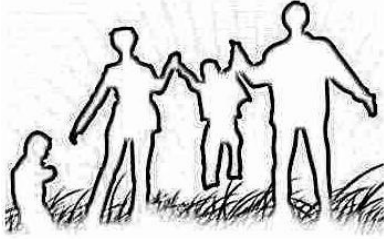


Association for Homeschooling

Association for Homeschooling
Vereniging vir Tuisonderwys



FROM :

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24 September 2010

TO :

The Acting Deputy Director General : Curriculum Policy, Support and Monitoring

Department of Basic Education

222 Struben Street

PRETORIA

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Dear Ms. M. Ramohapi

The Association for Homeschooling has represented homeschooling parents in South Africa since 1992 and Southern Africa since 2010 and promotes the freedom of parents to choose the type of education that is in the best interest of their children, as this is expressed in art. 26(3) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations. This declaration states : "*Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.*"

During the period of apartheid, home education was illegal in South Africa. The parents Andre and Bokkie Meintjies were jailed in 1994, and their children were placed in an orphanage, because they educated their children at home. Soon after this, home education was legalized in South Africa with the adoption of the new constitution in 1994. Since it was legalised, homeschooling has grown exponentially in South Africa.

The Association would like to use the opportunity to provide comments on the *National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements for all subjects listed in the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12*. The comments provided in this letter are a consolidation of comments from various members of the association and is provided in the format requested by the DoE.

Given that SA students have ranked last in all international studies from 1996 to 2008, the association regrets that the DoE gives only 21 days for taxpayers (*who fund the DoE*) and parents (*who's children are affected by the policies of the DoE*) to provide comments on such an important matter. The Association also regrets that while South African taxpayers are getting the worst value in the world for the tax they pay for education, this policy is published during a suspended teacher strike in which teachers are demanding an above inflation increase.

Given the limited time available, the Association could only analyse some aspects of the curriculum and reserves the right to make further comments at a later stage.

Yours sincerely

Bouwe van der Eems

(Chairman : Association for Homeschooling)

INTERMEDIATE PHASE

General	
Reference	Comment
1.1	<p>In this policy, the DoE prescribes in detail how much time should be allocated to the instruction every subject and each aspect of the subject. This takes away the freedom of teachers to use their own judgement to decide what the optimal time allocation is for their unique circumstances. There is no reason to believe that taking away the freedom of teachers to use their own professional judgement to decide what is in the best interest of the learners will improve the implementation of the NCS.</p>
1.1	<p>In principle, though, the notion of one national curriculum is an alarming threat to the survival of a society. The fact is that any curriculum can only represent a small subset of all the knowledge that is available at a particular time, and that is appropriate for children to learn at school.</p> <p>The existence of on one national curriculum dictates that all the children in the country will learn the SAME small subset of knowledge. This leaves us with a population who all know the same few things, while there is no-one who knows any of the other things that can be known and that may be essential for the survival of that society.</p>
1.3 (a)	<p><i>“The National Curriculum Statement Grades R - 12 gives expression to what is regarded to be knowledge, skills and values worth learning.”</i></p> <p>The NCS gives expression to the personal opinion the minister of education, mr. Kader Asmal, and it’s advisors of what is viewed worth learning.</p> <p>Given that the minister has received a room filled with letters and faxes of protest letters on the NCS in 2002, it can be concluded that NCS is not a reflection what parents in general view as worth learning.</p> <p>Given that the skills shortage has not been improved since the introduction of the NCS, it can be concluded that the NCS does is also not a reflection of what industry views as worth learning.</p> <p>Given that the public is only given 21 days to respond, it does not seem that a rigorous, fair, all inclusive, consultative, defensible, comprehensive and transparent process was followed to arrive at the weighty conclusions of what is worth learning.</p> <p>It is impossible that a curriculum can possibly address and ensure that ALL learners will be able to do the above. So every school going child follows the same curriculum whether it is suited for them or not, whether they enjoy it or not, or are able to follow their passion or not. Hence, they are forced to fit into ‘one mould for all’ which is decided by a handful of people, who could not possibly know what is good for every single child attending school. It continues to create unhappy children who just work through the system to get out of it as quickly as they can. I have not heard of any child that cannot wait to leave school.</p> <p>Unfortunately a lot of the <i>“knowledge, skills and values”</i> emphasised in the NCS policy document reflects a narrow ideological commitment closely paralleling that of South Africa’s Tripartate Alliance, which would, I expect, make the imposition of it on anyone not sharing these views, unconstitutional in the light of the freedoms of conscience and association that we enjoy in this country.</p>
1.3 (a)	<p><i>“It will ensure that learners acquire and apply knowledge and skills in ways that are meaningful to their own lives.”</i></p> <p>Since the introduction of the NCS in 2002, the use of drugs has continued to increase in schools. This trend does not seem to indicate that the introduction of the NCS has improved the way that learners apply knowledge and skills to their own lives.</p> <p>It is impossible for any written curriculum document to <i>“...ensure that learners acquire</i></p>

