was recognised as the official representative of School Councils by the then Minister of Education, Hon. M. Falzon.

Subsequent Ministers of Education endorsed this recognition. In fact since its inception the Association of School Councils has been consulted on almost all national educational issues. The Association is requesting:

- To be given a legal recognition.
- To have concrete official backing so that its organisation and campaigning can be made more effective.
- To serve as a forum for school and parents councils by organising a minimum of two national conferences annually.
- To deliberate on national educational policy and act as a pressure group to achieve necessary positive changes.
- To disseminate information and celebrate good practice.
- To support all School/Parents' Councils as required.
- To collaborate with all stakeholders in the field of education on the basis of its aims and principles.

The Way Forward

To attain this vision the Association requires adequate material, financial and human support.

G. The Role of the Division of Education

The Division is to assume the responsibility for:

- Conformity of each and every school to the NMC
- Propagating national educational policies
- Safeguarding educational standards
- Guaranteeing quality assurance
- Creating a national forum for schools' educational development and growth.

H. The Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education will continue to play the role of policy maker.

TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT PLANS OF THE DIVISION OF EDUCATION

This report, entitled "Training and Staff Development", was submitted by the Director General of Education to the Steering Committee on the Implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum during December 2000. Please note that this report was written before the Strategic Plan Targets and the corresponding Strategic Plan Training Programme (Sections B6, B7) were finalised.

A. Preamble:

Concurrently with the setting up of the Steering Committee for the implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum, the Minister of Education set up a separate Training Strategy Formulation Team to design a training strategy within the boundaries of the Division's training budget for 1999-2000 vote 18 (Recurrent), line 32 'Training' (Lm 300,000).

In charting its way forward, the Strategy Formulation Team took into consideration the following aspects of the prevailing situation:

1. Part of the Division's training vote was committed to skills development in the general service grades, the post-secondary sector and established in-service courses for teachers. The balance allotted to training and staff development directly related to the implementation of the new National Minimum Curriculum amounted to Lm102, 000.
2. The formulation of the training strategy was dependent on targets that had to be defined through the formulation and adoption of the strategic plan for the implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum – which exercise is currently being finalised.
3. Class based teaching staff's training and development was regulated through parameters governed by the MUT-Government agreement of 1994. Any major breakthrough in training was constricted through the lack of availability of time slots for such training to take place. No such constraints were applicable in the case of officers responsible for school management and responsible for central administration.
4. Officers responsible for central administration required skills transfer to learn

how to shed control of the system and move towards adopting a monitoring role in a decentralised system.

5. School managers and their assistants required skills transfer to empower themselves to work within a decentralised system.
6. The training schedule should build on the existent modalities and gradually shift to new modalities.

B. Brief review of training strategies in use to date

As part of its strategy to maintain the members of the organisation abreast with developments in the field of education, the Division of Education with the support of the Malta Union Of Teachers and in partnership with the Faculty of Education, University of Malta has always made one of its objectives the professional development of all those employed within the organisation. This objective has been further strengthened with the introduction of statutory in-service training for teachers as per Government-MUT agreement of 1994.

Staff development includes Council of Europe study seminars and specialised courses run by the Faculty of Education. The latter has organised courses to meet the changing demands in the field of education on the members of the organisation. The most recent challenges include inclusive education and IT. The Division of Education has proposed to the Faculty the organisation of courses to meet these demands.

The new NMC has placed on the Division new challenges that require an organisational development needs analysis to be subsequently translated into a more holistic and strategic staff development plan. The implementation of the training/developmental initiatives will evolve from a centrally directed function to a more decentralised form. Schools would be identifying their needs and organising their training courses. The centre will play a co-ordinating and facilitating role. The transformation will be made over a number of years. A shock wave treatment would create ripples that are counter-productive to the implementation of the NMC. The staff development plan identifies two levels that require training; training for centre-based officials and for school-based teaching staff.

Centre-based Personnel: Training Needs Analysis

Each Department within the Division was requested to draw up a training needs analysis.

- The Department of Curriculum has identified staff development needs in areas relating to assessment, teaching and learning strategies, professional development, teaching resources, supporting role of Education Officers and school autonomy.
- The Operations Department has identified training needs in three main areas

namely; school-based curriculum development, managing an inclusion policy, and managing the thematic approach to teaching.

- The Department of Planning and Development has identified the need to strengthen and improve its ability to facilitate school-based staff development, and, the need to develop training needs analysis and its researching and monitoring capabilities. The Department has also highlighted the need to have its own training centre to cater for the service-wide in-service training.
- The Department of Student Services and International Relations has emphasised the need of updating the pedagogical skills and competencies of teachers and facilitators who teach children with special needs. Another priority training area for its teaching staff is the development of Individual Education Programmes (IEPs).

Centre-based Personnel: Implementation of Training

- September 2000 - Training in curriculum skills for Assistant Directors of Education and Education Officers within the Curriculum Department. This training was delivered by the London Institute of Education.
- October 2000 - Training in benchmarking for Assistant Directors of Education and Education Officers within the Curriculum Department.
- Training of all Assistant Directors of Education and Education Officers in profiling and portfolios. This training would be provided by local and foreign expertise co-ordinated by Dr. G. Grima and Dr. D. Chetcuti.
- Training of Assistant Directors of Education and Education Officers of the Curriculum Department in quality measures in summative assessment, including special examination arrangements. Edexcel would provide this training.
- Training of a number of Education Officers of the Curriculum Department in technology and in Co-ordinated Science.
- Training of Assistant Directors of Education and Education Officers who co-ordinate INSET courses. This will focus within a framework of training the trainers.

