

Analysis of Feedback to the Consultation Process held with regard to the Draft National Curriculum Framework
Parents and Individuals

Appendix VII

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Analysis of Feedback

In order that a comparative analysis could be carried out on the feedback presented by an individual participant within a stakeholder cohort as well as amongst a specific stakeholder cohort as well across the different stakeholder cohorts a common template was designed to allow for a consistent analysis of the feedback received.

In segmenting each individual consultation document on the basis of the above template careful review of each document was undertaken and statements within paragraphs and across each were identified and correlated against the appropriate attribute.

This constituted painstaking review and attention to detail as a particular paragraph within a consultation document may include statements, issues, criticisms and recommendations relating to different aspects of the draft National Curriculum Framework.

In segmenting each individual consultation document into segments and categorising these under the appropriate attributes within the said template, careful attention was undertaken not to change the original drafting of the text. The actual nuances of text lifted from feedback documents reflect not only the opinion of the author / s but also an author's feelings vis a vis the language applied on the part of the draft NCF that he or she is expressing her / himself on – which may range from carefully articulated statements and unequivocal commendations to outspoken anger and disappointment.

To the extent possible, changes to the nuances of the text as presented by the author in his or her consultation document are limited to instances where editing could not be avoided to improve the original draft to render it more comprehensive or were the text is presented in Maltese (very limited feedback is presented in Maltese).

A further level of analysis carried out is that of ascribing a code to each and every segment categorised under an attribute within the said template. The codification applied is shown in Table 01.

Table 01: Codification of Segmentation Analysis of Documented Feedback

Code	Definition	Example
C+	Definitive statement in a consultation feedback document that is positive with regard to the draft NCF.	<p>Examples are:</p> <p>“Supports placement of Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2 in the same category as currently there is not enough communication between Kindergarten and Year 1.”</p> <p>“Enhanced communication will lead to a better transition between Kindergarten and Year 1 in Primary.”</p> <p>“Cross curricular themes a very positive innovation.”</p>
C-	Definitive statement in a consultation feedback document that is negative with regard to the Draft NCF.	<p>Examples are:</p> <p>“Timetable models do not reflect classroom realities as they do not take into account class disturbances and daily classroom practices such as collecting of forms, money for outings, etc.”</p> <p>“Has a strong utilitarian orientation as it directs students to well-paid jobs and not to societal needs.”</p>

"If [subject is] reduced to one lesson a week [it is] impossible to cover [the] syllabus."

S A **categorical** statement in a consultation feedback document on the existing state of play within the educational system or the draft NCF.

Examples are:

"Children should be exposed to good models of spoken English given exposure to America TV channels or not sufficient exposure to English at home."

"Learning Support Assistants need to receive proper pedagogical training to have sufficient knowledge as they cannot be all-rounders."

"Primary Schools with large physical setting population are impossible to allocate just 15 minutes for assemble and settling in."

I A statement in a consultation feedback document which identifies an **issue** or challenge with regard to the existing state of play within the educational system or the draft NCF – yet, in raising such an issue there is no rejection of the NCF matter under discussion.

Examples are:

"Syllabi do not take into account a differentiated teaching environment."

"Parents of high flyers complain that teachers are holding back their children from reaching their full potential."

"Syllabus prescribed text books is not suitable for use by lower ability students."

R A **recommendation** put forward in a consultation feedback document.

Examples are:

"Early years are crucial for educational development and children who seem to be lacking should be identified early and given adequate support."

"School Management Team needs to gather feedback and necessary information for School Development Plans (SDP) to be effective."

"Introduction of Subject teaching in the late Primary years might help for a smoother transition to the secondary years."

		Bonello, Tonio		Pisani Anthea		Chetcuti, Audrey
		Feedback about the inclusion of Education for Sustainable Development		Quality Education for All		
Early Years and Primary Education			C+	Happy to note new aspects like the emphasis on early years along with smooth transition from kindergarten years up to secondary years given importance in the NCF		
Differentiated Teaching	I	States that his child is quick learner and enquires whether differentiated teaching will also apply in church schools. Touch of concern that child's education may be slowed down.				
	R	Proposes school for fast learners.				
Timetable	I	Does not agree with extension of school times				
Learning and Learning Environment	R	Recommends that more importance is given to basic life skills such as first aid, survival etc that would teach students to be self reliant and know how to deal with life in times of possible natural catastrophe or without access to modern technology: eg lighting fire without matches or learning woodwork without modern implements.				
	S	The latter would also be beneficial in keeping traditional skills alive and give purpose to many skilled pensioners who could be engage to pass on their skills.				
Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)			C+	Welcomes inclusion of ESD as a cross curricular theme		
			R	Argues that there exist two approaches to ESD – weak and strong – and whereas weak approach dominates most ESD provisions, strong approaches to ESD which are		

		Bonello, Tonio		Pisani Anthea		Chetcuti, Audrey
		Feedback about the inclusion of Education for Sustainable Development		Quality Education for All		
				based on ‘participation, empowerment and self-organization’ bring about the change required to make a better world for all and that it is important therefore that when teachers apply ESD in their classrooms they are made aware of these two variations – to adopt a strong approach as much as possible.		
School Outings and Extra-curriculum Activities	R	Recommends that extracurricular activities can be easily organised within school premises – during after school hours and even evenings. Eg: Museum lessons, Sports activities, Music, Drama, Crafts etc – this would bring more life to schools in the form of edutainment.				
	R	Extracurricular activities such as field trips / cultural visits / exhibitions could also include parents – this would foster environment of collaboration and sense of community involving students, parents and teachers.				
	R	Recommends ongoing literary, artistic, crafts competitions for primary and secondary school students and the introduction of awards such as student of the year for eg for talent or creativity.				
School to Parents Relationship	R	Extracurricular activities such as field trips / cultural visits / exhibitions could also include parents – this would foster environment of collaboration and sense of community involving students, parents and teachers.				
Parental Involvement	R	Proposes parenting school, to help parents acquire skills associated with				

	Bonello, Tonio	Pisani Anthea	Chetcuti, Audrey
	Feedback about the inclusion of Education for Sustainable Development	Quality Education for All	
	good parenting.		

		Grech, Sarah and Robert		Camilleri, Kim		Vella, Annabelle
Principles	C+	We feel that the NCF documents present a very wholesome and positive picture of what Malta's education framework can achieve and we agree wholeheartedly with the spirit of it, as well as with many of the details of its implementation. In particular, we welcome the underlying tenets that a curriculum should foster the holistic development of children, and not just cater for academic needs.				
	C+	We welcome with great enthusiasm the efforts by the NCF to emphasise the importance of a more balanced learning environment which is much more sensitive to the real needs of all children, we are happy to see that this also means time allocated to more physical activity and arts education.				
	S	While the proposed changes in timetables suggest that these present 'family-friendly' measures, we would prefer to see the commitment to holistic education realised in practice, before our children are required to spend longer hours in school.				
Autonomy	I	We also do not feel that Malta is at the stage where each school can be left to decide its own language policy, as experience has shown that some schools have not acted on the 1999 recommendations to this effect.				
Timetable	I	We do not feel that the emphasis on a more balanced education requires extended school hours.	I	It is being mentioned regularly that the current school hours are not adequate and need to be extended. I personally think they are long enough and they are exactly what our children need so		

		Grech, Sarah and Robert		Camilleri, Kim		Vella, Annabelle
				that they can still have enough time to play and to spend with their parents .		
			R	If there are indeed plans to extend school hours, then I suggest that this is done on a voluntary basis – ie – school hours remain as they are and parents who want to leave their children longer at school would be able to do so – basically along the same lines of Klabb 3-16. I am suggesting this for both primary and secondary students.		
Language	C-	We do not feel that the issue of a National language policy (or rather the lack of it) is addressed adequately in the NCF.			R	Since we are living in a globalised environment and we need to interact with foreigners on a daily basis, I would like to suggest that the foreign language is introduced in primary schools in grade 3 and not later.
	R	Whilst we appreciate that the formulation of a National language policy is not the responsibility of the NCF, we feel, that given the failure by the relevant authorities themselves to address this pivotal issue, more could have been achieved if the NCF had presented a stronger case for the development of a language policy in education.				
	I	While NCF 2 Appendix I gives a realistic view of language usage in Malta at present, the document seems to fall short of making weighty and concrete enough proposals that might begin to address the perception that “proficiency in both languages has decreased over the years”				
	S	We feel that by referring to Maltese and English as ‘mother tongue’ and ‘second language’ on a regular basis				