	<p><i>and apply knowledge and skills...</i>". The acquisition and application of knowledge and skills depends on the learners and their will/desire to apply any knowledge and skills they have. The NCS cannot guarantee any positive outcomes for either individuals or society in general.</p>
1.3 (b)	<p>The first principle given upon which the NCS is based , is that of "<i>social transformation</i>". This is a political principle and not an educational one. It is therefore unsuitable as a formative principle for this NCS.</p>
1.3 (b)	<p><i>"The National Curriculum Statement Grades R - 12 serves the purposes of - equipping learners ... with the knowledge, skills and values necessary for self-fulfilment, and meaningful participation in society as citizens of a free country."</i></p> <p>Since the introduction of the NCS in 2002, the crime rates and corruption has continued to increase in South Africa. This does not seem to confirm that the introduction of the NCS has contributed to equipping young people for meaningful participation in society.</p> <p>Having the knowledge etc. for meaningful participation in society doesn't bear correlation with actual meaningful participation in society. The will and desire to do so are necessary. It must come from within the heart.</p> <p>What if you don't have an 'intellectual ability' for the one and only available curriculum proposed. Are you then classed as stupid or just put through the system and hold a matric certificate and to what value? I often employed people without Matric and had better results with them. They were not stupid by any means. They didn't have an attitude and they were willing to learn. When you really want to do something, you make it your business to do it. Matric or not.</p> <p>Some classroom memories I have are not good, especially when teachers made it their business to run people down and make statements like "<i>You will never make it etc</i>" What were they equipping that child with then?</p> <p>The large majority of what is being churned out of schools and in the work place is incompetent, possibly not through any fault of their own, but a failing system. The service industry is mostly a mass of confusion; the employer pays the price and has to provide for Skills. I have first-hand experience of that. I felt like I was trying to bring up children in the work place (Children with Matric) that had not been taught any values or skills worthwhile to my businesses, except to steal and be inconsistent and irresponsible.</p> <p>Can you really say children are self-fulfilled in school or by the system? A matriculate in 1st year university told us they have to re-do Math this year because their Matric Math was not sufficient. She felt so inadequate and felt a wasted effort at school. What is self-fulfilment? Something we attain for ourselves, completion etc School cannot give us that. That accomplishment or achievement comes when we are doing something we love. It happens all the time and being tested and not making the grade because you are struggling or not really interested could make you feel rather unfulfilled. There is no guarantee of self fulfilment in the school place.</p> <p>What values are being referred to? If we go by the value's children are forming at school, it is very worrying. Our youngest was strangled and dragged around a classroom in a private school, with less than 10 learners in a class, which promised a teacher present at all times. Children are on their cell phones during class the children are so bored, they listen to music with their earphones hidden in their blazers. I am convinced that values are first taught at home. How can one teacher possibly teach a huge class of children values, when there are so many different ideas of what values are. They can hardly control the class let alone instil any values.</p>
1.3 (b)	<p><i>"The National Curriculum Statement Grades R - 12 serves the purposes of facilitating the transition of learners from education institutions to the workplace"</i></p> <p>Given the skills shortage has not been improved since the introduction of the NCS, it can be concluded that the NCS has failed in facilitating this transition.</p>