School-based Personnel: Heads of School

The Division recognises the key role that heads of school play in the success of a school. It has always sought the professional development of Heads of School in the fields of both educational leadership and managerial competencies by organising on-going informal training. The 1994 agreement between the MUT and Government was a watershed in recognising the importance of a formal qualification in educational management and administration as a pre-requisite for promotion to head of school. The Faculty of Education was already offering this diploma course for a number of years prior to this agreement. This initiative has ensured that heads of school have mastered the skills and competencies

required to lead the school team to cope with increased responsibilities resulting from the decentralisation process.

The new NMC will move a further step in the decentralisation process as schools will be given a more central role in curriculum development and implementation. The direction indicated by the NMC has promoted the Division of Education to re-skill Heads of School and also Assistant Heads with those competencies required to ensure successful implementation of the NMC.

Centre-based Personnel: Training Of Heads Of School / Assistant Heads

- A five-day seminar tackling school leadership was organised for Heads and Assistant Heads during the week starting 25th September 2000.
- As part of the Literacy Programme, a one-day preliminary meeting was held for Heads of the thirteen primary schools taking part. It is envisaged that as the programme develops, on-site training and cluster networking among schools will nurture its consolidation.
- A school leadership-training programme spreading up to November 2001 for Primary and Secondary Heads of School. This course that is being co-ordinated by Dr J. Mifsud was launched during a one-day seminar on 25th October for a group of Heads of School with a repetition on the 26th October for the remaining Heads of School.
- The topic "Special Examination Arrangements" was covered during a one-day training seminar for Assistant Heads of Primary Schools. This was held on the 27th of October 2000. A repeat of this seminar will be held for Assistant Heads posted in secondary schools.
- A three-day seminar was organised for Heads of Primary and Secondary school between the 13th and 24th November 2000. The seminar covered school-based curriculum development.

Inclusive Education:

The Division of Education, through its Staff Development Branch and in partnership with the Faculty of Education has organised two courses to train facilitators; a certificate course and a diploma course. Currently the Faculty of Education is running another certificate course for facilitators. Through this training the Division of Education can meet the requests for mainstream education for children with special needs.

In the context of the new NMC the Special Educational Needs branch has felt the need to step up its training programme to create greater awareness of the issues of inclusion of students at the secondary level of education among centre-based officials as well as among school management teams. Training is also envisaged for supply kindergarten assistants. The training programme includes the following work:

- The Inclusive Education Policy will be the topic of a two-day seminar for centre-based officials.
- A two-day seminar dealing with inclusion of students with special needs in the secondary school for heads of Secondary schools.
- A two-day seminar dealing with inclusion of students with special needs in the secondary school for assistant heads of secondary schools and subject co-ordinators.
- A two-day seminar for facilitators of students who will move to the secondary schools and of students who are in their first of secondary education. The seminar will also be open to the parents of these children.
- An induction course for all supply kindergarten assistants. The twenty-hour course spread over ten sessions will cover the preparation of Individual Educational Programmes (IEPs), MAPS sessions, disability issues and transition programmes.
- The University of Malta will undertake a training course for thirty secondary school facilitators.

Information Technology

As part of its plan to develop IT in education, the IT branch within the Department of Curriculum has been collaborating with the Faculty of Education to equip teachers with the relative IT in education skills. This objective has given rise to a number of training courses at certificate and diploma level.

The first two courses that were initiated in October 1997 were:

- A certificate course in Information Technology in Education aimed at primary early childhood education teachers.
- A certificate course in Information Technology in Education intended for teachers of mathematics in secondary schools.

During the academic year 1998/99, two other courses were held:

- A certificate course in Information Technology in Education aimed at primary early childhood education teachers.
- A certificate course in Information Technology in Education specialising in the application of IT at secondary level.

In October 1999, the Faculty of Education offered one course:

- A certificate course in Information Technology in Education aimed at teachers who teach at the primary junior education level (Yrs 4 - 6).

During the current academic year 2000/01, the following courses were initiated:

- A certificate course in Information Technology in Education aimed at teachers teaching the primary junior education level (Yrs 4 - 6).
- A diploma course in IT for teachers teaching at the Primary Junior Education

level. This course equips participants with intermediate IT skills, building on the competencies acquired in the certificate course.

- A certificate/diploma course in Computer Studies Education. This course is intended for teachers who wish to teach computers studies as an option subject to students in Form III to V.

In October 2001, the Faculty will be offering the following courses:

- Certificate/Diploma in IT in Education (Secondary Science Education) intended for teachers teaching science in secondary schools.
- Certificate/Diploma in IT in Education (Secondary Language Education) intended for teachers teaching languages in secondary schools.
- Certificate/Diploma in Educational Multimedia Development and Evaluation. This course aims to equip participants with the competencies required for the development of educational multimedia courseware.
- Certificate/Diploma in Paper-based and Web-based Educational Resources. The course's focus will be the development of competencies required to create paper-based and web-based educational resources.

