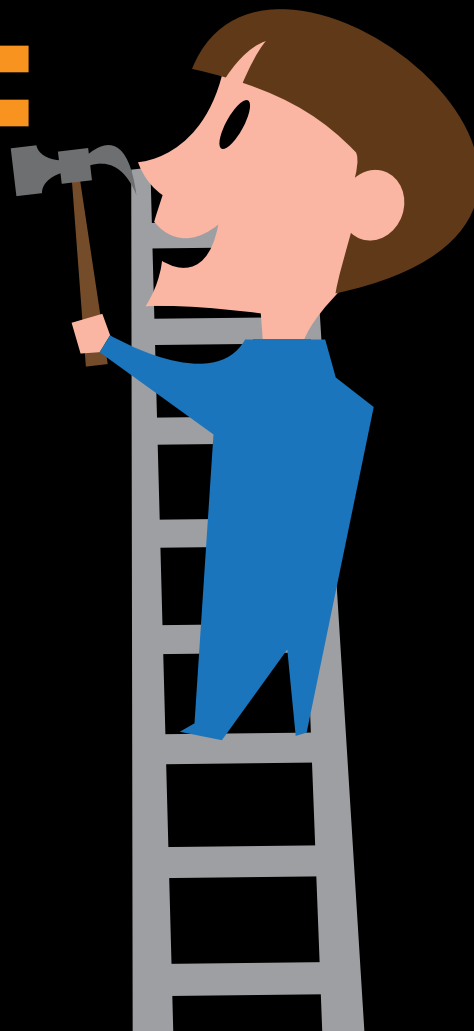


A commitment from
The Children's Plan

Your child, your schools, our future:

building a 21st century
schools system

a guide for children
and young people



department for
children, schools and families

1 Your child, your schools, our future: building a 21st century schools system

Here's a blank sheet of paper. If you were designing a really modern school, one for you and, in time, your children too, what would it look, sound, and feel like to be there?

Think about what a school is for, and the role it plays, or could play, in your town or village. What skills will you and your friends need when you leave? More than that, what sort of person do you want to be?

How would you help everyone, whatever their background or interests, enjoy learning? How could a future school make sure everyone has the same chances to be the best they can?

Jot down a few words or thoughts, draw some pictures if you feel like it, whatever comes to mind. Then turn over...

Did you know?

We all bring different experiences to the classroom: one in four children grow up with one parent. Thousands of you don't live with your parents at all. And some school children are the main carers for someone in their family.

School is changing – in new and exciting ways that will affect everyone, whatever year you're in. This booklet explains what's happening, why it's happening, and when you can expect to see a difference in your school.



How school is changing...

Fantasies aside, did your wish-list include any of these?

Tick the ones you think are a good idea.

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| ■ a personal tutor who knows you well... | <input type="checkbox"/> | ■ no tolerance for bullying or annoying or disruptive behaviour | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ■ if you're in primary school, you get to meet your new teachers before you move up to secondary school | <input type="checkbox"/> | ■ the latest computers and technology, and smarter classrooms | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ■ your health and happiness matter as well as maths or English | <input type="checkbox"/> | ■ one-to-one teaching when you have special needs, perhaps if you're dyslexic or could just use a bit of extra help | <input type="checkbox"/> |

How about these? Is this your idea of how a 21st century school should run....?

- you have a say in how your school's run, and how it can be improved
 - you have as big a role in your education as your teacher. Learning doesn't just happen to you – you make it happen
 - your school knows you well enough to help if you're having problems, either at school or at home, before things get out of control
 - teachers could be shared between schools, so that if your teacher is an expert in a particular subject, they might help out other children too. You could be taught by other specialists in return
 - when you're older, you could be going to another school, college, or a local business for some of your lessons
- if you're struggling with maths or English, you're not left to struggle, but can get extra support
 - a wider choice of subjects – and qualifications. Whatever your strengths, that means you'll get the skills you need and the recognition you deserve.

Tell me more

Personal tutor? Is that just a new name for my class teacher?

Every pupil will have someone who will help make sure you're doing well and are happy. In primary school, it could be your class teacher. But in secondary school, from 2010, it will be a named Personal Tutor. They will be able to help you with anything you're worried about or arrange extra support if you need it.



Tell me more

Lessons in another school?

No school can do everything we want on its own, so they may buddy up with other local schools to share teachers and facilities.

Tell me more

How much time will I get to play sport?

All 5-16 year-olds will have the chance to do five hours PE and sport every week, and three hours if you're 16-19.

Did you know?

If you're starting Year 7 this September, you will continue in education or training until you're 18. As well as sitting GCSEs and A levels, you can decide to learn practical skills, maybe study for a new Diploma or start an Apprenticeship – the choice is yours.

And does any of this sound attractive...?

- more time for sport and PE
- more trips, visits and time spent outside the classroom
- more help with anything you're worried about
- skills you need for life, and interests like playing in a band, reading for pleasure or competing in district sports, are all encouraged and valued



What it means for you

OK, we asked you to imagine you had a blank canvas on which to paint a picture of a great school. We gave you a list of things you may have included.