	<p>Since the introduction of the NCS, university have introduced more additional admission tests, because matric results are not viewed as reliable enough to judge whether a learner should be admitted to a tertiary institution. The NCS has therefore failed in facilitating the transition from school to tertiary institutions.</p>
1.3 (c)	<p><i>“The National Curriculum Statement Grades R - 12 is based on the following principles - ... encouraging an active and critical approach to learning, rather than rote and uncritical learning of given truths.”</i></p> <p>The NCS does not approach all material using a critical approach. It uncritically accepts material in line with the personal opinion the minister, prof. Kader Asmal, of education and it's advisors as truth and uncritically rejects material that is not in line with this.</p>
1.3 (c)	<p><i>“The National Curriculum Statement Grades R - 12 is based on the following principles - Human rights, inclusivity, environmental and social justice; infusing the principles and practices of social and environmental justice and human rights as defined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.”</i></p> <p>The NCS is based on the so called “<i>values of the constitution</i>”, which is a subset of the values of the constitution as subjectively selected and interpreted by the minister of education and his advisors.</p> <p>I can't help but worry about how much longer we are going to have to hear about the imbalances of the past. How many years ago did the transition take place and how much further could we be if we all are willing to ‘<i>move forward</i>’.</p> <p>I am among those who are really sorry that education was not available to all in the past and I am delighted that things have changed. But I get the feeling it's because of harping on the imbalances of the past and feeling so sorry for ourselves that we are not moving forward. One thing for sure, it is creating hatred and hardness in the hearts of the younger generation.</p> <p>I know I am opening a can of worms, but why are so many little children begging. Besides how government spends and looks after themselves and makes empty promises to our Nation, who are now using what they are so often reminded of. “<i>I need to feel sorry for myself</i>” School is not as profitable to some as making collection, and they are there every day because they are getting an income. So why go to school. School is compulsory, but taking drugs, murdering and stealing go by unpunished?</p> <p>In practise, reading through these documents, when “<i>principles and practices of social and environmental justice and human rights</i>” are covered, it is a narrow sub-set of principles and even narrower selection of possible application that is repeatedly harped on: i.e. : human, plant and animal rights with special emphasis on unfair discrimination, gender issues, social transformation and sexual practices and health .</p> <p>There are far more and broader principles that would better serve the legitimate, stated purposes of the NCS: e.g. Honesty, Humility, Responsibility, Diligence, Kindness, Mercy, Justice, Forgiveness, Obedience, Mutual Respect, Interdependence, Equality, Informed thought and Action.</p> <p>A critical and less ideologically uniform appreciation of our constitution would teach that Freedom of Association implies a freedom to dis-associate. That Freedom of Speech implies the right to withhold comment, that Freedom of Conscience assures the individual that he/she is free think and believe counter-ideologies to those promoted by the NCS.</p>
1.3 (c)	<p><i>“The National Curriculum Statement Grades R - 12 is based on the following principles - Credibility, quality and efficiency; providing an education that is comparable in quality, breadth and depth to those of other countries.”</i></p> <p>According to the SA Education Report 2008, SA students have ranked last in all international studies from 1996 to 2008 and it has deteriorated even more since then.</p>

	<p>There is no indication that the education based on the NCS is comparable to those in other countries in a positive sense.</p>
1.3 (c)	<p><i>“Valuing indigenous knowledge systems; acknowledging the rich history and heritage of this country as important contributors to nurturing the values contained in the Constitution;”</i> is also given as an underlying principle. What does this mean?</p> <p><i>“Indigenous knowledge systems”</i> need to be defined, if we are expected to value them. Then again, why should we value <i>“indigenous knowledge systems”</i> in particular in the light of the fact that the <i>“rich history and heritage of this country”</i> is a tapestry of different cultures, ideologies, stories, beliefs, religions, knowledge of diverse origins, triumphs and tragedies?</p> <p>Surely knowledge should be valued for its accuracy and usefulness rather than for its origin, which may be interesting, but is ultimately irrelevant, since, unless we are speaking of divine revelation, all knowledge has as its origin in a human being, somewhere and at some time.</p> <p>As for <i>“contributors to nurturing the values contained in the constitution”</i>. Values aren't nurtured / grown. They are fixed in relation to pre-supposed absolutes (or relativisms, depending on the philosophy undergirding them) and can only be accepted or rejected.</p>
1.3 (d)	<p><i>“The National Curriculum Statement Grades R - 12 aims to produce learners that are able to identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking;”</i></p> <p>This aim is severely constrained and undermined by the fact that in formulating the NCS, its creators have already decided what is worth learning and what is not worth learning (ref.1.3(a)). Given that it seems that the DoE purposefully does not give sufficient time to the public to provide comment to the new curriculum policy, this indicates that the DoE does not appreciate any critical thinking when this is applied to the curriculum of the DoE.</p>
1.3 (d)	<p><i>“The National Curriculum Statement Grades R - 12 aims to produce learners that are able to - use science and technology effectively and critically showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others.”</i></p> <p>Given that the skills shortage has not been improved since the introduction of the NCS, it can be concluded that the NCS is also not a reflection of what industry views as worth learning.</p>
1.3 (d)	<p><i>“The National Curriculum Statement Grades R - 12 aims to produce learners that are able to: ... work effectively as individuals and with others as members of a team ...”</i></p> <p>I have noticed from many school going children <i>‘working as a team’</i> on projects often means one person always ends up doing the work, because that person is diligent and wants to get the work done, the others just take advantage of that and don't participate anyway and enjoy socialising more. The work gets done for them. Oh yes and not forgetting the projects for homework then extends to becoming the parents problem.</p>
1.4	<p>In this policy, the DoE prescribes in detail how much time should be allocated to the instruction every subject and each aspect of the subject. This takes away the freedom of teachers to use their own judgement to decide what the optimal time allocation is for their unique circumstances. There is no reason to believe that taking away the freedom of teachers to use their own professional judgement to decide what is in the best interest of the learners will improve the implementation of the NCS. This reduces professional teachers to administrative clerks that merely execute centrally prescribed procedures.</p> <p>It also presumes that all learners and educators are the same and that the same formula applied to every teaching situation and circumstance will produce a successful outcome. It overlooks the undeniable fact that every human being is unique and has a unique combination of temperament, talents and abilities. By implication, optimal learning conditions are not identical for every person.</p>