		Grech, Sarah and Robert		Camilleri, Kim		Vella, Annabelle
		in NCF, the idea that each language has a predetermined role or remit (for example, Maltese for identity, English for international communication) in society is reinforced rather than levelled out				
	R	Is it not feasible to think that the two languages, being both 'official' are simply referred to as Malta's two official languages since this would surely emphasise the importance of bilingualism and really allow children and by extension parents to benefit fully from the advantages of being equally competent in at least two languages.				
	R	It seems that rather than lacking language proficiency, students do not have the organisational or analytical skills necessary to complete even basic communicative tasks. We would venture then, that these skills are a prime case for the NCF aims of a more cross-curricular, thematic, interdisciplinary and collaborative approach.				
	I	We agree that multilingualism is important and beneficial, but in practice, as parents, we are more concerned with effective and articulate communication rather than the number of languages our children appear to know. We feel that if, in the early and primary years, our children are equipped with the skills for acquiring language and communicating effectively, then later on, they can learn any number of languages they choose. Our				

		Grech, Sarah and Robert		Camilleri, Kim		Vella, Annabelle
		educational system may well support multilingualism, but we do not feel confident as yet, that it nurtures effective communication in different languages, and that is much more important.				
	C-	NCF 2 pg 53, concerned with language of instruction, has little of any value to offer in terms of rethinking current practice and does not suggest way forward. We feel strongly that the lack of clarity in this crucial area is only harming children, who ultimately rely on language skills to “communicate effectively and confidently”				
Health Education	I	We are concerned that all areas proposed for inclusion under “Health education” will lead to the soft option of keeping children contained and controlled while they are instructed in how to eat properly, for example, at the expense of more physical activity.				
	C+	We agree fully that education should reflect and reinforce the idea that health includes a wide range of issues including balanced nutrition, as well as mental and physical activity among other things. However, we would like to be reassured that talking and instructing will not be favoured over action and activity.				

		Buhagiar, Nathalie		Calleja, Joanne		Camilleri, Josette
Principles			I	After listening to certain people like Profs Serracino Inglott, M.U.T and other people in the education section voicing their concerns, we are sincerely that most of the proposals will not help our son and other students to achieve better quality in education.		
Teacher Support	I	I very often come across teachers literally at their wits end trying to cope with students who have very challenging behaviour. Teachers need to be supported. They need more practical strategies on how to cope with challenging behaviour in the classroom.				
	R	I am aware that professional help is available but we need people who have firsthand experience in the classroom; some strategies work in theory and on a one to one basis but not in a classroom. Maybe some CPD can be organised nationally with experts from abroad who can offer practical classroom strategies.				
	S	BEd students need more input on how to cope with an inclusive classroom. Hence here inter-professional collaboration comes into play. Students should have input from professionals such as OTs, SLPs,PTs, SEBD specialists – surely this can take through liaison of the faculty of education with that of health services.				
Autonomy			S	We preferred our son to attend a church school – during the past years we have seen total dedication from the school where the students		

		Buhagiar, Nathalie		Calleja, Joanne		Camilleri, Josette
				progress is given priority and we would appreciate if such schools would be allowed space to adopt their own policies and continue developing their unique identities. This can only be done if they reserve their autonomy.		
Differentiated Teaching			C+	As regards students needing more individual attention and help to improve their education we fully agree and give our full support with hope that these students will benefit and they will be on the same level as students who might find it easier to understand certain subjects.		
			I	But we also hope that in this process hard working students who study hard to get good results will not be impeded in their ways to achieve their goals.		
Syllabus	S	With the new framework, I hope this will reduce significantly. There is no time for consolidation, love for learning and even the children that are 'typical' cannot enjoy life – let alone those who have some difficulty. Also more time can be spent developing other skills such as emotional literacy, communication etc.				
	R	Less homework and less demands – curriculum change needs to take place top down. We are expecting too much (material heavily loaded on memory and study rather than reflective thinking and reasoning) at sec and matsec level.				
Children in Class	R	To cater for diversity this needs to be kept low. 26 students with 1/3 having				

		Buhagiar, Nathalie		Calleja, Joanne		Camilleri, Josette
		additional needs is too much.				
Learning						
-General Principles and Aims of education		.				
Subjects						
Science Education			I	Our son was looking forward to start Biology, Physics and Chemistry as these would be needed in his future as regards to the career he has chosen. With the proposals of eliminating these subjects and introducing these subjects as one we are very much concerned as up till now it seems that the University of Malta is not backing these changes, and if that position stays, this will create confusion and more stress on the students once they reach 6 th Form level.		
			I	They would end up needing private lessons that would create more stress which might end up with the students giving up and not continue their education. In our opinion this will also create stress on teachers – ie – if a teacher teaches biology now she has to teach the 3 subjects as one subject.		
Arts Education	R	Music and the arts need to be taken on board more seriously – college of music and the arts promised by the minister needs to be created sooner rather than later.				
Facilities and Support Structures and Services	R	Resources should be for the church and independent schools too if this is a national curriculum which all are expected to take on board.	R	Resources – this is an excellent proposal, provided that the government supplies the church schools with these resources as doing and rightly so to the state schools –		

		Buhagiar, Nathalie		Calleja, Joanne		Camilleri, Josette
				after all these resources are funded from the people's taxes and it's only fair that all students benefit from these resources.		
			I	From the donations that church schools receive from parents they obviously cannot afford to do what is proposed – after all there must be no discrimination between children. To be honest for us as parents it does not make a difference if our teachers have laptops or if they use smart boards or robots etc – because our main interest is the level of education our son is getting to move forward in his life.		
Learning and Learning Environment					S	Focus should be given more on 'independent learners'.
					S	Non-formal learning is essential and complements formal learning. However this is not recognised by all (including parents and teachers). Students should be given the opportunity to participate in projects organised by youth councils. Unfortunately importance is given more to formal learning, hence resulting lack of confidence in students to participate in public talks and other opportunities in the working environment.
					S	Students can gain knowledge on different cultures by given the opportunities to visit other countries.
Special Needs	I	The education of students with physical disabilities in the secondary schools needs to be looked at closely.				

		Buhagiar, Nathalie		Calleja, Joanne		Camilleri, Josette
		A lot of resources are needed. Are we truly inclusive by having a child in the class, all the time to the detriment of the physical and mental development of such children. If we cannot cater for the needs of such children then we should rethink and come up with alternative modes of practice.				
	S	Hopefully NCF will promote the learning of life skills for those students in secondary especially those with moderate to profound learning difficulties, who we know for fact will not sit for Sec exams. The academic curriculum is totally unsuited for them. With life skills these children would have a chance of being independent and not a burden on society. This will need to include community training.				
	S	Job shadowing in the secondary. Unfortunately few employers take on students with disability.				
	R	Far more students than are statmented need support especially if they have learning difficulties. May I recommend here the student services and add that in my experience all students with significant disabilities are seen in good time by the statmenting board – it is the students with learning difficulties that are accumulating and left behind. With the present curriculum still loaded on memory work unfortunately these cannot succeed without support and adaptations in classes.				

		Micallef, May		Vella, Isabelle		Spiteri Tagliaferro, Romina
Teacher Support	I	Proficiency in English and Maltese is a must, yet some teachers are not confident in teaching in the language relative to their subject. You cannot teach science, maths, physics, accounts etc in Maltese and then expect a student to sit for an exam and express himself in English. The Maltese and English proficiency exams are not doing enough for the B. Ed students graduating from our university.				
Autonomy	C-	There is much talk of autonomy but there is also talk of 'ethics classes' rather than religious education. I teach at a church school and choose such a school for my children, precisely for the religious ethos of these schools. Space and autonomy should be given to church schools to enhance their religious ethos further.	C-	I am writing here as I am concerned regarding the NCF – our son attends a church school and it seems they cannot enhance and practice their own policies to continue to develop their own unique identities.		
	C-	Not all schools' needs are the same and hence different schools should be given the space to make their own timetables (as we have done so so far)				
Differentiated Teaching	C-	Not all schools have the luxury of enough LSAs to help the teacher out in large classes of 29 students. How then are we supposed to cater for all the differentiation in learning and inclusion which is supposed to take place? I am a teacher, but above all, I am a human being with a family of my own. As it is, I already take home too much from my job: lesson planning, corrections and preparation of resources as well as setting of exam papers. Inclusion and setting, therefore are fancy words and in reality a			C-	I see the issue of having classes of mixed abilities as problematic. One cannot compare church schools with those of the state. Teachers are against this measure, because as everyone knows it's a double edged sword, where those who wish to strive ahead cannot and where those who cannot cope won't keep up and fall further behind.