Well, the good news is we're not starting from scratch. Most of these ideas can be seen in some schools now. Your school may be one of them. The aim of the Government's White Paper *Your child, your schools, our future: building a 21st century schools system** is to make sure every school is like this.

We want every child in every school to succeed, at school and in life – not just some children in the best schools.

That wasn't just a list of ideas or 'wouldn't it be nice if's'. They are all things that, if your school doesn't already do them, you'll see happening in your school very soon.

It goes way beyond the classroom. This isn't just about better teaching, or even better learning. It's about your health and happiness, about feeling safe and cared for, about being involved.

Did you know?

School children in England are regularly some of the best in Europe when it comes to maths and science, according to a 2007 global study.

Hidden talent?

If you're pretty good at a subject, there'll be more support to help you improve further. And if you're a bright 14 to 19 year-old and you don't have the time or as much opportunity to study at home as you'd like, your school or college will be looking to work something out with you.

Look out for...

More teachers who specialise in one subject in your school – including specialist maths teachers in primary schools.

***What is a White Paper?**

Your child, your schools, our future: building a 21st century schools system is a White Paper. A White Paper is a publication in which the Government sets out what it intends to do. It's usually written after lots of discussions with experts and people affected by the proposals, such as young people, as this one was. This booklet is a short version of the full publication. To read it, go to www.dcsf.gov.uk/21stcenturyschoolssystem



Heart of the Community

Did you know?

Your school may share a head teacher and subject teachers with another school, especially when it comes to maths, sport and languages at primary school. You might also share governors – the people who make decisions about how your school is run.





Tell me more

In Dorset, South West England, 28 schools and colleges have clubbed together and set up a Primary College so that all 800 Year 6 pupils can have a go at over 70 workshops in all sorts of practical and academic subjects. For a week at the end of the summer term they work in mixed school groups on a large college campus. It's helped them make the move to secondary school – they make friends more easily and are more confident.

Life skills

You'll be learning more about things like relationships, managing your feelings, saying no to bullying and realising that it's 'good to be me' at school.

What's a school for?

The question isn't as daft as it sounds.

Schools sit at the heart of communities. They also have a big role, working closely with your parents or carers, in helping you develop into the person you want to be.

We want everyone to have the best chance of a happy childhood, and to develop the skills and abilities you'll need to succeed in life.

The world's changing fast, as you'll know if you've ever tried to explain Facebook or Bebo to your parents. You don't just need good skills, you need the confidence, learning and thinking skills to understand the world around you, and be able to adapt to change – or make change happen.

For that to happen, the Government wants to make it compulsory for your school to:

- **promote your education, development and wellbeing – and the education and wellbeing of all children and young people in your local area; and**

- **help to support the needs of the wider community.**

These two points add up to a very big change in the way that schools work.

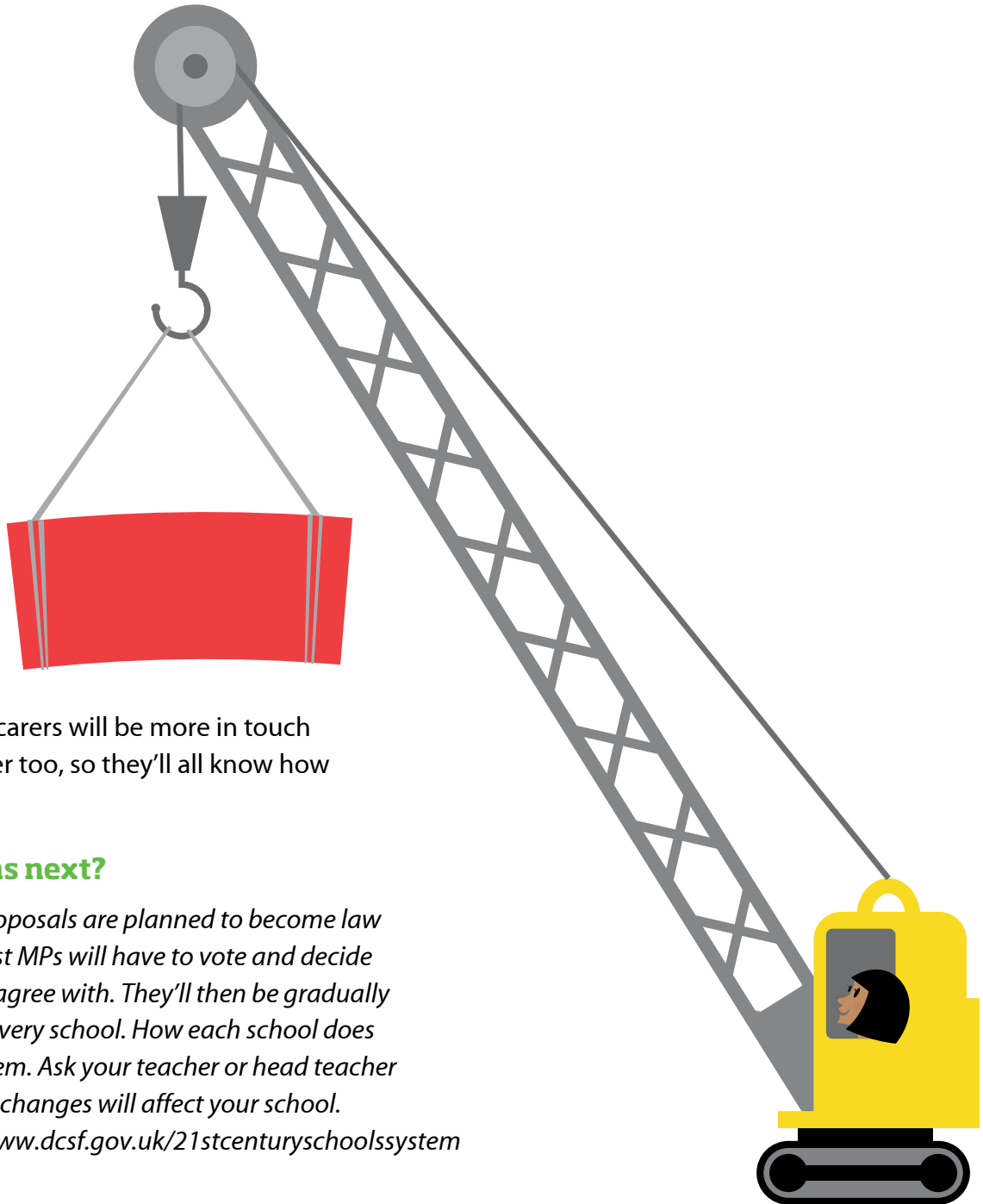
The words have been carefully chosen. 'Wellbeing' recognises that schools must look after you as a whole person, not just your education. 'Promote' is important here too, because we're saying a school won't do all the educating itself, but involve others like parents, doctors, and children's services.