	<p>Will this really improve the curriculum or just frustrate the learners who might be struggling. How often in our family of two, does the one master something immediately and the other needs more attention. This will make sure there is no time for proper understanding for all which is already a huge problem.</p> <p>If teachers could do what they actually studied for, we might get better educated children. Instead the curriculum may also frustrate the teachers who will be very busy with administration. Or, as our children reported back, their teachers often spent a lot of time on their cell phones during what was supposed to be teaching time.</p> <p>Schooling is a business and when you run a business there has to be a structure and this is what the 'schooling business' requires, irrespective of what might be good or not good for the learners.</p> <p>The time-weighting is fascinating and in some cases inexplicable e.g. look how much time is given to DANCE!</p>
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Generic Home Language	
Reference	Comment
2.1	<p><i>"Learners will learn how language is used, and will develop a shared language for talking about language (a 'metalinguage'), so that they can evaluate their own and other texts critically..."</i></p> <p>What is this shared metalanguage? Language is language and words have defined meanings. We can't assign our own new meanings to words as this would then be deceiving others who do not know the 'metalanguage' as to what we mean when we use certain words.</p>
2.5	<p><i>"Language learning should be a natural, informal process..."</i></p> <p>Where better than in the home context where there can be natural interaction with a variety of people and situations for a variety of purposes. The natural examples in real life situations are vast and varied. These real life interactions that home educated children are exposed to can be used and analysed and expanded on in the learning process. One teacher can never model good practices in all of life's language applications in the real world outside the "theoretical" classroom. Group interaction and role play can be practiced between siblings, where possible, or with parents, grandparents, etc. It is not necessarily only possible between children of the same age in a school classroom.</p>
2.5 2.6	<p>The language approach requires that reading and writing must be done in groups. This approach makes the NCS Policy unsuitable for education at home.</p>
2.6.1	<p><i>"Learners who feel uncomfortable to read aloud, should not be forced to read in front of their peers but should rather be supported in a mentorship setting."</i></p> <p>It is impossible to achieve this mentorship setting (requiring collaborative one-on-one interaction) in a large class of children.</p>
3.4	<p>The teaching plan prescribes in details what teachers should be doing during each hour of the school year. Such a teaching plan assumes that all learners are the same and can progress at the pace of a fictitious "average learner". The reality is that all learners are unique. For some learners the pace will be too fast and they will get behind. For some learners the pace is too slow, and they will get bored. By prescribing the teaching plan and taking away the freedom of teachers to adapt the pace of teaching to the class, the DoE creates a situation where most learners will be either behind or bored. Only a small minority of average learners will be able to progress with their education.</p> <p>Once again ALL learners are not the same. I am very interested to know what the "average" pupil looks like? In classes of 30 to 40 pupils this is going to be tough going on the teachers. Our daughter was way ahead in her reading and the teacher wouldn't allow her to read more than 5 pages a day in case she finished all the readers! This</p>

	<p>would surely interrupt what the teacher has to achieve during each hour. The child that is eager to progress just has to be bored and frustrated and the child that is struggling will just have to stay behind.</p> <p>The teaching plan prescribes in details what teachers should be doing during each hour of the school year. It does not allow for interest-driven educational detours nor for the fact that individual learners, groups and classes may have special difficulties / giftedness and may work at different rates.</p>
4	<p><i>“Evidence of independent reading should be noted in book lists kept by learners.”</i> <i>“Evidence should be kept of how this final mark was obtained. Teachers should keep assessment tasks and memoranda in their portfolios.”</i></p> <p>This requirement confirms that the DoE does not view teachers as professional educators that can be trusted, but corrupt administrative clerks that should keep evidence of their work so that inspectors can check if they perform their duty as prescribed.</p> <p>Keeping evidence places an enormous administrative burden on teachers without adding any value to the lives of the learners. This suggests that the purpose of the NCS policy is not to improve the education of learners, but to increase the control of the DoE.</p>

