

Response to the Alexander Report February 2009 - press release to the CfSA  
Geographical Association March 2009

- The Geographical Association (GA) applauds the range and depth of this genuinely independent enquiry into the state and future of primary education: the investment and process of which recognise the significance and importance of this stage in children's learning. We believe that this is a time when children should experience a broad and relevant curriculum and agree wholeheartedly with the Report's statement that standards and breadth of curriculum are interdependent.
- The GA considers that the aims (for a new curriculum) suggested by Alexander offer great potential to explore the concepts of what the GA calls 'living geography': the inclusion of sustainability and interdependence at this level of organisation within a new curriculum structure is warmly welcomed, as it recognises the importance of futures thinking in an education agenda for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- The proposal to offer a curriculum with national and local components is seen as a positive opportunity for all schools and an opportunity for geography to underpin curriculum relevance and community cohesion within a wider framework of national and global perspectives. It is hoped that this 30% will be planned by schools and school networks, rather than local authorities. However, this does imply that effective teacher support would be of paramount significance.
- The GA strongly supports the view taken in the Report that vulnerable subjects such as geography require a 'campaign on several fronts' to assert their 'importance to human development, culture and education'. Like Alexander, we believe that the marginalisation of geography and other non core subjects relates in part to their neglect in initial teacher training (ITT) and continuing professional development. The GA is actively working to support teachers through the Action Plan for Geography to be confident and knowledgeable about the subject and its value and is well placed to provide further work in this area.