Other Training Initiatives:

- As part of the Learning to Learn initiative the Division has been implementing the "Let Me Learn" programme since 1998 in three schools. These schools require further on-going development and support. The stage has now been set to expand further this initiative to five more schools. This would require an intensive training programme prior to implementation.
- In September 2000, a "Literacy Improvement Programme" was initiated in twelve schools. A school-based model is being followed in implementing this programme.
- As part of the "Thinking Skills" programme, all PSE teachers in secondary schools have followed initial training in Edward Debono's Thinking Skills programme.
- Summative and Formative Assessment will be the focus of training seminars organised for teachers. Education Officers trained in this area will deliver these seminars.
- Training of Kindergarten Assistants in the constructive play method.
- In May 2000, the Department of Curriculum organised a course for teachers who opted to teach European Studies, a new subject being offered as an option to students in secondary schools as from October 2000. As a follow-up to this training, a Council of Europe Seminar was held on 7th -14th July. The Council of Europe is also providing expertise in drawing up the syllabus for the subject.
- The Curriculum Department organised a one-week training course at the beginning of July. The course covered the examination arrangements for

children with specific difficulties. Personnel at the EAU and teachers of the deaf attended this training.

- Over a phased period of three years primary science peripatetic teachers will visit schools in Britain to familiarise themselves with current developments in the teaching and learning of science and technology.

C. Training Proposed to be given by NCC Focus Groups

The Strategic Plan envisages the creation of various Focus Groups, each on a major NMC theme or concern whose main functions will be those of training and of acting as a resource to assist schools when asked for advice by the schools. The following are expected to be some of the training-related work of these future groups, which will be acting within the framework of the National Curriculum Council.

Early Childhood education Focus Group (ECEFG)

It is intended that the ECEFG hold information meetings with kindergarten assistants to explore the requirements and implications of the new learning programme for kindergarten children. It is also planned that the Focus Group also organises parents' evenings in schools.

Primary Education Focus Group (PEFG)

The Strategic Plan envisages that this committee run a programme of workshops and training sessions for Year 1–6 teachers. The training will cover various aspects of the new primary curriculum including attainment targets, policies of assessment, profiling and strategies for differentiated learning. Subsequently, on the basis of evaluation of this first phase of training, the Strategic Plan envisages the planning and implementation of training for teachers of Years 4–6 in the area of assessment policies with particular emphasis on the Junior Lyceum and Common Entrance Examinations.

Personal & Social Development Focus Group (PSDFG)

The Strategic Plan envisages that PSDFG creates a three-year training plan. In the first year of implementation, the Strategic Plan requires the introduction of a new format for training PSD teachers in post, as described in the report of Working Group G09 at the June 2000 NMC Implementation Conference. The main emphasis will be the new PSD curriculum, attainment targets and team teaching. During the second year, this training will be extended to PSD teachers of Form III in Junior Lyceums and teachers of Form IV in Area Secondary Schools. In the third year the training will embrace PSD teachers of Form IV in Junior Lyceums and Form V Area Secondary Schools.

Information & Communications Technology Focus Group (ICTFG)

The Strategic Plan envisages that ICTFG runs a continuous training programme for all primary and secondary school teachers. The main emphasis of this training will be the use of ICT as a cross-curricular learning/teaching tool at primary level and as a resource in specific subject areas at secondary level. A second training programme is envisaged for teachers of computing. It is planned also that ICTFG organises training programmes and familiarisation sessions for staff in managerial positions. This will include an advanced training course for Subject Co-ordinators, both those posted in secondary schools as well as those who will eventually be posted to primary schools. The course will cover the use of ICT in education. Familiarisation sessions on the applicability of ICT in education will be held for all Heads and Assistant Heads both in primary as well as in secondary schools.

Language Development Focus Group (LDFG)

In the context of Language Development (Bilingualism and the Use of Language) the Strategic Plan envisages that LDFG conducts a programme of seminars and workshops dealing with language teaching strategies within the framework of policies and attainment targets as set by the kindergarten and primary curricula. This series of seminars are meant to cover all kindergarten assistants and primary school teachers.

Primary Science and Technology Focus Group (PSTFG)

In collaboration with the PEFG, ICTFG according to the Strategic Plan is to organise workshops for primary school teachers. These workshops will introduce teachers to the new science and technology curriculum. As a second phase, the PSTFG is to organise on-going meetings for science and technology co-ordinators posted in secondary schools. These meetings will focus on the issue of support for the teaching of science and technology.

Co-ordinated Science Focus Group (CSFG)

The CSFG as a point of departure, is to organise a training programme for Form I teachers on the teaching of Co-ordinated Science. In the following year it would embark on the second phase, which includes the drawing up of a detailed curriculum for Form III and a training programme for teachers of Forms II and III in secondary schools. Subsequently, the Focus Group will draw up the detailed curriculum for Form IV and implements a training programme for teachers of Form III and IV in secondary schools.

Technology Education Focus Group (TEDFG)

As a first step the TEDFG, is to embark on a programme of training the trainers. These trainers will subsequently train teachers of technology. The second phase of the plan envisages the holding of certificate/diploma courses to train teachers

in the pilot schools. This phase will be followed by preparations for the introduction of technology education in the other secondary schools. This would include the training of teachers of technology.

Inclusive Education Focus Group (IEFG)

The IEFG is to organise a series of seminars and meetings for Heads and Assistant Heads, curriculum co-ordinators and school councils of primary schools. These meetings are meant to cover various aspects of inclusion in the curriculum and its effects on school policy. The IEFG will seek through these seminars to facilitate the implementation of inclusion programmes in primary schools. At a second stage, the Focus Group plans a programme of meetings for teachers and parents to discuss the inclusion policies of their schools. The third phase would concentrate on training and re-training of facilitators and kindergarten assistants.

School & the World of Work Focus Group (SWWFG)

As a first phase, the Focus Group is to conduct a series of workshops for teaching staff in secondary schools with the intent of creating awareness about making schools relevant to the world of work and to draw up a strategic plan for its implementation within the curriculum. At a second stage, the SWWFG is to involve guidance teachers and teachers of Form V to discuss strategies for bridging the transition between school and work. This issue will be discussed during a series of workshops and seminars.