Generic Additional Language	
Reference	Comment
2.1	<p>Many parents prefer languages other than the official South African languages as additional languages. Christians or might Jews might prefer Hebrew or Greek as an additional language, because these are the languages in which the Bible is written.</p> <p>Muslims might prefer Arabic as a first additional language.</p> <p>The limitation of additional language to the official languages of South Africa might therefore be out of line with the needs of many religious communities.</p> <p>The limitation of additional language to the official languages of South Africa might be out of line with the needs of certain religious or cultural communities. What if one learners' parent is Chinese? Why should Chinese not be acceptable as a second language for that child? What if a Muslim wants to learn Arabic or a Christian, Greek in order to better understand their holy books? Inclusive is a stated value of NCS.</p>

Mathematics	
Reference	Comment
2.3.3 (5.1)	<p><i>“Posing questions relating to human rights, social, economic, environmental and political issues in own environment.”</i></p> <p>One of the unreasonable purposes of this curriculum is to transfer the political ideology of the government to the next generation. Even subjects such as mathematics are used for this purpose by prescribing the material related to particular ideological outcomes to be used for the purposes of data handling.</p>
4.1	<p><i>“The minimum requirements for assessment in Mathematics Senior Phase are: 6 Tests; 1 Midyear/ Half-yearly Examination and 1 Final Examination; and 3 Assessments Tasks chosen from Assignments, Projects and Investigations. Records of the assessment tasks as well as the marks of learners must be kept.”</i></p> <p>These requirements are of no value to homeschooling learners. Because homeschooling parents are intensely involved with education of their children, they know exactly what their children can and cannot do. The purpose of a test or an examination is for a party that is not personally involved with the learners to determine what a learner can and cannot do. Since homeschooling parents already know this, there is very little educational value in doing tests and examinations, except in the case of the final matric examination.</p>

Life Skills	
Reference	Comment
<p>2.1</p> <p>2.5</p> <p>Religion Education</p>	<p><i>“Religion Education pursues the moral and ethical development of the learners, whilst they learn in a factual way about the various religions and beliefs which exist in South Africa.”</i></p> <p><i>“Nature and purpose of religion: role of religion in developing people as individuals belonging to a society – home, school and community environments.”</i></p> <p><i>“Teachings of different religions in South Africa: similarities and differences. Learning to respect differences, others’ rights and beliefs – learners share their religious beliefs and practices and importance of religion in their lives.”</i></p> <p><i>“Inequality and discrimination within religions: recognition of the rights of children and adults. Acts of inequality and discrimination within different religions. How religions are addressing inequalities and discriminations.”</i></p> <p><i>“Misconceptions about religions: how different religious beliefs and practices are misunderstood and misinterpreted by society – myths and realities about different religions.”</i></p> <p>The NCS Policy teaches learners about religion from a perspective that all religions are equal. It is unacceptable to many Christian and Jewish parents to teach their children about religion from such a perspective, because the Bible states : <i>“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD.”</i></p> <p>It is also impossible to say that a curriculum can teach religion in a “factual” way, since facts do not exist in a vacuum, but are always interpreted. The NCS Policy teaches learners about religion from an interfaith perspective, and not a “factual” perspective.</p> <p>The view of the nature and purpose of religion is in conflict with the views of Christians and other religions.</p>
<p>2.5</p> <p>Religion Education in General</p>	<p>The NCS Grades 4–6 Life Skills Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement states : <i>“ Religion Education pursues the moral and ethical development of the learners, whilst they learn in a factual way about the various religions and beliefs which exist in South Africa. It affirms learners’ own identity and leads them to an informed understanding of the religious identities of others. The teaching of Religion Education must be sensitive to religious interests by ensuring that individuals and groups are protected from ignorance, stereotypes, caricatures, and denigration...”</i></p> <p>I submit that no <i>“religious interests”</i> apart from that of the religious secular humanist can be sensitively approached by a curriculum which pays such scant attention to the spiritual nature of religion and the actual beliefs of the different religions. In 4 years and 160 hours of Religion Education, I can identify only 10 hours allocated to the knowledge / understanding of the beliefs/philosophies of the various religions .There is no reference to God or gods in 4 years worth of statement and only one direct reference to <i>“supernatural being”</i>, one to <i>“prayer and meditation”</i>, one to <i>“worship”</i> and two to <i>“spiritual”</i>.</p> <p>95% of the religious content that is there, involves the application of these (un-named) religions to life. But how can young children be expected to make informed application with so little exposure to the beliefs they are supposed to apply? It’s absurd.</p> <p>Most of the NCS statement is concerned with religious practices / rituals only as they relate to popular NCS themes like discrimination, sexuality, plant, animal and human rights, health, violence and abuse, and with subjects which have been misclassified and shoe-horned into the Religion Education curriculum on the flimsiest of pretexts. So we find <i>“the nutritional value of various foods”</i>; <i>“food groups”</i>; <i>“bullying”</i>; <i>“developing self-confidence”</i>; <i>“learning to share and take turns”</i>; <i>“personal hygiene and sexual health”</i>; <i>“how to cross a road safely”</i>; <i>“goal-setting skills”</i> and <i>“knowing the harmful aspects of some household products and medicines”</i> etc., all being stuffed in under the banner of <i>“Religion Education”</i>.</p>