		Micallef, May		Vella, Isabelle		Spiteri Tagliaferro, Romina
		teacher cannot honestly cater for ALL needs of individual students in a class. Mixed ability teaching does not work. Our brighter students are being left by the wayside because we are catering and focusing too much on the weak students who cannot cope.				
Timetable	C-	The proposed timetables as well as the as the new Form 1 frameworks for various subjects simply make the teacher feel tied down to doing what is written done on the paper rigidly. There is no room for the teacher's creativity and personality! What are we contributing to our students' personalities and characters?				
	I	With regards to SDPs, if done well, whatever needs to be discussed pertaining to the school, should be discussed during these meetings rather than changing the timetable to fit these meetings in.				
Professional Development	C-	The in-service courses held in summer are not doing enough for teachers' professional development. Speaking from past experience, at times I attended courses with different names but churning out the same course content within the space of a couple of years.				
Science Education	C-	Will the proposed changes in the NCF be backed up by the MATSEC board? Physics, Chemistry and Biology, having different names and core science being taught throughout the secondary cycle, to mention a few; what are the implications of all this? Will our students be forever pawns on a chessboard? I'm sorry but essentially	I	We need to be reassured that the proposed changes in science subjects are backed by the university of Malta		

		Micallef, May		Vella, Isabelle		Spiteri Tagliaferro, Romina
		we should stick to what is good in our educational system and rectify what is not because we are creating a generation of adults that cannot really cope when situations become difficult. This comes from constantly trying to cater for them and simplifying things to extremes!				
Language	C-	Is it wise to propose English literature as an option subject in the higher classes when paradoxically, the NCF also wants to enhance arts, culture and literature?				
Facilities and Support Structures and Services	I	Realities in church schools are different to those in state schools. An example of this are the lack of laptops for teachers in church schools whilst teachers in state schools are equipped with such tools. Interactive white boards have to be bought by and paid for by church schools whereas they are provided by the government in state schools. Where is the fairness and equality in all this? Why do our children have to be at a disadvantage? Church schools are not even given VAT exemption on these resources!	I	We find the lack of resources truly unfair for our children.. we pay taxes and our children aren't given the same resources like that of state schools.. we are talking of children that all will be making a contribution to the future of this country.		
School Outings and Extra-curriculum Activities	C-	Longer breaks/ more extracurricular activities: this should not be rule of thumb for all schools. As parents, my husband and I want to be able to take our children ourselves to their after school sports activities etc. we do not want a longer day so that others take care of our children whilst I 'baby sit' other people's children. Once again parents should be the main educators of their children.				
Parental Involvement	I	I also feel that the main shift in this			C-	I am against the proposal to involve

	Micallef, May	Vella, Isabelle	Spiteri Tagliaferro, Romina
	proposed NCF is for the teacher / school to provide everything for the student. There is no mention of the parents as primary educators and care givers!		parents further in school activities. It is the teachers who belong in schools and not parents – it is they after all who have teaching experience. The fact that in most cases both parents work also makes this difficult if not impossible.

		Cachia, Sarah		Mifsud, Doriane		Mifsud, Sylvia
Timetable			I	There is mentioned that the breaks and lessons will be longer. Timetables were not mentioned, but I consider this to be a bad idea if this means that school will finish after 2.30 p.m.		
			S	After this time will be too tiring for children, considering there is homework and study to be done, children are now attending sports in the afternoon at the college and 2 times muzew or other youth group they might attend later on, learning an instrument and its study too etc etc. children need free time and some time they can spend with the family especially where the mother, like in my case, works most Saturdays and during the summer as well. One must consider work-life balance.		
PSD					I	While local recent documents and policies on education encourage the personal and social growth of students, in actual fact it is then not reflected in the school timetables
					I	My concerns are mainly that although it is clear from the PSD syllabus that it covers numerous topics which fall under Health, Citizenship and Career education, in the proposed NCF timetables, PSD is only included under health education. Thus PSD is not assigned enough hours to be able to contribute in all the areas which are of main interest to it.
					I	In the NCF, PSD is in fact at times indicated as falling under Health, Citizenship and Career education, however at others (such as in the timetables) it is not. This makes the situation of PSD ambiguous and does not guarantee its deserving place in the curriculum.

		Cachia, Sarah		Mifsud, Doriane		Mifsud, Sylvia
Examinations and Assessments	I	I think that O' Levels' standard should be reduced. I am concerned of greater stress and more exams. I am feeling the pressure of the Benchmarking, as my child is in Grade 5 in a church school and before children in church schools had no other external examinations.				
School Outings and Extra-curriculum Activities	I	I am really concerned about the new curriculum, in that I think that it is not fair for children in the secondary years to have too many extracurricular activities especially in Form 4 and Form 5, as required by the new school leaving certificate... Nowadays, they have to do all O' Levels in Form 5 (which I do not agree to either – as I think that one should have the option to do O' Levels during Form 4 as well), with a much higher standard than our days. Malta is having a problem with young teenagers with depression and I think this is the problem – they have too much stress during their secondary education, let alone have to do other extra curriculum activities during this period of great study.				

		Vassallo, Myriam		Mallia, Josianne		Zerafa, Janice
Focus on / Early Years						
Teaching / Teacher Philosophy and Capacity						
Autonomy						
Differentiated Teaching					C-	I'm really sorry to say that I do not agree at all with the idea of having children mixed up. This is because unfortunately it works the other way round. Let's name them good and less good. The first one is more likely to be influenced by the second one instead of the opposite. We are already experiencing this because last year a particular student was in my child's class and with his/her behaviour and bad attitude kept interrupting the whole class including the teacher who struggled to do a proper lesson. Is this right??? Certainly not. I'm very sorry but it is putting a strain on teachers and students who want to learn.
Languages	R	I am proposing that the Maltese Sec examination will be divided into two separate exams. Just as it is in the English examination. Students who are targeting of studying languages at a Post Sec education will obviously need the two exams others who like my daughter targeting for engineering course finds no reason for studying Maltese literature. In fact lots of students and parents agree with this thought.				
Physical Education			R	With the introduction of 30 minutes PE session every day, I think it is worth considering phasing out the school uniform and adopt the idea of a PE Kit for the whole school week for years 1 till 6 for the following reasons:		

		Vassallo, Myriam		Mallia, Josianne		Zerafa, Janice
				Comfort: PE kits are more comfortable, and following the new ideas being implemented in the years 1-6 of the NCF, it is more practical for the section of Arts education.		
			I	School bag heavier: we are already dealing with heavy school bags, resulting to back pain at a very young age now, let alone having to take the PE Kit every day.		
			I	Time is wasted in changing clothes – primary students used to take 15 minutes to get dressed and another 15 minutes to get undressed and we used to have lots of complaints of students getting sick while undressing. I think these 30 minutes can be spared and wisely used in any other subject.		
Examinations and Assessments			I	I hope that all form of assessment will be school based and not based on homework or projects done at home, since the latter most of the time reflects parents' competence and not the student's real performance.		
School Outings and Extra-curriculum Activities	I	I would like to draw your attention to the extracurricular subjects listed on the school leaving certificate. I think this is somehow only to the privileged ones since sending your children for example to music lessons in piano, violin, drama, ballet etc cost money, or even scouting and lots of more.				
	I	Did anyone consider people with low income how can these afford of doing so. An example of this is being done in our church school. All the extracurricular subjects are being done after school hours and at a cost,				

		Vassallo, Myriam		Mallia, Josianne		Zerafa, Janice
		and believe me not a minimal one.				
	I	In my case I find it very unfair for people like myself having my daughter finding herself in a situation where her class mates talk about after school sessions. Unfortunately this situation hurts a lot. Therefore kindly consider enforcing after school extracurricular in the public area government school where a means test be introduced.				

		Grech, Kimberly		Magro, M		Conti, Louise
Early Years and Primary Education			I	There is an apparent gap between Kinder and Year 1. The students attending Kinder 1 last year never wrote letters or numbers in class.		
			I	Now, in Year 1 they are already being given short sentences to spell and read when they are supposed to be learning how to write letters and numbers. Whilst in Kinder they wrote nothing they are now suddenly expected to read and spell in class.		
			R	I believe that they should be taught very basic literacy in Kinder, because teachers in year 1 cannot be expected to perform miracles. One moment students are playing and in the next expected to read in Maltese and soon in English!		
Syllabus			I	I believe that students are being overloaded and that the school time is becoming too short for the work load that is being fostered on the students.		
			S	A lot of class work that used to take place at school is now being carried out at home with the parents with the consequence that children are becoming increasingly tired and have little time for rest. Apart from this not all parents have the luxury to spend all that time with their children on homework, and the time the children spend with the family as a family is too short.		
			S	I see the difference between winter and summer where in the latter children seem to be more calm and happy. The syllabus is too vast to be covered in the limited time that		

		Grech, Kimberly		Magro, M		Conti, Louise
				children spend at schools, and this will become more so with other lessons such as PSD, music etc.		
Timetable	R	I would also like to start having a caswel where day every month, and I also think that we should maybe start at quarter past eight.	I	As a working mother, I am also finding great difficulty with the school opening hours. 8.30 AM is too late. Where else do you find an office or work place where workers report at 8.30AM? Children are ready to begin proper lessons before 9AM. An hour later they go out for their first break. I believe school should start at 8AM and finish at 3PM and this way the teachers might have more time available to undertake class work where students can ask their teachers about any difficulties they may encounter. I have noticed the difference between class work and homework at the end of the scholastic year when children bring their copy books home and the home work copy books are invariably much thicker. A lot of work is being done at home with parents.		
	R	I think that it would be better if we start having the second break just five minutes longer.				
Arts Education	R	In my school I think it would be better if we should have drama at least twice a week.				
PSD						
Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)						
Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Creativity						
Vocational Subjects						
PE and 30m / Day Allotment						

		Grech, Kimberly		Magro, M		Conti, Louise
Examinations and Assessments					I	I just want to point out that there seems to be no lines/guidelines that tackle students that are failures. Do students with low results/marking/assessment go on to the seventh transitional year or is there a system for these students which can help them within this same framework – because it seems up to particular schools that have to take care of this.