Democracy Focus Group (DEMFG)

This Focus Group, according to the Strategic Plan, will identify a number of schools to pilot the student school councils project. The piloting phase would include training of all students and teachers in these pilot schools in the procedures of democratic institutions and skills required to organise electoral campaigns. This will be followed by a publication of a handbook on the promotion of democratic environments and teaching-learning styles both in schools and in the home. This handbook will be introduced during meetings for all students and teachers in each school.

Community Education Focus Group (CEFG)

Together with the University of Malta, the CEFG will organise a two-year diploma course to train community-learning centre co-ordinators.

The Long-term Way Forward

By the beginning of the next scholastic year 2001/02, two developments are expected to take place:

- The various Focus Groups will have worked out policy documents in their respective area of specialisation. The policy documents will specify detailed

targets – on which targets specifically designed training can be formulated.

- Negotiations with MUT will have matured and time slots for the training of teaching staff during the course of the scholastic year will have been created.

On the basis of the above developments, it is proposed that a standing committee will elaborate the training strategy in an evolving and continuous manner.

APPENDIX 12

PLAN TARGETS FOR SCHOOLS & OTHERS, LISTED BY THEME

A. Explanation of the Chart of Plan Targets

The following chart indicates the targets to be achieved; they are listed by Theme or Area. There are 15 Areas or Themes from T01 to T15, as well as an additional item Marked T00.

The Targets are shown in the column headed "Targets", next to a reference number in the "Nr" column. The "Sch" or Schools column indicates targets that require the Schools initiative or involvement. The "Ph" or Phase column indicates which Targets should logically be reached before others. Below is some additional explanation of these items.

The "Nr" or TARGET NUMBER Column. The numbers in this column are of the form [Tnn.mm] where Tnn is the Theme label, and mm indicates the target number. The Themes are labelled from T00, T01, T02...up to T15, while the Targets related to each theme are numbered 01, 02, 03, ... etc.

The "Sch" or SCHOOLS Column. An "S" in this column indicates that the Target shown on that row is one where the responsibility of achievement rests mainly with the school itself. This usually means that each school may determine its own pace according to its own needs; strengths, preparedness and priorities - but each school must complete all the targets before June 2005. In the same column the symbol 'S*' indicates that the school is to collaborate with a central body, normally the National Curriculum Council (NCC) or one of the Focus Groups that work within the framework of the NCC. This may imply that the school should if possible conform to the time-table, if any, proposed by the central body – in this way the school would be able to make best use of centrally-organised training and other resources, where applicable. Notwithstanding this, the school may choose its own pace in such cases as well, provided it plans to reach all Targets by June 2005.

While the initiative for certain targets belongs to a central body, schools must act in a strong collaboration with the central body for that target.

The "Ph" or PHASE column. This column indicates the Phase of each Target, either Phase 1, or Phase 2, or Phase 3. Within any Theme, the Phase number shows the appropriate sequence of the Targets. For example the formulation

of a policy might be marked as Phase 1 and the execution of that policy would then be marked as Phase 2, to show a logical sequence (first 1, then 2, then 3) that should normally be respected by all bodies. In some cases two or three Phases are indicated for the same Target – this indicates that it may be appropriate to carry out ongoing and cumulative work on that Target over a long period such as two or three years. As a rule of thumb, one may want to visualise the first phase as being January-June 2001 and Phases 2, 3 as being the next two scholastic years - but this is not binding. Schools are requested to make their own plans and set their own pace, but that all school-related Targets are required to be complete by June 2000.

The TARGET Column. The Targets are self-explanatory. The acronyms used in the statement of the Targets, e.g. ECEFG for Early Childhood Education Focus Group, are defined in a list that follows the chart. In most cases they end in the letters **FG** and refer to the Focus Groups. These are groups of experts working within the framework of the National Curriculum Council. Their function is to act as a resource for the Schools that ask for their services. They also function, by agreement with the National Curriculum Council and in accordance with the present Strategic Plan, as central groups of experts for such central tasks as setting up a national research project, publishing a handbook, and so on.

The NCC or NATIONAL CURRICULUM COUNCIL Column. In this Column “**N**” indicates that the implementation of the Target shown is the main responsibility of the NCC itself. Also in this column “**M**” indicates that the Ministry of Education and the Division of Education have a major responsibility in relation to the Target shown.

B. Themes or Subject Areas for grouping the Targets

The Subject Areas, or Themes, around which the Targets have been grouped, are as follows:

- T00 – The National Curriculum Council (NCC)
- T01 – Early Childhood Education
- T02 – Primary Education
- T03 – Secondary Education
- T04 – Educational Assessment
- T05 – Personal and Social Development
- T06 – Information and Communication Technology in Schools
- T07 – Language Development (Bilingualism and the Use of Language)
- T08 – Primary Science and Technology
- T09 – Co-ordinated Science in Secondary Education
- T10 – Technology Education in Secondary Schools
- T11 – Inclusive Education

- T12 – Parental Involvement
- T13 – School and World of Work
- T14 – Democracy in Schools
- T15 – Schools as Community Centres

What follows below is a chart of all the Targets grouped by Theme.