	<p><u>eg. in Grade 4.</u></p> <p>We have 4 hours of <i>“Role of Religion in the development of the self: individuality and uniqueness. Skills to accept and appreciate oneself as a unique individual with unique religious beliefs.”</i> (This is Psychology, not Religion. And the writer needs to look up the dictionary definition of “unique.” There are precious few, if any, “unique” religious beliefs.)</p> <p>Then there are 3 hours of the <i>“Influence of religion on individual's choices relating to lifestyle: respect for own and others' bodies. Religious rules and skills for keeping oneself healthy and safe from harm: sexual abuse and violence- religion as a place of safety.”</i> (This looks like a forum for the discussion of sexual orientation and physical abuses.</p> <p>This is not Religion Education. But it is EXTREMELY concerning because it a) places the onus on the child to 'keep safe' and b) states that religion can be 'a place of safety'.</p> <p>Please tell me how sexual abuse by Priests in the guise of Roman Catholic confession rites; Temple prostitution (often involving minors) in Hinduism; The stoning of adulterous women in Islam ;unprotected sexual orgies during religious experiences in ashrams devoted to Krishna, so-called <i>“Gay churches”</i> , self immolation in Shamanism/Traditional African religions ; the fleecing of poor disciples by unscrupulous tele-evangelists and other extremely UNSAFE religious <i>“places”</i> are to be reconciled with this piece of curriculum? Any religion can be used as a vehicle for evil by people with evil intent. No religion can be called a safe place.</p> <p>Under the heading <i>“Acts of compassion in different religions”</i> we have</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Caring for the environment: What is a healthy environment? Activities by different religions to protect the environment. Ways of taking care of and protecting one's environment: home, school and community. (Ecology/Social Science/ Community Development? Yes. Religion? No. Not unless this is an oblique reference to prayers for protection, charms and amulets or exorcism....in which case, why not say so.) 2. Caring for others: Learn about own and others' feelings; become aware of own and others' views, needs and rights: other children and older people.....Religious rules and skills to communicate own views and needs without hurting others' feelings. (This is a thinly disguised exercise in Values Clarification. This is not Religion Education.) 3. Caring for animals..... <p>Points 1, 2 and 3 consume 10 hours of teaching time. Added to the 7 hours devoted to the preceding subject matter, and 3 hours devoted to <i>“Personal hygiene”</i> in term 4, we have 50% of the time allocated to the year's Religion Education being spent subject matter which is, at best, only tenuously linked to Religion.</p> <p>I could give many more extracted examples of dishonest representation of subject matter in Religion Education, but feel that the point has been made.</p>
<p>2.5 Religion Education in General</p>	<p>To say that the NCS on Religion Education <i>“affirms the identity of learners”</i> is not true. To think that the identity of a Muslim child who strongly adheres to Islamic law restricting the freedom of movement and choice of women, and which treats men and women differently under Sharia law, is going to come out of the 3 hours worth of <i>“Discrimination in religion”</i> lessons feeling affirmed in his/her beliefs is just silly.</p>
<p>2.5</p>	<p><i>“Religious beliefs and practices: fasting in different religions – when, how, why and how long. Health benefits and risks associated with fasting.”</i></p>