		Cassar, Lorraine		Sultana, Joseph		Carabott, Philip
Principles			C+	I must say that it is quite positive. I am pleased with the aims that were listed.. in today's world good certificates are important but being able to communicate, respect those around you, self-confidence, ethics and morality are fundamental.		
Differentiated Teaching			I	The kind of learning that will be taking place in the classroom seems positive. I do hope however that students who may not be as bright as others would really be given the support required. I have heard of cases where the teacher gave up on so called 'hopeless students'. I am aware that teaching such students may not be so easy.		
			R	I suggest that if for example a student is not so good in let's say Science, instead of letting him mess up his situation they should suggest studying in another subject leading to an area that he likes.		
Syllabus	R	I think it is extremely important to teach children first aid even at kindergarten age. Then every year there are refresher lessons. It is not the first time we hear of very young children saving a life abroad because of this teaching.		.		
Sexual Education					C-	I am very perplexed and concerned with the new national curriculum. As you are aware the long awaited (and still not finalized) national sexual health policy contains as its most fundamental and essential element a review of sex education in schools. It is a fact that in many cases sex education is sporadic, subject to individual "preference" and all too often, too little, too late. The new

		Cassar, Lorraine		Sultana, Joseph		Carabott, Philip
						curriculum mentions the world sexual health once and that is it. No detail whatsoever.
					C-	The previous curriculum had a list of subjects which were supposed to be covered. Even that is now gone. Is this an oversight or is it deliberate?
					S	I'm sure you will agree with me we couldn't even begin to address the problems of teenage pregnancies, condom non-use, increasing STIs etc without a vigorous modern sex education programme based on peer reviewed research, rather than on individual's idiosyncrasies.
Language	C-	I am alarmed to find my 6 year old coming home with Maltese home-work and school magazine with the words KOWT, HELOW, JOTT etc. I am sure there are Maltese words for these. I looked up the word KOWT on the internet and it is related to the terrorist group of the TALIBAN. Why are we teaching children HELOW and not INSELLIMLEK? FELUKA is a Maltese word for a yacht. Taking foreign words and misspelling them is confusing children.				
	I	When the children are then asked to write these words in their English lesson, they write them the Maltese way. Children need to distinguish between different language and this method of teaching is not helping. I am sure as my child gets older more of these words will be given to him, when I am sure for a little bit more effort an actual Maltese word can be found. If absolutely no Maltese word exists I favour what was taught in my day. We				

		Cassar, Lorraine		Sultana, Joseph		Carabott, Philip
		used to write a composition in Maltese for example and if we had to write a word in English, we would write it in inverted commas.				
School Outings and Extra-curriculum Activities			R	I hope that certain activities shall be done in the evenings. Today all parents nearly carry out a full or part time job. Many offices end at 5.00 pm. Others even later so one must understand that not everybody's job finishes at 2.30pm. one cannot keep taking days off each time there is an activity, so I hope that schools would take this into consideration.		
Parental Involvement			R	I think those parents who cannot involve themselves in school councils or parent teacher associations, have a right to know what has been discussed. There should be a school web site or electronic link where parents can share their opinions even if they cannot be presented.		

		Mifsud, Louis		Abela, Diane		Cordina, Joanne
Early Years and Primary Education			R	I am of the opinion that children should be taught how to deal with accidents from their early years. They should be provided with a first aid course and taught how to react in such circumstances.		
Children in Class	C-	I was expecting to find in the NCF a greater importance on the need to reduce the amount of children in class.				
	C-	This is the essence of everything we have started since the elimination of the Junior Lyceum exams – and without this being addressed I expect nothing but total failure in the implementation of the proposals in the NCF – primarily those concerned with 'multilevel teaching' were a teacher needs to address students with different capabilities according to their needs.				
	S	Smaller classes are today possible; with a declining birth rate, we have less children in schools and I am certain smaller classes will find approval from teachers, parents and students alike.				
European Studies					R	It is important that European Studies is also offered at A level. Although this subject is offered at university, the fact that presently students can't have this option at A level hinders them from continuing to study the subject.
					I	There seems to be a problem where boys are concerned. Although a good number of girls choose this subject year after year, the same cannot be said where boys are concerned.
					R	The themes covered in this area are really interesting and can be made even more so

		Mifsud, Louis		Abela, Diane		Cordina, Joanne
						through the use of media eg: video clips, interesting sites on the internet, games etc. it would be a good idea if we all share our ideas and help each other to make this subject more attractive and student-friendly.
PSD	I	PSD is a subject that has always been undermined by the fact that it lacks official certification and the fact that it imparts important values is always underestimated.				
	C-	Despite the emphasis placed by the NCF on 'well being' and 'personal and social growth' this is not reflected in the time allocated to PSD in the proposed timetables.				
	R	Why don't we have the implementation of the national sexual health policy that has just come out in 2010 and where the lack of time allocated to PSD is highlighted? Whoever has adolescent children like me, will surely agree with me when one witnesses their lifestyle outside of school (and this effects their behaviour in school too).				
	R	PSD should have been given the same emphasis as science if not more in the NCF, because the personal and social development of our children is the ultimate basis of success or failure of any educational reform.				

		Buhagiar, Mary Anne (Dr)		Stensen, Josette		Vella, Mariella
Principles			C+	From what I read from the booklet presented, the proposals both in the academic subjects and practicalities are good as it looks towards a more holistic view but due to the inclusion framework and changes that happened recently in this regard one has to keep in mind that teachers in classrooms have to be able to cope with different levels of abilities amongst children. We cannot pretend the impossible because we would be risking more frustration amongst children and teachers and more complaints and doubts from parents.		
Teacher Support	C-	I feel disgusted by the inconsiderate way in which the authorities have shouldered off their responsibilities and left it to Head and teachers themselves to make crucial choices. The use of the seemingly jargon word: "timetable" turns out to be highly deceptive: it is not simply a timetable issue but a much hotter issue concerning basic worker rights.	R	Teachers today, have to have ongoing training because apart of the syllabus and the rest of the curriculum, they have to face situations as mentioned [students from difficult social backgrounds]. I know that today there is the service of LSAs in the classroom but this service may be limited as well compared to the number of applicants and actual needs, not forgetting at times, the limitations in resources.		
	C-	Indeed in the ultimate analysis, the time table shifts incurred as a result of curricular reforms have drastically impaired the employment stability of many teachers including myself, apart from impairing the employment opportunities of new graduates in the social sciences and other areas.				
Autonomy	C-	I cannot help conveying my steadfast belief that leaving the choice of "timetable" in the hands of heads and/or teachers is totally unjustified			I	Professor Grima mentioned the possibility of including a homework policy. Such decisions should not be included in a curriculum framework – they belong at

		Buhagiar, Mary Anne (Dr)		Stensen, Josette		Vella, Mariella
		particularly on a moral ground, because the likelihood is that members of staff will resent each other, if the chosen timetable is the one that involves a reduction of lessons for a number amongst them who feel cheated by their colleagues. Fostering disunity between members of staff is no feasible way of tackling curricular issues!! Of course peer resentment is not the only big objection. Another more serious objection is that, as stated above, employment rights and opportunities may be undermined by the curricular reform, and the result will almost certainly be teacher unrest, all of which will ultimately have their toll on the students.				school level. Homework (like timetables and text books) are the responsibility of the Head (and the staff). Do respect the creativity, ethos and leadership of individual schools.
	C-	What the authorities have done in the NCF, unheeding of all other consequences, is create a number of timetable models under the supposed pretext of flexibility and better learning. In truth, the flexibility is simply not there, because schools cannot combine timetables together to adopt to their own human resource need.				
Syllabus	C-	I have skimmed through the new curriculum framework, giving particular attention to pages 59-61 and appendix II of book 3. These pages incorporate the various timetables and timetable models for the junior and senior years of secondary education. As I analysed them in detail. I was appalled to discover the negative way in which the document looks upon environmental studies subjects,				

		Buhagiar, Mary Anne (Dr)		Stensen, Josette		Vella, Mariella
		namely history, geography and social studies.				
Timetable	C-	Please refer to the timetables at pages 60 and 61 of book 3, because I wish to demonstrate the deliberately degrading approach that authorities have adopted towards Environmental Studies. Column C, which rightly provides for three lessons of Environmental Studies per week at Forms 3, 4 and 5 reduces the lessons per week of History and Geography in Forms 1 and 2 from two to one lesson per week. The reduction stands despite the fact that the authorities could have easily removed the school based discretionary choice of two subjects under this column. Columns D and E, then, leave unchanged the full current load of five environmental studies lessons per week for Forms 1 and 2, but reduce the weekly load for that subject from three to two at Forms 3, 4 and 5 levels. Indeed, what seems cruelly deliberate is that Column D reduces the lessons for the senior classes, although the number of lessons allocated for Maltese could easily have been set at four (rather than a choice between four and five). Finally, columns F and G which incorporate a 6-day cycle and could have easily preserved the current loads of Environmental Studies lessons at junior as well as senior levels, also keep on playing ping-pong with our subjects! Under column F it is the junior level that is allocated 3 instead of 5 lessons whereas under	I	If the idea of shorter breaks, longer days and more possibilities of subjects is going to be considered then children have to have their free time after school in order to do other personal interests not having more handwritten homework to do at home. They need their time to play too.		