T00 – The National Curriculum Council (NCC)

Targ.Nr.	Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
T00.01	The NCC sets up main Focus Groups: Early Childhood Education Focus Group (ECEFG), Primary Education Focus Group (PERG) and Secondary Education Focus Group (SEFG) with overall responsibility for educational programmes for the sector. The NCC also sets up specialised Focus Groups: EAFG, PSDFG, ICTFG, LDFG, PSTFG, CSFG, TEDFG, IEFG, PIFG, SWWFG, DEMFG and CEFG to address specific areas of the curriculum. (Refer to Glossary for Focus Group definition.)	N		1
T00.02	The NCC, through the different Focus Groups, acts as a catalyst and provides support for the different initiatives for the implementation of the NMC.	N	S*	1,2,3
T00.03	At each of the three phases of the implementation process, all Focus Groups evaluate their programme and present their Annual Report to the National Curriculum Council, including a phased plan of action.	N		1,2,3
T00.04	The NCC creates instrument for monitoring schools and sends it to the schools for information and feedback.	N	S*	2
T00.05	The NCC begins its programme for monitoring and assessing schools	N	S*	3

T01 – Early Childhood Education

T01.01	ECEFG holds information meetings with KG assistants to explore the requirements and implications of a new ECE programme.	N	S*	1
T01.02	ECEFG initiates survey of current resources in KG classes with the NMC's policy on inclusion in mind.	N		1
T01.03	KG co-ordinators are appointed for the larger KG centres.	M		1
T01.04	ECEFG and schools design a new learning programme for Early Childhood Education	N	S	1
T01.05	ECEFG holds information and training meetings with KG assistants on the implementation of the new ECE programme.	N	S*	2
T01.06	ECEFG and schools organise school-based information meetings with parents on the new ECE programme, introducing also the school's parental support plan.	N	S	2
T01.07	ECEFG liaises with EAFG on the beginning of policy of transferring records of pupils to Primary Year 1 and schedules meetings between the Kindergarten Assistants in charge of KG2 and the receiving Primary Yr. 1 teachers.	N	S	2
T01.08	Schools include their programme of ongoing information and		S	3

Targ.Nr.	Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
	education meetings for parents in their annual SDP			
T02 – Primary Education				
T02.01	PEFG and schools define a philosophy of differentiated learning for primary schools in accordance with the NMC and incorporating policies for creative thinking and self-expression. The Steering Committee recommends that the principles that define differentiated teaching incorporated in the report of NMC Conference Working Group G12 should be the basis of this philosophy.	N	S	1
T02.02	Let Me Learn Centre is strengthened to manage the implementation of differentiated learning in primary schools in co-ordination with the PEFG. This includes: (a) the preparation of a strategic plan to train teachers in-service, (b) disseminating materials and information about differentiated teaching, (c) advising on methods of assessing learning outcomes based on differentiated teaching, and (d) providing long term support for school-based initiatives in differentiated teaching.	N M	S*	1
T02.03	PEFG initiates and completes research project to study the current state of thematic and differentiated teaching in the primary schools identifying successful practices and problems with implementing these policies.	N	S*	1,2
T02.04	PEFG formulates a strategic plan to support those schools that have not started considering the thematic approach to make a start.	N	S*	2
T02.05	Introduction of once weekly one-hour time-tabled sessions for teachers teaching the same Year group. This will give them time to plan, coordinate, and evaluate the themes together in an ongoing manner.	M	S*	2
T02.06	Appointment of co-ordinators for each Year group, which has three or more classes (eg. YR 3 in a particular school has four classes) from within the group for horizontal integration of the curriculum.	M		2
T02.07	PEFG begins a programme of workshops and training sessions for Yr 1-6 teachers on the different aspects of the new primary curriculum.	N	S*	2
T02.08	Schools include their school-based policies on thematic and differentiated teaching, assessment and record keeping, language and IT, gender and inclusion, in their SDPs		S	2
T02.09	PEFG collaborates with the EAFG to identify changes required in Junior Lyceum and Common Entrance Examinations to render them conformable with the new curriculum policies on teaching and assessment methods.	N M		2
<i>NB. Targets for language, science, and technology teaching in Primary Schools are included in Sections below on Bilingualism and Language Teaching, and Science and Technology.</i>				

T03 – Secondary Education

T03.01	SEFG looks at the objectives of Secondary Education as outlined in the NMC and co-ordinates the different initiatives of the various Focus Groups to design a relevant and effective learning programme for this sector.	N	S*	1,2,3
T03.02	SEFG liaises with PEFG and collaborates on initiatives of other Focus Groups such as EAFG to build a smooth transition between primary and secondary.	N	S*	1,2,3
T03.03	Curriculum Co-ordinators are appointed in the secondary sector,	M		3