	<p>Many parents who are part of religious groups that practise fasting would not agree that this subject should be taught to their children from a comparative religion point of view.</p>
2.5	<p><i>“Decision-making skills: whether to or not to participate in own religious activities – looking at the pros and the cons.”</i></p> <p>Parents who view the transfer of their religion as part of their religion, will not agree that schools should teach their children that they have the right to choose to take part in this or not. The Bible clearly states : <i>“And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”</i></p> <p>To plant the idea that children can choose to participate in their own religion is creating conflict between children and parents and could promote the breakdown of families.</p>
2.5	<p><i>“Moral obligations of religions: moral lessons selected from different religions in South Africa. Lessons that promote moral uprightness, honesty and responsible citizenship: respecting laws and rules that govern human existence - obeying traffic rules, paying taxes and behaving well.”</i></p> <p>To promote the idea that paying taxes forms part of moral uprightness is becoming increasingly problematic to defend, since paying taxes to a corrupt government enables the government to continue with its corrupt practises.</p>
2.5	<p><i>“Discriminations against religions: acts of discrimination towards certain religious groups.”</i></p> <p>This NCS Policy makes it compulsory that children must learn about religion from an interfaith point of view. This in itself is an act of discrimination against religions. It is therefore ironic that a curriculum that is in itself an act of discrimination attempts to teach learners about discrimination.</p>
2.5	<p><i>“Activities by different religions to protect the environment.”</i></p> <p>It seems that Life Skills is also a channel through which the ideology of the Green movement in is unreasonably promoted.</p>
2.5 Grade 4 Week 1-2	<p><i>“Nature and purpose of religion: role of religion in developing people as individuals belonging to a society – home, school and community environments “</i></p> <p>From whose religious perspective will the <i>“Nature and Purpose of Religion”</i> be taught?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <u>The Secular Humanist's?</u> : Religions are human constructs to explain the world and give shape to society. God/gods/consciousness is a projection of the human self. <u>The Evangelical Christian's?</u> All religious practises are deceptive in nature and purposeless unless they have as their source a living relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Christian rules/law is a reflection of the God who gave them to the world to demonstrate God's requirements of humanity and our need of a saviour. The purpose of true religion is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. <u>The Hare Krishna's?</u> The highest path of religion is absolute, unconditional surrender to Lord Krishna, which frees one from all sins, brings one to complete enlightenment and enables one to return to Krishna's eternal spiritual abode. Religion's purpose is to free the soul from the law of karma which binds us to the material world (in perpetual re-incarnations of the soul) by engaging souls in transcendental devotional service, guided by a guru/realised teacher. <u>Animism's?</u> Religion is our service to the spirits/ancestors in order to gain their favour and co-operation with our human endeavours so that our selves,

	<p>families and societies will prosper.</p> <p>There are of course many more religious viewpoints represented in South Africa: Buddhism, Roman Catholicism, Satanism, Islam.....but in the couple of hours given to explaining all of this to a class of 9 year olds, they might struggle to get their minds around it.....</p>
4.3.6	<p><i>"Learner participation and movement performance in the PET will, therefore, be assessed through class observation and reported in each term."</i></p> <p>This requirement means that children with physical disabilities could get low scores for this aspect of the subject, which could negatively affect their overall mark.</p>

Natural Sciences and Technology	
Reference	Comment
GR 4 Term 1/3	<p><i>"Discuss human, plant and animal rights."</i></p> <p>The NCS Policy pretends to promote the constitution of South Africa. The South African constitution does not describe plant and animal rights. This confirms that the NCS promotes a subjective selection of the values of the constitution plus additional fabricated values that are not in the constitution.</p>
GR5 Term 2	<p><i>"In the past (millions of years ago) there were other kinds of plants and animals - now extinct Plant and animal fossils."</i></p> <p>Natural Sciences is taught from the perspective that the earth is millions of years old, namely the evolutionary perspective. Teaching Science from such a perspective is unacceptable to many Christian parents. The debate on evolution vs. creation is still under discussion in the media. When the Department of Education takes side in this debate and uses its power to promote one side of the debate, the DoE abuses its power to promote a specific religious viewpoint.</p>

Human and Social Sciences	
Reference	Comment
Overview of topics	<p><i>"Dutch settlement and slavery at the Cape"</i></p> <p>The content of the history course discriminates against the Afrikaner. The entire history of the Afrikaner is ignored, and the Dutch people from whom the Afrikaner originated are associated with slavery. It also ignores the history of the English in the Cape.</p>
Overview of topics	<p>The content of the history course ignores the moments of history that are important to many Christians, such as the history of the Reformation.</p>
Overview of topics	<p>As for Religion Education, the over-riding presupposition reflected in the NCS for Human and Social Sciences is that the subject should be used as a tool of the state to accomplish its own political and social agenda.</p>
Overview of topics	<p>We have the usual obsession with rights and under-emphasis of responsibility. Rights for plants are a taken-for granted in the NCS. Can thoughtless organisms like beetroots and earthworms really have rights? Should we not rather speak of human responsibility towards the natural world?</p>
Overview of topics	<p><i>"Teachers must teach about Nelson Mandela ..."</i></p> <p>To make the teaching on a former leader of a political party compulsory, is blatant political indoctrination.</p>