		Buhagiar, Mary Anne (Dr)		Stensen, Josette		Vella, Mariella
		column G (which in total allocates as many as 43 lessons per week), it is the senior level that is allocated 2 instead of 3 lessons. Thus environmental studies gets an overall bad treatment in each of the timetables, unlike other subjects, which fare badly in some timetables but are somehow given a good treatment in others.				
	C-	Moreover, as for better learning, there is not the slightest indication that this will take place under the new lesson arrangements. The variations are too minimal for them to make any real difference.				
	S	I wish to state that in the case of our school and other Junior Lyceums, the best solution is yielded by timetable 2, provided the number of Maltese are set at 4 (not 5). Indeed this solution safeguards the collective interests of all Junior Lyceum teachers, not just teachers of environmental studies, because it is the solution that almost certainly excludes the need for redundancies without reducing the students' chances for success.				
Learning and Learning Environment	I	The modular setting for certain subjects, such as the arts education, technology education and health education is not adequately explained in the document. The term 'modular' does not always mean to convey the way in which one subject may be found to alternate with another during the same academic year.				
	S	Indeed, I further believe that the modular approach should as far as				

		Buhagiar, Mary Anne (Dr)		Stensen, Josette		Vella, Mariella
		possible be avoided in any curriculum, because what it entails is a very superficial teaching of the subjects concerned. Superficial teaching is not conducive to true learning for the simple reason that as its name implies, it can never qualify as quality teaching.				
	R	In my opinion, the D&T, HE & Arts education for years 9 to 11 should not be available as alternating modules through the academic year: they should feature as another separate fully fledged option stream. Thus, students will have to choose one of these subjects. Maybe other subjects can be added, such as health and well-being (which would interest future doctors and beauticians). Of course, I must make it clear that the present proposal of a fully fledged stream of non-academic subjects most likely to interest future professionals presupposes that the VET option has been removed from the NCF.				
Citizen Education	C-	The way in which citizenship education, as a learning area, is made to include not only social studies, history, geography and environmental studies but also “aspects from Personal, Social and Health Education and Home Economics” is also very misleading. The inter-disciplinary approach should not be dragged too far, in such a way that the identity of a subject becomes blurred. So in my opinion, the cited words must be omitted.				
Environment Science	C-	As I read the NCF, I could not help				

		Buhagiar, Mary Anne (Dr)		Stensen, Josette		Vella, Mariella
(History, Geography and Social Sciences)		wondering why some teachers, especially teachers of Environment Science subjects, are being treated like second-grade educators. What is ironic is that this attitude of discrimination against us is being committed at a time when so many new Social Studies publications are being placed on the local market!! To say the least, a curriculum wherein our subject features as in-and-out subject that is totally dispensable in the eyes of Malta's educational leaders, savours of acute injustice. Ultimately, the injustice is suffered not only by us teachers but also by our students who depend on us to learn.				
	C-	The indication is that, under the new curriculum framework, certain subjects such as Environmental Studies (meaning History, Geography and Social Studies) are being outright degraded, while others with no academic value whatsoever (such as health education) are being exalted beyond all reasonable proportions. What is deeply worrying is that in some of the timetables, health education is deliberately given a big number of lessons so that Environmental Studies (a three-subject based discipline) end up with two lessons!!				
Employability					I	I do not agree with Dr. Calleja's remark that one way to test the NCF is by seeing how it affects us as an employable society. I see this as an attempt to find a measuring tool to validate the whole process, but surely it is not the right way to

		Buhagiar, Mary Anne (Dr)		Stensen, Josette		Vella, Mariella
						measure the success or otherwise of an educational venture?
Lifelong Learning			C+	The idea of lifelong learning and more focus on sciences, more practical experience and more self development including spirituality is very promising and very good thinking		
Health Education	C-	I must also affirm that health education is a repetitive subject in the new curriculum, because it is already included under the syllabi of Social Studies as well as PHSE. I consider it shameful that so many lessons have been lavished on this new subject at junior as well as senior levels, while sacrificing lessons and livelihoods centred upon environmental studies.				
	R	My suggestion in this part of my email, therefore, is that, before it is too late, the proposed new subject of health education is scrapped and any basic information related to diet, exercise and lifestyle be incorporated into the PSHE and social studies syllabi. Moreover, health education can also be included in the vocational stream in due course.				
	I	I still cannot decipher what exactly is entailed in the new learning area of "Health Education". It certainly includes PE, HE, PSHE, but in truth the huge increase in the number of HE Lessons under the timetables generates doubt as to whether health education has become a more complex subject that contains many new topics.				
Science Education	C-	In my opinion, the new core subject:				

	Buhagiar, Mary Anne (Dr)	Stensen, Josette	Vella, Mariella
	<p>“Science” is not the great innovation that it is purports to be! I consider myself equipped with very strong evidence in support of my position, because I happen myself to be one of the very few students who studied “General Science” during my secondary school years. Besides, I have been teaching social studies (one of the three subjects that together form environmental studies). Up to this day, I believe that my choice of General Science (at the time, it had been offered as an option) had been erroneous. I still regret having chosen the subject, which has helped me very little in life. My teaching experience in the field of environmental studies, then can yield one important truth, namely, that students tend to get confused by the complexity and vastness of the subject and they end up discouraged by the idea of having to study three subjects combined into one. Indeed students who do not choose any of science subjects as their option subjects should be made to choose any one science subject (form physical, materials or life studies) rather than the core science subject! I cannot help recalling also that, as happens in environmental studies, it will be very difficult to find teachers qualified to teach all the three science subjects. So ultimately, the change from having physics as the only compulsory science subject should have pointed in a different direction. I believe that that, in the future,</p>		

		Buhagiar, Mary Anne (Dr)		Stensen, Josette		Vella, Mariella
		students should be allowed to choose any one science subject rather than being compelled to take up the core science subject suggest in the NCF document.				
PSD			R	In PSD lessons in my opinion children should be encouraged to write about their emotional feelings, opinions in order to learn to express themselves better in life.		
			I	At present children sit for exams in practically all subjects but why not have another one in PSD?? In my opinion this should be a very important exam as this may increase further knowledge in writing and self expression as part of life skill support. For example children will have a situation such as tackling anger management and after they read a story they have to give their views etc. in this regard I see the need for more life skills programmes supporting both children and parents.		
Vocational Subjects	S	I firmly believe that the vocational stream must be implemented with great caution, because it can easily ensnare academically capable students into preferring an easier way out, thus preferring vocational subjects to the harder, knowledge-based subjects. Tourism is particularly controversial because there are so many areas of pure knowledge that are required in this sector such as accounts, social studies, history, business studies, home economics, languages. Indeed, it appears imperative that, in many sectors, the				

		Buhagiar, Mary Anne (Dr)		Stensen, Josette		Vella, Mariella
		vocational stream on its own will hardly make sense and will have to be supplemented with the usual option subjects that feature in the list on page 55.				
	I	The VET proposed in the NCF purports to generate more flexibility. In truth however, the VET stream is distorting the true nature of vocational education. Vocational Education is to be defined as post-secondary training in a particular sector of industry. What the NCF is doing is distort the true nature of vocational training and degrade it to training for practising a craft. Maltese secondary schools are being turned into craft schools by virtue of the NCF innovation.				
Examinations and Assessments	C-	The authorities are fully aware that, in state schools, environmental studies are taught to students through three subject-teachers, so why allocate as few as two lessons at senior level? Shall we be expected to prepare our students for MATSEC as if we still had three lessons per week dare I ask? As far as I am concerned, I must make it clear that, with just two lessons of environmental studies per week/6-day cycle for the senior classes, it shall not be possible to prepare students for MATSEC.	I	We have to assess the child's ability as to what he/she want to do or what his/her abilities are in academic subjects or practical work. If we are thinking of introducing more languages we cannot exclude that some children are not interested at all in learning languages or focus on sciences but maybe they shine in physical activities or arts or music. Will schools and teachers be able to assess, encourage and work through such ways to support the child?		.
	R	The MATSEC board should give more choice to students in the environmental studies papers, so that students are enabled to answer questions based on only two of the three constituent subjects, namely history, geography and social studies.	C+	I agree with assessing the child all year through and give constant feedback to both child and parents, with more focus on the child developments and abilities so to be able to support further on what the child prefers to do in life and what		