Targ.Nr.	Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
	specific to the particular school, and in proportion to the school population.			
T04 – Educational Assessment				
T04.01	EAFG carries out a survey of early screening and profiling taking place in schools.	N	S*	1
T04.02	EAFG explores with core groups of education officers, subject co-ordinators and teachers the kind of external assessment which should take place at the end of the third year of Primary and the second year of Secondary education and creates structures to research and make plans for Benchmarking.	N	S*	1,2
T04.03	EAFG explores the coursework, profiling and portfolio systems currently used internationally and involves teachers in the discussion of what is the best system for the Maltese classroom.	N	S*	1
T04.04	EAFG carries out an evaluation of the support systems needed by schools to be able to develop their own means of assessment in line with the policies of the NMC and particularly in view of the decentralisation of examinations within the state schools.	N	S*	1
T04.05	EAFG carries out its first phase of training aimed at ensuring that all teachers are aware of the new philosophy of educational assessment.	N	S*	1,2
T04.06	Following the evaluation exercise (T04.04) and the training (T04.05), decisions are taken by the EAFG and schools on the timeframes for the implementation of school-based formative and summative assessment.	N	S	1
T04.07	EAFG initiates discussions with the Faculty of Education to ensure that pre-service teacher training covers all aspects and prepares teachers to carry out both formative and summative assessment.	N		1
T04.08	EAFG carries out its second phase of training dealing with formative and summative modes of assessment.	N	S*	2,3
T04.09	EAFG and schools pilot and evaluate profiling and portfolios through action research projects.	N	S	2
T04.10	EAFG explores with core groups of education officers, subject co-ordinators teachers, parents, employers and University alternatives to the Junior Lyceum/Common Entrance Examinations.	N M	S*	2
T04.11	EAFG explores with core groups of education officers, subject co-ordinators teachers, parents, employers and University representatives the impact of the changes in assessment practices on entry into tertiary education and employment. The EAFG disseminates among educators and parents the results and recommendations of all research projects.	N	S*	2
T04.12	EAFG and schools decide on the format of profiling and portfolios and on the plan for their implementation. The implementation of Profiling and Portfolios begins its first phase and subsequent phases follow according to set policy and plans	N	S	3
T04.13	Decisions are taken on (a) Benchmarking (b) Policy regarding Junior Lyceum/Common Entrance Examinations.	N M	S	3
T04.14	Training begins in monitoring of standards procedures.	N	S	3

Targ.Nr.	Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
		M		
T05 – Personal and Social Development				
T05.01	PSDFG designs a curriculum to cover Forms 1-5 of the secondary schools complete with attainment targets for Forms 3 and 5.	N		1
T05.02	PSDFG consults with PEFG (Primary Education Focus Group) on the inclusion of PSD targets within the Primary Curriculum.	N		1
T05.03	PSDFG introduces new format for training PSD teachers in post as described in the NMC Conference Working Group 09	N		1
T05.04	Extension of PSD teaching to Form 3 in Junior Lyceums and Form 4 in Secondary Schools after appropriate teacher training.	N		2
T05.05	Extension of PSD teaching to Form 4 in Junior Lyceums and Form 5 in secondary schools after appropriate teacher training.	N		3
T05.06	Appointment of PSD co-ordinators in secondary schools.	M		3
T05.07	Primary and Secondary Schools include school-based PSD policies in SDPs.		S	3
T05.08	PSDFG carries out a research project to evaluate the impact of its efforts in both Primary and Secondary Schools.	N		3
T06 – Information and Communication Technology in Schools				
T06.01	ICTFG draws up policies on ICT and Computing across the spectrum of primary and secondary schools.	N		1
T06.02	ICTFG co-ordinates with the Primary Education Focus Group (PEFG) to identify adequate ICT policies, including the use of Internet, for the new primary curriculum, relevant multimedia software, and attainment targets for IT competence in Yrs 3 and 6 of the primary school.	N		1
T06.03	ICTFG sets up a policy for basic ICT Proficiency Certification.	N		1
T06.04	ICTFG sets up Conversion Diploma Course in co-ordination with Faculty of Education.	N		1
T06.05	ICTFG initiates training programme for teachers of Computer Studies.	N		1
T06.06	ICTFG initiates a continuous training programme for all primary teachers in the use of ICT as a cross-curricular teaching and learning resource.	N		2
T06.07	ICTFG commences continuous programme for training secondary school teachers in the use of ICT as teaching and learning resources in their subject areas.	N		2
T06.08	ICTFG starts advanced training programmes for subject co-ordinators in secondary schools and ICT primary school co-ordinators on the use of ICT in education.	N		2
T06.09	ICTFG begins familiarisation programmes for secondary and primary school heads and assistant heads on the use of ICT in education.	N		2
T06.10	ICTFG helps schools develop ICT in education policies in their SDPs.	N	S	2
T06.11	ICTFG initiates programme for upgrading the hardware and software in KGs, primary and secondary sectors.	N		1
T06.12	ICTFG initiates programme to bring the student to computer ratio in line with leading European countries.	N		1
T06.13	ICTFG carries out a research project to evaluate the impact of its efforts in both Primary and Secondary Schools.	N	S*	3

Targ.Nr.	Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
T07 – Language Development				
T07.01	LDFG and schools conduct ongoing research on current language teaching and language use in primary and secondary schools.	N	S	1
T07.02	LDFG supports and advises the Early Childhood Education Focus Group (ECEFG) and the Primary Education Focus Group (PEFG) on language policies and practices across their respective curricula, and on suitable attainment targets in the 1st and 2nd language at the levels set by the NMC for both.	N	S*	1
T07.03	LDFG issues guidelines for schools and holds advisory meetings on the preparation of school-based language policies and practices. LDFG co-ordinates with the ECEFG and PEFG in organising a	N		1
T07.04	programme of seminars and workshops for teachers in post in language and language teaching strategies in line with the language policies, practices, and attainment targets set by the kindergarten and primary curricula.	N	S*	2
T07.05	LDFG and schools, in collaboration with the ECEFG and PEFG, hold meetings for parents explaining the importance of language at home and in the school, and explaining language policies and practices in the respective curricula.	N	S	2
T07.06	Language co-ordinators are appointed in the primary schools	M		1
T07.07	Primary Schools include their school-based language policies and practices in their SDPs.		S	2
T07.08	LDFG and schools commence a long-term campaign to sensitise teachers in secondary schools and the general public on the importance of language across the curriculum and in the home, identifying correct practices for language use.	N	S	2
T07.09	LDFG holds meetings with secondary schools to discuss the role of the two languages in the secondary school curriculum, strategies for consolidating the different languages across the curriculum, attainment targets for language use, and the assessment of language across the curriculum.	N	S	2, 3
T07.10	Secondary schools include school-based language policies and practices in their SDPs.		S	3
T07.11	LDFG and schools carry out a research project to evaluate the impact of its efforts in both Primary and Secondary Schools.	N	S	3