SENIOR PHASE

Life Orientation	
Reference	Comment
2.1	<p><i>"Life Orientation guides and prepares learners for life and its possibilities and equips them for meaningful and successful living in a rapidly changing and transforming society."</i></p> <p>This subject prepares learners for life from the perspective of the world view of the Department of Education. These things are in conflict with the things that parents that have for example a Christian would like to teach their children to prepare them for life. This is expressed in Psalm 119:9 in the Bible, where it states : <i>"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word."</i></p> <p>Life Orientation wants to prepare learners for society and the world of work. However, it does not mention anything about preparing learners to prepare for life in the family. Given that family is the building block of society, it is not possible to prepare a learner for society, if a learner is not prepared for life in the family.</p>
2.1	<p><i>"...tolerance for cultural and religious diversity ... they learn in a factual way about the various religions and beliefs which exist in South Africa..."</i></p> <p>This selective <i>"tolerance"</i> does not seem to include the child learning to cherish and value his or her own cultural background and religious convictions. What is the purpose of using the word <i>"factual"</i>? Are the learners otherwise learning things that are not fact? How will it be dealt with where the various religions and beliefs that exist in South Africa contradict one another?</p>
2.1	<p><i>"...sensitive to religious interests by ensuring that individuals and groups are protected from ignorance, stereotypes, caricatures, and denigration."</i></p> <p>Who will define what exactly these are? Can we have an extensive list of what the composers of this legislation define as ignorant views, stereotypes, caricatures and denigration?</p>
2.1	<p><i>"Participation in PE will nurture positive attitudes and values that will assist learners to be physically fit, mentally alert, emotionally balanced, socially well adjusted, morally true and spiritually uplifted."</i></p> <p>No prove is provided on how exactly is PE proven to cause learners to be morally true and spiritually uplifted? This seems to be a meaningless unfounded statement.</p>
2.1	<p><i>"Creative Arts provides exposure to and study of a range of art forms, that is, dance, drama, music, and visual arts."</i></p> <p>Who gets to choose specifically what dance, drama, music and visual arts children study and get exposed to? The possibilities are extremely wide ranging, including expressions that parents would not want their children exposed to.</p>
2.2 (vi)	<p><i>"... develop a positive attitude and understanding of different religions."</i></p> <p>Who decides when a child's attitude in this regard is positive enough? How is this positivity defined or measured?"</p> <p>Does aim (vi) mean that for example someone from the Islamic faith is expected to develop a truly positive attitude towards Judaism; or a Christian to develop a positive attitude towards the religion of Satanism? They are diametrically opposite and mutually exclusive. The development of such attitudes will be unacceptable to religious parents.</p>
2.5 (1)	<p><i>"Changes in boys and girls: physical and emotional (Gr. 7). Concept: sexuality (Gr. 8). Sexual behaviour and sexual health (Gr. 9)."</i></p> <p>Many parents object to the idea that sex education is taught at schools, since it is a</p>

	<p>subject that should be taught within the religious framework of the parents. If the NCS Policy pre-scribes that sex education must be taught at schools, then this makes schools unacceptable to such parents.</p> <p>In the teaching plan of the sex education, the idea that sex should be confined to marriage is not even mentioned. This approach to sex education is in conflict with the views of many religious communities.</p>
2.5 (3)	<p><i>“Leadership roles produced in various religions (Gr. 7). Oral traditions and scriptures in major religions in South Africa (Gr. 8). Central teachings of major religions in South Africa (Gr. 9)”</i></p> <p>The NCS Policy teaches learners about religion from a perspective that all religions are equal. It is unacceptable to many Christian parents to teach their children about religion from such a perspective, because the Bible states : <i>“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD.”</i></p>

Technology	
Reference	Comment
2.4	<p><i>“Wherever applicable, learners should be aware of different coexisting knowledge systems.”</i></p> <p>What does this mean in the context of the technology subject field? This seems to be a vague and meaningless statement.</p>
2.4	<p><i>“Learners should be aware of bias in technology and be able to express opinions that explain how certain groups within society might be favoured or disadvantaged by products of technology.”</i></p> <p>Which particular biases will be the focus of attention? This seems to be a pollicisation of a field that has very little to do with politics.</p>
2.5	<p><i>“All these designers need to have: knowledge of the conventions / building codes”</i></p> <p>One needs more that knowledge of conventions and building codes. This need to have a list leaves out the need for understanding and applying laws of physics, chemistry, mathematics, etc. and the ability to understand and perform engineering field specific design calculations.</p>
2.7	<p>Time allocation of 1 hour per week for practically making technology objects will be inadequate. Are there enough suitably qualified and experienced teachers to bring this subject to life and impart their knowledge and enthusiasm for technology to the learners? What will entice these “scarce resources” out of “industry” and into the classroom?</p>