		Buhagiar, Mary Anne (Dr)		Stensen, Josette		Vella, Mariella
		Thus students will be able to concentrate on two of the constituent subjects. A similar proposal can be made in relation to the core science subject, where students would be able to concentrate on two of the three science disciplines.		she/he is able to cope with rather than focusing only on exams.		
	C-	Underpinning the NCF provisions that deal with assessment, there is a frightening reluctance to resort to fully fledged, summative assessment by means of formal examination. Indeed the word 'examinations' is deliberately avoided and seems to be taboo in the minds of the NCF creators. On the other hand coursework, the need to record non-formal learning in the SLC and in Profile, peer reviews, portfolios, self-evaluation techniques, on-going assessment in the context of innovative teaching methods – these are only some of the new methods of assessment that are being given a boost by the NCF. I consider this to be of grave consequence. Indeed, I believe that if such soft assessment methods are allowed to prevail over the traditional methods, the entire educational system will be doomed to failure! Once this happens, the process will have given birth to an unprofessional workforce unable to cope with the demands of the industry of our day. The results will be devastating – incompetent lawyers, doctors, architects, accountants etc etc In Malta, people from all walks of life make the fallacy of separating theoretical from practical skills. They				

		Buhagiar, Mary Anne (Dr)		Stensen, Josette		Vella, Mariella
		try to justify a lowering of educational standards by assuming the workplace does not really need big brains and far reaching theoretical knowledge after all!! I feel the creators of the NCF have precisely committed this big mistake not only upon curricular level (eg. By introducing the VET option) but also on the assessment level.				
School Outings and Extra-curriculum Activities	I	I am really concerned about the new curriculum, in that I think that it is not fair for children in the secondary years to have too many extracurricular activities especially in Form 4 and Form 5, as required by the new school leaving certificate... Nowadays, they have to do all O' Levels in Form 5 (which I do not agree to either – as I think that one should have the option to do O' Levels during Form 4 as well), with a much higher standard than our days. Malta is having a problem with young teenagers with depression and I think this is the problem – they have too much stress during their secondary education, let alone have to do other extra curriculum activities during this period of great study.				
Social Needs			S	We cannot exclude the fact that more children are coming to school from very difficult and unstable home environments that although schools provide better teaching and more fun ways of learning, unfortunately some children have to face other distractions within their family situations which will be carried into the classrooms too.		
			S	So such children will have less		

		Buhagiar, Mary Anne (Dr)		Stensen, Josette		Vella, Mariella
				concentration span to cope with others and develop their abilities. They may also not have parents who encourage them, support them or participate in what is going on in schools. Maybe this will add up on absenteeism which is also a present problem having drop outs at an early age.		
Parental Involvement			R	In my opinion schools have to find ways and means to reach parents (being both parents or single parents) more, especially those who have difficulties within family environments, those who have more difficult situations with their children such as in parenting and even those who make no contact at all with the school. Therefore I see that there should be more social work support in schools and more guidance teachers/counsellors and maybe support groups for parents in the evenings to reach both fathers and mothers and nowadays even support to grandparents who are very much hands on with child minding etc.		

		Mifsud, Sarah		Portelli, Raymond		Moore, Charlotte
Principles	C-	I totally disagree with the new curriculum.	C+	As a head of school with extensive experience, I am convinced that the changes elicited in the NCF and the wide consultation that has taken place and is still ongoing, will result in greater respect and dignity towards the teaching profession. I am certain that this respect and dignity will encourage the same educators to impart on their students the same spirit of change and enthusiasm that are embraced in the NCF.		
Cross Curricular Concepts					R	It is essential that subject curricula are devised in a way that help teacher of different subjects plan and implement cross curricular activities.
Syllabus					R	Education Officers, and other professionals who devise the curricula, should collaborate to develop curricula of different subjects that complement each other.
90 Minute Curricular Development					I	Teachers require time and resources in order to be able to plan and collaborate. Even though in the proposed timetables this has been catered for, at times collaboration is difficult due to trivial things, including lack of time and opportunity for planning together, especially in large schools. In my opinion, it is so much easier to carry out cross-curricular activities in schools with a small population of students and teachers.
Professional Develop					R	One of the aspects of professional training for teachers should focus on how to plan and implement sessions using the thematic approach. Even though primary teachers have been trained in this area

		Mifsud, Sarah		Portelli, Raymond		Moore, Charlotte
						during their course at University, secondary teachers have not been given extensive training in this regard. In-service training held for teachers and LSAs should reflect the expected collaboration between different subjects.
Timetable	S	Our school time should totally be the same.				
PSD					C-	In the NCF documents the term Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) is used instead of Personal and Social Development (PSD). A change in name, without a rationale is not desirable since the term PSD incorporates much more than the term PSHE. PSD can be defined as the end result of Personal and Social Education.
					C-	Aspects from PSD have been included under Health Education and Citizenship Education. In the NCF there are aspects which are exclusive to PSD. However, various aspects of the NCF are also the basic principles of PSD.
					R	The rationale and methodology of PSD are completely in accordance with NCF rationale, aims and principles. In this regard, I suggest that PSD is removed from the Health Education and Citizenship Education categories and be presented on the diagram (Document 2, Figure 2.4) as the "glue" that holds learning areas together.
Managing Change			R	In my opinion the most delicate part of the process is to plan well how to ensure that teachers, students, parents and services will complement each other in the most efficient manner for the benefit of all.		

	Cauchi, Edward	Calleja, Matthew	Ciantar, Fiona
Timetable			C+ I liked the idea of introducing longer break times so that the children might participate to some activities during break time.
Learning and Learning Environment		R More innovation and creation should be employed to devise new and more interesting teaching methods.	R I have a suggestion about homework. I'm not sure if this has anything to do with the curriculum. But of course the children's time at home is an extension to what they are doing at school. Homework is very important – I think. I don't agree with a no homework policy, but too much homework can be a little hindering. I try to keep to a strict policy that if the homework has been given it needs to be done. I also think that extracurricular activities are very important. ... My suggestion is- can the curriculum have some clause , or maybe some guideline to teachers to make sure that this balance can always be reached. Maybe in primary schools introduce the idea of given homework that can be concluded in about an hour everyday - for example. Maybe suggest a no homework day. Can different teachers in secondary schools have meetings to discuss homework given out to students to make sure that they are not being burdened too much. I think that this can happen in older years when there are subjects with different teachers and different homework.
Physical Education			C+ I liked the target to increase exercise time everyday
Science Education			C+ I liked the fact that the children are going to be more exposed to Science

		Cauchi, Edward		Calleja, Matthew		Ciantar, Fiona
						and Technology
Art Education			R	Arts, Drama and Music Lessons should be increased.		
Languages					C+	I liked the introduction of a second foreign language
e-Learning			R	E-Learning should be introduced in all subjects and the use of computers made intrinsic to the learning process.		
School Outings and Extra Curriculum Activities			R	Educational outings should be increased.		
Comments		e-Mail constituted a request to meet with pertinent authorities to discuss to discuss further the involvement of music/art performance in Maltese education and the provision of artistic services within Maltese schools. We have already been involved in various projects with the Education ministry through the past months.				

	Borg Josef	Curmi, Michael	Vella, Kaia
Principles		C+ I am definitely in favour of a big chunk of what was proposed, and may other parents see this as a positive and new approach within our children's creative and developing mindsand not complain that the kids have to take their PE kits with them every day to school! Let them indeed take their kits everyday if need be , as this will be one of the countless opportunities to help them develop properly , and will put a smile on their faces.	
Children in Class			R I will be happier in bigger classes with less children
Timetable			R I will be happier if the school hours will be reduced
Learning and Learning Environment		S I feel that it is of utmost importance that students are not pushed to just be text and book orientated only: "mhux rashom gol -kotba biss , u kitba il hin kollu ." , izda homework bilancjat , u counter-productive .	R I will be happier if more games and more crafts organised
		S Children will go and do research out of their own freewill, as they will feel that they have got time to do it . More space for PE , music , drama arts and other creative work , will definitely work wonders on the child's mind .	R I will be happier if three times a week we have no home work
		R A balanced schedule of homework, will give the student time to breathe and enjoy working on other things. The more we force our children to study and pin their heads to the text book , the less creative they will be able to develop other hidden aspects of their capabilities .	R I will be happier if three times in a week we have class work then crafts and games only
		S Well it puts a smile on my children's	

		Borg Josef		Curmi, Michael		Vella, Kaia
				face whenever they come from school and tell me , " today we had lesser HW , and we read a book , and learnt something new about other things , since we had the time to do so !		
History	C-	I would like to express my disagreement about the proposal in the nmc which states that history as a subject is going to be under an umbrella called citizenship and which includes a number of other subjects.				
	C-	In this manner an important subject which in my opinion helps in providing a more holistic education to generations such as history would be reduced to a much lesser importance.				
	S	I also refer to reports coming from Britain where citizenship had been taught for quite a few years and now they are reconsidering its effectiveness.				
	I	In my opinion history would be rendered to a very general one having future generations deprived of going in depth in the subject since little time would be allocated for history lessons. This would drive us in a very dangerous situation since when a society does not know its past it would be a society which lost its memory and roots.				
	I	I also question how the present compliment of history teachers would be necessary if the number of history lessons is to be reduced significantly if it is placed under the citizenship umbrella. This would probably result				