T08 – Primary Science and Technology

T08.01	PSTFG collaborates with the Primary Education Focus Group (PEFG): (a) to define a science and technology curriculum for the primary schools that coheres with the principles and policies of the new primary curriculum, and (b) to set up the methods of assessment and the attainment targets for science and technology for Yrs 3 and 6 in primary schools. PSTFG collaborates also with the CSFG and the TEDFG to ensure that there is coherence between the primary and secondary curricula in both science and technology education.	N		1
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Targ.Nr.	Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
T08.02	Science and technology co-ordinators are appointed in the primary schools.	M		2
T08.03	PSTFG collaborates with the PEFG to organise workshops for primary school teachers to introduce them to the new science and technology curriculum.	N	S*	2
T08.04	PSTFG and schools collaborate with PEFG to set up meetings with parents in schools to explain the role of science and technology in the new curriculum.	N	S	2
T08.05	Primary schools include their science and technology policies and plans in their SDPs.		S	2
T08.06	PSTFG collaborates with the PEFG to start holding meetings for the science and technology co-ordinators to discuss methods of support for science and technology in schools, including training of teachers, equipment, and teaching and learning resources. These meetings will be sustained in an ongoing manner.	N	S*	3
T08.07	PSTFG and schools carry out a research project to evaluate the impact of their efforts in both primary and secondary schools.	N	S	3

T09 – Science in Secondary Schools

T09.01	CSFG is set up with a proper brief to take charge of the introduction of Co-ordinated Science in secondary schools with all its implications for consultation with all stakeholders, curriculum design, training, dissemination of information and advice to teachers, preparation of teaching aids and materials, etc.	N M	S*	1
T09.02	The CSFG organises a familiarisation seminar to provide a professional forum during which the main issues concerning Co-ordinated Science are sorted out and a clear strategy for an in-service course is agreed upon.	N M	S*	1
T09.03	The CSFG organises workshop sessions for small groups of Form 3-5 Science Teachers (Biology, Chemistry, Physics teachers), from state, church and independent schools, preferably in the teachers' own schools, in order to: (a) ensure that teachers understand underlying philosophy (b) provide teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills for teaching the CS curriculum effectively.	N	S*	1,2
T09.04	CSFG designs the general Co-ordinated Science programme over the 5 years of secondary schooling and disseminates it to the public for information	N		1,2
T09.05	CSFG designs and constructs a detailed Form 1 curriculum.	N	S*	1,2
T09.06	CSFG implements a programme of training for Form 1 teachers.	N	S*	2
T09.07	CSFG designs and constructs a detailed Form 2 curriculum.	N	S*	2
T09.08	CSFG designs and constructs a detailed Form 3 curriculum, implements a programme of training for Form 2 & Form 3 teachers. Form 1 starts the Co-ordinated Science programme.	N	S	3
T09.09	CSFG designs and constructs a detailed Form 4 curriculum, implements a programme of training for Form 3 & Form 4 teachers. Form 2 starts Co-ordinated Science programme.	N	S	3
T09.10	Schools start including their Co-ordinated Science policies in their SDPs.		S	3

Targ.Nr.	Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
T10 – Technology Education in Secondary Schools				
T10.01	TEDFG designs and constructs a general programme for technology education for the secondary schools and Junior Lyceums together with a strategic plan for its implementation at these levels in a number of pilot schools.	N	S*	1,2
T10.02	TEDFG co-ordinates with the PSTFG to ensure that there is coherence between the primary and secondary curricula in technology education.	N		1,2
T10.03	TEDFG organises courses and workshops for trainers who will be charged with training technology teachers.	N		1,2
T10.04	Suitable facilities are provided for the University of Malta for the training of teachers in technology education primary and secondary.	M		1
T10.05	TEDFG undertakes a stock taking exercise in secondary schools in order to identify deficiencies and problems of resources (building, tools and equipment, etc.) and to propose an action plan to prepare the schools for the introduction of technology education programmes as demanded by the new curricula.	N	S*	1
T10.06	TEDFG creates certificate/diploma courses to train teachers in the identified pilot schools, which will have been provided with the resources, required to implement the programme. (NMC Conference Working Group G.06 suggests appropriate strategy in its report).	N	S*	2
T10.07	TEDFG implements a first phase pilot project in a select number of secondary schools.	N	S	2
T10.08	TEDFG and schools assess their pilot project and construct the second phase of its implementation strategy, meanwhile schools targeted for the second phase are prepared for the introduction of technology education.	N	S	3
T10.09	TEDFG trains technology teachers for the second phase of the implementation process.	N		3