And look at how a school has other responsibilities, not just to look after its own pupils.

Did you know?

School report – with a difference

Just as you get a school report, your school will too. It will mark pupils' progress and wellbeing, and check that no pupil is being left behind. You and your parents may be asked for your opinion on how well your school is doing. Look out for it from 2011.



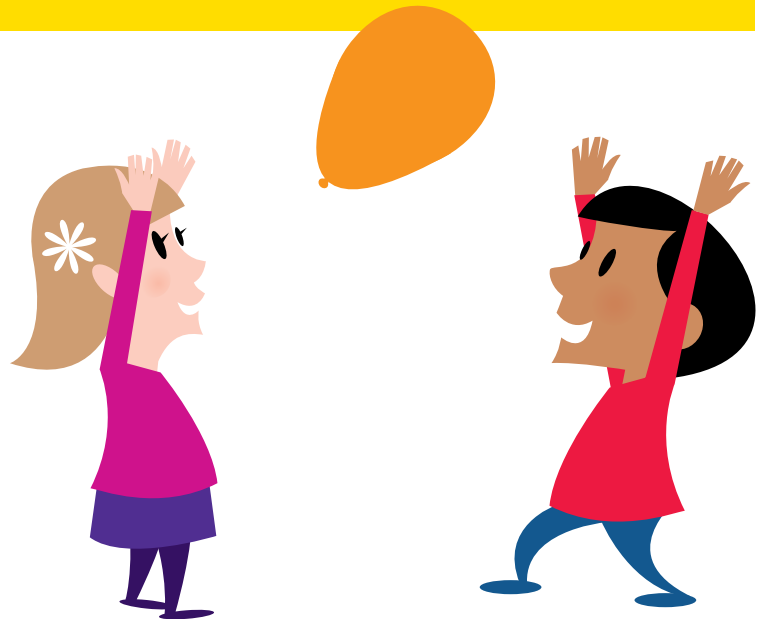
Your parents or carers will be more in touch with your teacher too, so they'll all know how you're doing.

What happens next?

Many of these proposals are planned to become law this year – but first MPs will have to vote and decide which ones they agree with. They'll then be gradually introduced into every school. How each school does it will be up to them. Ask your teacher or head teacher about how these changes will affect your school. Follow it all on www.dcsf.gov.uk/21stcenturyschoolssystem

Six more ways your school life is about to change:

1. Your school will ask your views, including when it's looking at rules on behaviour.
2. If you're at primary school, you can learn a new language and learn to play a musical instrument.
3. If you're good at science at Key Stage 3, you'll be able to study triple science GCSEs – biology, physics and chemistry.
4. If you're 5 to 16 you'll, have the chance to do five hours of PE and sport a week – in and out of school.
5. Your school will encourage you to eat healthily and exercise (if it doesn't already!). And look out for lessons in PSHE – it stands for personal, social, health and economic education and it's about helping you develop important life skills.
6. If you're 14 to 16, you can spend time helping out in your community or getting work experience.



You can download this publication at
www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications

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