		Borg Josef		Curmi, Michael		Vella, Kaia
		in having history teachers teaching other subjects in which they are not experts and have not studied at university.				
Physical Education					R	I will be happier if go to school in Pe.kit and ones a week with uniform
Languages					R	I will be happier if I have more Italian lessons because I like this language.
Facilities and equipment					R	I will be happier if more computers in our classes
					R	I will be happier in a bigger school

		Nathan E Phillippi		Bonnici Sara		Buhagiar, Victor
						Feedback submitted in the form of a questionnaire
Principles					C-	NCF is trying to teach a lot on everything in less time – this will never make Malta a professionally developed country – we are going to remain a ‘jack of all trades, master of none’ country – creativity and research needs focused people
					C+	Agrees to a large extent with aims of NCF re learners who are capable of successfully developing their full potential as lifelong learners and who are engaged citizens in constantly changing local, regional and global realities, and to a moderate extent re learners who are capable of sustaining their chances in the world of work
					C+	Strongly agree with NCF re entitlement, diversity, continuum of achievement, learner-centred learning, quality assurance and teacher support
					C-	NCF trying to make so much of a centrally controlled radical reform that after all the time and effort put in will not take off – NCF is not sustainable and not taking into consideration the strain on church and private schools and ultimately on the parents’ pockets
Early Years and Primary Education					C+	Agrees with well-being, social and communicative competences
					C-	Disagrees with learning dispositions and intellectual competences
Autonomy					C+	Agrees with clear focus in colleges and schools on meeting the needs of all learners through increased curricular autonomy
Timetable			C-	I am a Form 2 student and i totally disagree with the new curriculum. our school time should totally be the same and we should be called form 2 not	S	The timetable should not be set by NCF but latter should only insist on minimum hours over a scholastic year – school administration with teachers are competent

		Nathan E Phillippi		Bonnici Sara		Buhagiar, Victor
						Feedback submitted in the form of a questionnaire
				year 8. although i am only a twelve year old girl, my rights should be heard because it's my opinion.		enough to carry such task – central control is never good
Learning and Learning Environment					C+	Agrees with Learning areas in the Primary years re languages, maths, science, religious education, citizenship education, technology education, arts education and health education
					C+	Agrees with Learning areas in the Secondary years re languages, maths, science, religious education, citizenship education, technology education, arts education and health education
					C-	Disagrees with 2+3 model regarding choice of options in secondary level since this is what we have today and is wrong
					C+	Agrees with support for all learners to achieve and succeed whatever their backgrounds, needs and aptitudes
					C+	Agrees with creation of active, inclusive learning communities which put learning and learners at the heart of all that they do and are accountable to their stakeholders
					C+	Agrees with seamless progression through early, primary and secondary years in the skills and competences required for lifelong learning
					C+	Agrees with learning which is active, personalised, relevant and purposeful
					C-	Disagrees with proposed range of subjects on offer during secondary years
					R	Include management principles and creativity in list of subjects
Lifelong Learning					C+	Agrees with development of lifelong learners who are engaged and responsible citizens
Geography	C-	I do not want to take much of your				

		Nathan E Phillippi		Bonnici Sara		Buhagiar, Victor
						Feedback submitted in the form of a questionnaire
		time so; this is a plea that you do not remove Geography as a study from your schools' curriculum.				
	S	It is such an important subject that so many people assume is just about learning place names, but it also focuses on the physical mechanics of the Earth as well as cultural interactions.				
	S	You don't want to make the same mistake that the American schools made by removing geography from our curriculum!				
	S	We brought it back in the 80's and are one of the most unknowledgeable countries about geography which is pointed out to us every year after the results of the geography bowl are reported.				
Languages					R	Place less emphasis on Maltese in favour of second foreign language
					I	Geography is more important than English Literature – Spanish or Italian Literature are equally as important
Vocational Subjects					S	Should not be introduced in Year 9; textile is out of date in Malta
Examinations and Assessments					C+	Agree with assessment strategy for all the three cycles of education
					C-	Primary - benchmarking exam is nothing but a common entrance exam offering no solution – if assessment from Year 4 is adequately controlled together with a monitored school exam would be more than enough
					R	Secondary – MATSEC should adopt (ideally immediately) a more flexible approach – students should be allowed to sit for any

		Nathan E Phillippi		Bonnici Sara		Buhagiar, Victor
						Feedback submitted in the form of a questionnaire
						exam if they feel competent to do so. Exams should be held twice a year doing away with the re-sit system.

		Ghirxi, Kevin		Bezzina Charlie		Etienne and Leona Sciberras
						Parents of 4 children attending church schools
Focus on / Early Years						
Teaching / Teacher Philosophy and Capacity						
Autonomy	I	The NCF, however should provide and allow space for Church schools to develop or enhance their own policies and practices in order to continue developing their own unique identities, ie the school's autonomy needs to be reserved.				
	R	The NCF is being promoted as a flexible instrument that may be adapted for and by each individual school. This flexibility that is being talked about ought to be defined or developed further and must be rooted more in the proposals. For instance, it seems that requesting schools to choose one of the proposed timetables or a single level of LSA inclusion are some examples of the rigidity that the proposed NCF is establishing.				
Timetable			S	<p>I think it is not fair to have school hours longer but than if it needs to be done it has to be done.</p> <p>BAD: The activities out of school could not be held and what time are us children going to do our h.w and study??</p> <p>GOOD: We learn better</p> <p>Longer lessons mean, that we can</p>		

		Ghirxi, Kevin		Bezzina Charlie		Etienne and Leona Sciberras
						Parents of 4 children attending church schools
				understand the lesson better		
90m Curriculum Development						
Peripatetic and Assistant Teachers						
Differentiated Teaching					C+	We liked the idea of various methods of learning - through personal experience even 4 siblings have their own way learning things
Language as a Medium for Teaching						
Learning and Learning Environment					C-	Re secondary, we do not like the increase in subjects
					C-	You state that you want to help children enjoy learning but from 3 years onwards there is no more fun left in students with so much work and time pressure
Learning Subjects						
Languages	C-	We also have considerable concern that not enough study and emphasis has been given in the NCF regarding bilingualism.			I	Will the languages be taken as an introduction to the senior school or are they going to be tested on them too like any other subject? If latter we are very against this idea.
Maltese						
English						
Foreign					C-	We do worry about the idea of the children being introduced to foreign languages at such an early age
Science Education	I	As parents we need to be assured that the proposed changes in the science subjects are fully endorsed by the University of Malta. We have been informed that in the past, certain decisions in a number			C+	We do like the idea of Core Science

		Ghirxi, Kevin		Bezzina Charlie		Etienne and Leona Sciberras
						Parents of 4 children attending church schools
		of subjects (such as accounts, economics, and IT) were not supported by the university of Malta, with the consequence that students had to find a more stressful environment in sixth form or take private lessons.				
Religious Education	S	Parents choosing a church school for the education of their child freely make specific commitments to the religious ethos of the school. As parents we are not against the setting up of the so called "ethics classes" proposed in the NCF for state schools. This makes sense in their context.				
Vocational Subjects						
PE and 30m / Day Allotment						
Facilities and Support Structures and Services	I	The document speaks of 'resources' ie smart boards, laptops for teachers, robots and other expensive tools used by students and teachers alike. Presumably these resources allocated to state schools are publicly funded. It seems that at present church schools do not enjoy these same privileges. Presently, church schools have to purchase their own resources by funding them from "donations" or fund raising activities. Moreover church schools do not enjoy a VAT exempt status for these educational materials. I believe				

	Ghirxi, Kevin	Bezzina Charlie	Etienne and Leona Sciberras
			Parents of 4 children attending church schools
	that this is a discrimination against the parents of children who are attending church schools and therefore the matter should be addressed as a high priority item.		
Examinations and Assessments			C+ Re exams, we like the idea that all their mark will be taken into consideration and not only the final exams
			I We did not understand the idea of benchmarking – will this have the same effect in both church schools and state schools?
			R If to help kids understand that the secondary schools is a continuation of the primary, couldn't you assess them instead of stressing them with benchmarking?
			C- You need to do something to ease up on the secondary and most important on the MATSEC
			I Why does the average mark always change? Why are the MATSEC papers at time too high a level?
			I Having more subjects would not be a bad idea if the MATSECs were not such a pressure
			I Why are MATSEC level papers so difficult at times, almost equal to A levels?
			R We prefer that children are assessed throughout the year instead of being given exams
			R If most of students do well in SECs in a year, the average mark will shoot up – we believe that mark's average should be fixed and the paper should be of 5 th

		Ghirxi, Kevin		Bezzina Charlie		Etienne and Leona Sciberras
						Parents of 4 children attending church schools
						form level
Comments						