T11 – Inclusive Education

T11.01	IEFG works with the ECEFG, the PEFG and the SEFG on a system to identify and make provision for children with special needs in KGs, primary and secondary schools.	N	S*	1
T11.02	IEFG works with the ECEFG, the PEFG and the SEFG to recommend inclusion issues, policies, and teaching methods that should be included in the primary and secondary curriculum at different levels.	N	S	1,2
T11.03	IEFG initiates a programme of seminars and meetings for primary heads, assistant heads, curriculum co-ordinators, and school councils on different aspects of inclusion in the curriculum and in school policy. This programme should help the Focus Group identify support strategies and requirements to help schools implement their inclusion programmes.	N	S	2
T11.04	Primary and Secondary Schools include their school-based inclusion policies and programmes in their SDPs.		S	2
T11.05	Schools initiate a programme of meetings, and work shops for teachers and parents on their inclusion policies.		S	2
T11.06	IEFG recommends ways of re-grading and re-organising facilitators and kindergarten assistants already in post, and initiates programme of training and retraining of same.	N		2
T11.07	IEFG commences project to help regular schools develop a liaison strategy with the special schools.	N		2

Targ.Nr.	Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
T11.08	IEFG sets up a resource centre for educational materials and teaching resources for diversity.	N		2

T12 – Parental Involvement

T12.01	PIFG publishes handbook on parental involvement.	N		1
T12.02	School Councils begin to publish newsletters and information materials for parents during each scholastic year.		S	1
T12.03	Schools introduce policy of holding open days for parents and the community.		S	2
T12.04	PIFG encourages schools to introduce a policy of having a home-school diary for all pupils and students.	N		2
T12.05	The NCC assigns responsibility for home-school liaison.	M		2
T12.06	Schools include their parental involvement policies in the SDPs.		S	2

T13 – School and World of Work

T13.01	SWWFG prepares a strategic plan to implement its agenda.	N		1
T13.02	SWWFG issues proposals on how workplace related themes could be incorporated into the school curriculum at secondary level.	N	S*	2
T13.03	Beginning of first phase in the implementation of the SWWFG's strategic plan, which should commence with meetings and workshops with schools and teachers on the strategic plan, and its curriculum implementation.	N	S	3
T13.04	SWWFG organises workshops and seminars for school guidance and Form 5 teachers to discuss the planned strategies for bridging the school-workplace gap in Form 5.	N	S	3
T13.05	Schools identify their school-based policies and programmes, if any, for linking up with the world of work.		S	2

T14 – Democracy in Schools

T14.01	DEMFG collaborates with the Primary Education Focus Group (PEFG) to determine how issues of democracy can be brought into the primary curriculum (especially through the reorganisation of the social studies programme) and how the skills and values of democratic citizenship can be cultivated through the general pedagogy and classroom management.	N		1
T14.02	NCC makes proposals to the Minister of Education on the appropriate legislation for the setting up of Student School Councils in all secondary level schools.	N		1
T14.03	DEMFG identifies a number of pilot schools for the Student School Council project, including training of students and teachers in democratic procedures; organising a campaign, canvassing, committee work.	N	S*	2
T14.04	DEMFG produces a handbook for teachers and parents on the promotion of democratic environments and teaching-learning styles in schools, classrooms and homes.	N		2
T14.05	DEMFG commences a programme of seminars, meetings, and workshops for teachers and parents on the content of the handbook.	N	S*	2

Targ.Nr.	Target	NCC	Sch	Ph
T14.06	DEMFG evaluates the pilot School Council project and creates a strategic plan to extend it to other schools.	N	S*	3
T14.07	Schools include their policies and programmes for democratic education and the creation of democratic environments (school, classroom and home) and teaching-learning styles in their SDPs.		S	3
T15 – Schools as Community Centres				
T15.01	CEFG holds consultative meetings and workshops for heads of schools and school councils, School Boards, and PTAs on the formulation of a policy document	N	S*	1
T15.02	CEFG creates a two-year diploma course together with the University of Malta for training Community Learning Centre Co-ordinators.	N		1,2
T15.03	A policy document on Community Learning Centres will be published	N M	S*	2
T15.04	Community Learning Centre Co-ordinators appointed in a number of pilot communities.	M		2
T15.05	Pilot project with the first batch of Community Learning Centres commences.	N	S	2
T15.06	NCC publishes procedures required to apply for the funding of projects, and its criteria for prioritising applications.	N		1
T15.07	CEFG receives and assesses project proposals from Community Learning Centres and advises NCC on funding.	N		2
T15.08	CEFG and schools research and evaluate the pilot project with the first Community Learning Centres. CEFG plans the next phase of implementation.	N	S	3
T15.09	Second Diploma Course for Community Learning Centre Co-ordinators starts.	N		3

National Curriculum on its Way

Report of the National Steering Committee on the Implementation of the National Minimum Curriculum

Milestones in the National Curriculum reform process under three government administrations

August '94	Appointment of a Consultative Committee on Education (CCE)
April '95	CCE submits report <i>Tomorrow's Schools: developing effective learning cultures</i>
February '97	Steering Committee for Curriculum Review appointed
March '98	Draft New National Curriculum for Education in Malta for students between the ages of 3 and 16 years published
May '98	Draft National Curriculum tabled in Parliament

November '98	Consultations with educational partners and stakeholders set in motion
October '99	Draft National Minimum Curriculum published and tabled in Parliament
Oct. – Nov. '99	Parliamentary Social Affairs Committee discusses draft Curriculum in 8 sittings
December '99	<i>Creating our Future Together - National Minimum Curriculum</i> published
January '00	National Steering Committee appointed to formulate an implementation plan
June '00	National Conference Curriculum on its way
July '00	National Curriculum Regulations, 2000 published
December '00	National Steering Committee submits its report and an implementation plan
February '01	Proceedings of Conference Curriculum on its way: a Conference on the Implementation of the National Curriculum published
February '01	Cabinet of Ministers approves the implementation plan and corresponding 5-year budget estimates
March '01	Establishment of a National Curriculum Council

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