

education in the uk



In response to the recession and falling standards of schooling, the conservative government of the time decided to increase the budget of the education system. The conservatives wanted a more centralised and standardised education, that focused on increasing young peoples chances of finding employment.

In 1980 the education reform act was announced, leading to a compulsory curriculum and the open enrollement of pupils, as well as setting up assessments at the end of each key stage.

1981 saw the push for vocational subjects with Technical and Vocational Education

Initiative (TVEI) being announced. However, out of the 25 programmes established,

In 1985 the Better Schools programme was announced, this aimed to raise all standards of ability, promote enterprise and increase employment chances.

22 were cancelled and in 1986, NVQ's were created to replace them.

In 1988 the National Curriculum was introduced, despite it not being fully prescriptivist, it became the guidelines of what teachers could strive for and work upon.

pupils, or they would be forced to close.

Alongside the introduction of the curriculum and league tables, there was the new

Ofsted, which forced schools to look into more marketing strategies to help capture

These changes led to schools having more autonomy over their budget, as well as giving parents the choice of where to send their children.

education 5 to 9 survey

In 1982, there was a survey published by the Department of Education and Science, which made the following points about primary schools:

Most primary schools fell between the extremes of very good and very poor, with most offering a good education to children aged between 5 and 9. Children's behaviour and personal relations in schools were developing well.

In terms of academic achievement, it was found that nearly all children were making a satisfactory start in learning literacy and maths, but that the development of these skills widely varied, and that certain schools were spending too much time on teaching them. It was found that schools are doing a satisfactory job of helping ethnic minorities learn English. On the other hand, mathematical skills were usually practised too much without application.

Furthermore, despite the fact that the topics and activities were well planned, they were not linked in a way that developed skills and understanding.

In schools where there were children with learning difficulties, it was found that there was a quick turnaround in helping them, but not when it came to educational psychologists and psychiatrists, meaning the diagnosis may have trailed behind. Linking to this, where there were higher achieving children, they were rarely given the help to make more progress. This was a bigger problem in classes that had a mixed age group, where the those on either side of the learning spectrum may have suffered some neglect.

In terms of teaching, it was found that there needed to be more in-school training, and more help with teachers who wished to move up the ladder. However, First School teachers needed to be checked to ensure they were teaching properly.



education in the world

Netherlands

The Primary Education Act 1981 and the main aims are:

They focused more on child centered education

An uninterrupted development process of pupils, which is adapted in accordance with the individual pupils' progress

The necessary knowledge and social, cultural and physical skills

An education geared towards emotional, intellectual and creative development

New Zealand

In 1988 the Department of Education published a draft of the curriculum and here are the aims:

Provide pupils with knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to grow in a changing world

Develop skills to participate fully in everyday life

Developing an awareness of cultural identity and traditions

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Knowledge on being able to work well with others and respect one self and others.

Despite this draft not being implemented because of political changes, there was still a focus on equity and citizenship.

Sweden

The Skollagen (Education Act 1985) aims:

Provide students with knowledge and skills to succeed in life

Ensure collaboration between teachers at school and home life

Promote students harmonious development so that they become more responsible adults and members of society

This act emphasize value on multiculturalism, citizenship, freedom of belief and gender equality.



There are a few differences between the examples given, and the UK.

Sweden, New Zealand and the Netherlands all seemed to prioritize freedom of belief and creativity whereas the UK took a stronger stance on the core subjects of English and Mathematics.

Also, the Netherlands focused on a child-centered approach towards primary teaching. The UK was still following a very didactic way of teaching, despite the Plowden Report (1967) favouring the child centered approach.

Another difference would be that both New Zealand & the Netherlands used schooling as a tool to fight inequality and cater for minority groups. Despite some efforts being made to do this in the UK, the schooling system still followed a very functionalist style whereby students could still be pigeonholed.