		Mallia, Andrew		Abela, Noel and Ellul, Sarah		Izzo, Anton
Principles			C+	As the NCF suggests it is important to have the learner (the student) in the centre of learning. We thought that there will be a positive impact on the child when he is the centre of learning. We must consider the baggage of knowledge the child has and make use of it in class.		
Early Years and Primary Education			S	The NCF mirrors the Early Years environment. We discussed that the environment in which the children are set need to be appropriate. Early years practitioners in our school do set up the environment for the children. In our school this is done through the use of the literacy room and mostly the discovery room, where children have the chance to practice what has been taught in class.		
Teacher Support			R	Regarding the issue of teacher support we thought that it is essential not only to newly qualified teachers but to all teachers.		
			R	Church schools needs the appropriate resources (human and ICT) to be able to implement the NCF proposals		
Cross Curricular Approach			S	In our school the cross-curricular themes that the NCF proposes are already in place.		
				As the NCF proposes the cross-curricular lessons should be covering the same themes and topics as the teacher's topics in class. Therefore the cross-curricular themes mirror those mentioned in the NCF. This means that during, example, the Science we cover the same themes that we do during the other lessons (English, Maltese, Maths, Religion, Civics).		
Quality Assurance			R	NCF should concentrate more on quality than quantity – it is more important for the		

		Mallia, Andrew		Abela, Noel and Ellul, Sarah		Izzo, Anton
				children to understand in depth a topic than to rush through the topic and children will not understand it well		
Syllabus			I	Not enough time and resources available to cover all the NCF proposals – syllabus etc.		
			R	The NCF should be more focused on the quality and not the quantity. We thought that the quality is much more important than the quantity. It is more important for the children to understand in depth a topic than to rush through the topic and the children would not understand it well.		
			R	We spoke about the element of flexibility with the time-table. It is important to work according to the children needs and not move fast to finish and cover the curriculum and the syllabus.		
			R	Time table should not be fixed to the teacher but flexible to the needs of the children e.g. dedicating more time during English lessons than Maltese		
90m Curriculum Development			C+	Curriculum meetings for teachers are positive. These are present in our school and they should remain there as it is the time where the teachers meet and discuss what has been covered and what will be covered in the coming days. It is important for the NCF to propose meetings like these.		
			R	Hold curriculum meetings for teachers during school hours whilst the students will be having extra-curricular lessons		
Teachers Roles and Responsibilities			S	In real class situation, the LSA has more duties than what the NCF proposes – an LSA with only one child helps the class teacher with other children		
Learning and Learning Environment			C+	Placing the learner (student) at the centre of learning will leave a positive impact on		

		Mallia, Andrew		Abela, Noel and Ellul, Sarah		Izzo, Anton
				the child		
Geography and History	C-	My question is where do the subjects of geography and history fit within [key Concept 8 of the NCF]				
	I	Furthermore, given the absolute importance of these two subjects in providing a framework of general knowledge that allows understanding of other issues, why is it felt that that Citizenship should be given greater importance?				
	I	History and World Sciences seems to be a far more important learning area given that it impacts on all the other learning areas mentioned.				
Religious Education			C-	The NCF does not mirror the school practice with regards to the religion practice since it is a church school		
Languages			C+	Exposing children at young age to another foreign language is a good thing		
			I	The NCF will impact primary classes in this school if a new foreign language is introduced at an early age roughly from grade 3 onwards		
			R	If foreign language is introduced early then it should be one which is most spoke abroad (French) concentrating more on the language skills than the writing and the grammar		
			R	At least the language skills should be mostly introduced more than the writing and the grammar of the language so that the children will get used to the language and also some of the vocabulary. It would be good if students at a young age will be		

		Mallia, Andrew		Abela, Noel and Ellul, Sarah		Izzo, Anton
				exposed to another language apart from the Maltese and English language. As it is best for children to learn a language at a young age.		
Examinations and Assessments			S	The informative assessment is done as proposed in the NCF.		
			R	Individual assessments need to have their own time and space and not done during the lesson – NCF needs to find ways how to do this		
Facilities and equipment			S	Church schools needs the appropriate resources (human and ICT) to be able to implement the NCF proposals		
			I	The NCF talks about professionals like counsellors, play therapists and school nurses – such professionals are not present in this school and it is felt that it is important to have them		
			R	Teacher support is very important but has to be extended to all other professionals – LSAs, nurses, counsellors, social workers		
Financing			I	The NCF offers ideal situations however to implement it you require a large number of resources and modern technology who is going to fund it. Funding for resources are not always available to non-government schools. From these modern technologies the child feels more involved during the lesson and helps them to understand more what is being done in class. Example it would be a positive impact if each class would have the use of an interactive whiteboard.		
School Outings and Extra-curriculum Activities			S	Our school offers extra-curricular lessons at a young age. This is a positive thing as from a young age the children will be exposed to lessons such as arts, creative		

		Mallia, Andrew		Abela, Noel and Ellul, Sarah		Izzo, Anton
				arts (drama & music), ICT and physical education.		
Parental Involvement			S	Regarding the issue of parental involvement, we concluded that throughout the year we have a lot of parental involvement. Some of the things mentioned in which we consider the parents are through the use of school circulars, the use of the school diary, school meetings, PTA, emails and also class websites (to keep the parents updated).		
Management of Change			R	There should be evaluation and monitoring of the NCF		
Special Needs					R	As parents of an autistic child, we recommend that in the benchmarking in year 6, autistic children are given all the support possible like grid charts, multiplication charts – even if necessary a calculator.
Special Needs / Issues					S	This is not so that these children get high marks but as to encourage them since they tend to easily lose attention. At the end of the day both the teachers and us parents would know where these kids really ability stands. We have suggested this because in the booklet you have circulated nothing is mentioned in this regard.

		NCFCP A
		Document No 9
Principles	C-	Does not ensure entitlement and respect of diversity: centred around the average, non problem learner.
	C+	Rationale and aims of NCF are positive provided all learners irrespective of ability, background are guided to reach them.
	I	Strongly agrees with the 10 key areas which emanate from the NCF but not with the ways envisaged for them to be put into practice
Teacher Support	C-	Not clear how teachers can refer to the support structures, for instance on how to train adequately and who to turn to with difficulties in relation to differentiated pedagogy.
Differentiated Teaching	C-	Children with learning difficulties and disabilities should have been tackled n more depth especially due to the introduction of differentiated pedagogy.
	R	Needs to move away from focusing massively on the 'average' learner and to consider a serious adaptation of its principles for different scenarios in order really to guarantee entitlement and diversity.
Cross Curricular Concept	R	Respect of diversity should be included as another cross curricular theme.
Quality Assurance	S	Important that the role of Education Officer is not undermined as they have a key role to play in accountability.
	S	EO visits to teachers in schools are very necessary.
Syllabus	C-	Quality assurance measures are lacking.
Children in Class		
Timetable	I	6 day cycles would mean confusion as learners would get mixed up in the things they have to take to school, etc: this is already very common especially in ASs (?).
Professional Development	I	Openings for persons who pursue their training need to be more clear.
Teacher Roles and Responsibilities	R	Beneficial for the students to have LSAs with higher competence in the subject, provided their training to work with pupils with learning difficulties / emotional / physical problems is full.
Learning and Learning Environment	R	Do away with Malta's early specialisation model - even tat Sixth Form level, the baccalaureate / maturita models offer so much more: choices should be made much later and important subjects even history, Maltese, English, Mathematics etc should be learned across the board at Sixth Form.
Business, Economics and Accounts		
Citizenship Education	I	Queries whether "non formal learning in CE will be recorded through the Secondary School Certificate and Profile" will result in standardisation across the different schools as how to tackle this matter.
Geography		
Health Education		
Technology Education		

		NCFCP A
		Document No 9
Mathematics		
Languages	S	Aim of bilingualism is to be ensured without prejudice to Maltese or English.
	C-	English should not be referred to as an "important international language of communications (Pg 50)" as it serves many important domestic uses too.
	C-	English is being granted less time which means a significant blow to language competence.
	C-	Multilingualism is mentioned therefore as an important aim but the number of lessons / week for foreign languages has been reduced.
Vocational Subjects		
Special Needs	I	Abroad (UK) a blind child may have up to 2 full-time LSAs to help her access the curriculum and move about the school: in Malta it is a peripatetic teach who comes for 1 1/2 hour sessions every fortnight: an all year round LSA is not provided in Independent schools not even for a blind child.
	I	Children with learning difficulties, emotional problems and physical impairment are being treated by Independent schools as second class learners / individuals.
	I	Current supply LSA system employed by Independent schools only encourages their LSAs to find better employment at the first occasion and this means that the same child can end up repeatedly and frequently 'dumped' by his LSAs.
	R	LSAs in private schools need to be employed full time.
Parental Involvement	R	Pg 61 "notes ... correspondence or communication notebooks": these need to be two way in principle and practice.
Management of Change		