



The Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP
Secretary of State for Education

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Professor Becky Francis CBE
Chief Executive Officer of the Education Endowment Foundation

18 July 2024

Dear Becky,

Our education system needs to enable children and young people to develop the knowledge and skills required to thrive as citizens, in work and throughout life. As you know, this government is committed to our mission to break down the barriers to opportunity for every child and young person, at every stage, to shatter the ceilings to achievement that currently exist in our education system, and to equip young people for life. To help us achieve this, I would like to invite you to lead an independent Curriculum and Assessment Review which learns from and builds on the hard work of professional and expert teachers, lecturers, support staff and leaders.

The Review will need to suggest ways to refresh the curriculum and assessment system from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 5, including qualification pathways, to ensure it is cutting edge, fit for purpose and meets the needs of children and young people to support their future life and work. The Review should seek to ensure that the curriculum, assessment system and qualification pathways:

- support high standards for all, with an excellent foundation in the core subjects of reading, writing and maths;
- ensure breadth of opportunity for every young person, including creative, and sporting, as well as vocational subjects;
- give young people the knowledge, skills and attributes they need, including digital, communication and life skills;
- are inclusive, reflecting the issues and diversities of our society and ensuring that all young people are represented; and
- ensure that assessment captures the full strengths of every child and young person and the breadth of curriculum.

We need to ensure that no child is left behind, and that barriers to progress and ceilings to achievement are removed, especially for children and young people who are from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds, have a special education need or disability and/or are otherwise vulnerable. We must also ensure meaningful, rigorous and high-value pathways for all at 16-19.

I ask that you and the Review Group, to be established, work in close collaboration with teaching professionals and experts, as well as parents, children and young people, and stakeholders such as employers, colleges, universities and trades unions. I would ask you to ensure that recommendations reflect the considerable challenges facing the education system by taking an evolution not revolution approach, maintaining what's working well with curriculum and assessment, including qualification pathways, without seeking to fix things that are not broken, taking into account the trade-offs and practicalities involved in your recommendations, including the impact on workloads for education staff.

I am, in parallel, publishing a document setting out the Terms of Reference for the Review and for the Review Group. The Minister for School Standards, the Minister for Skills and I will support you in the Review and we will meet regularly to discuss progress and emerging findings. I look forward to a thoughtful and engaging conversation with the sector; to seeing an interim report on your work in the new year; and to seeing a full report later in 2025.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bridget Phillipson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**The Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP
Secretary of State for Education**