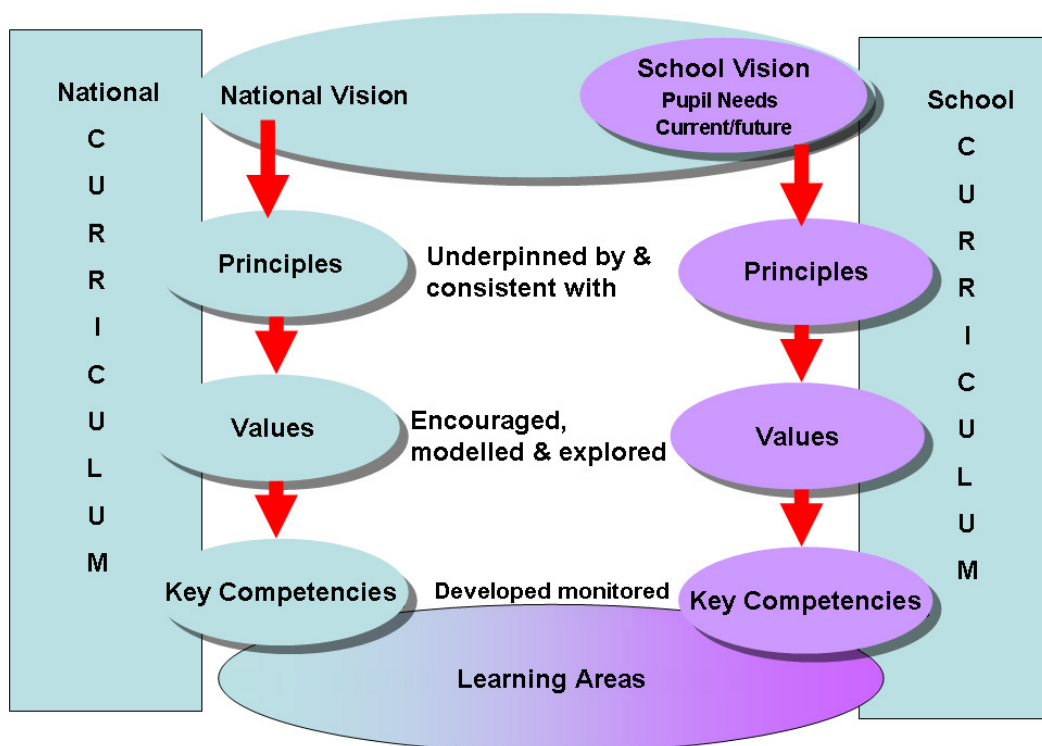
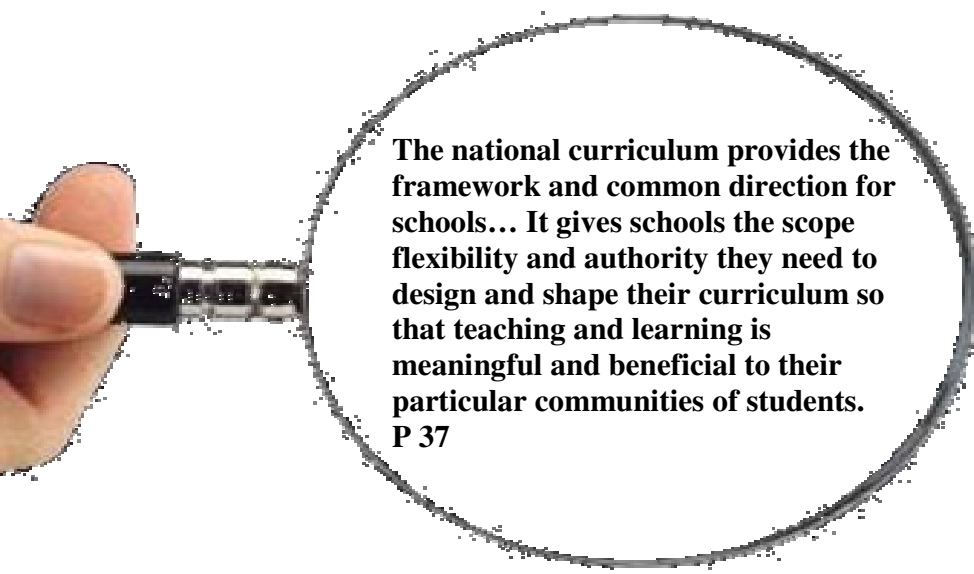


Get a grip on Competencies

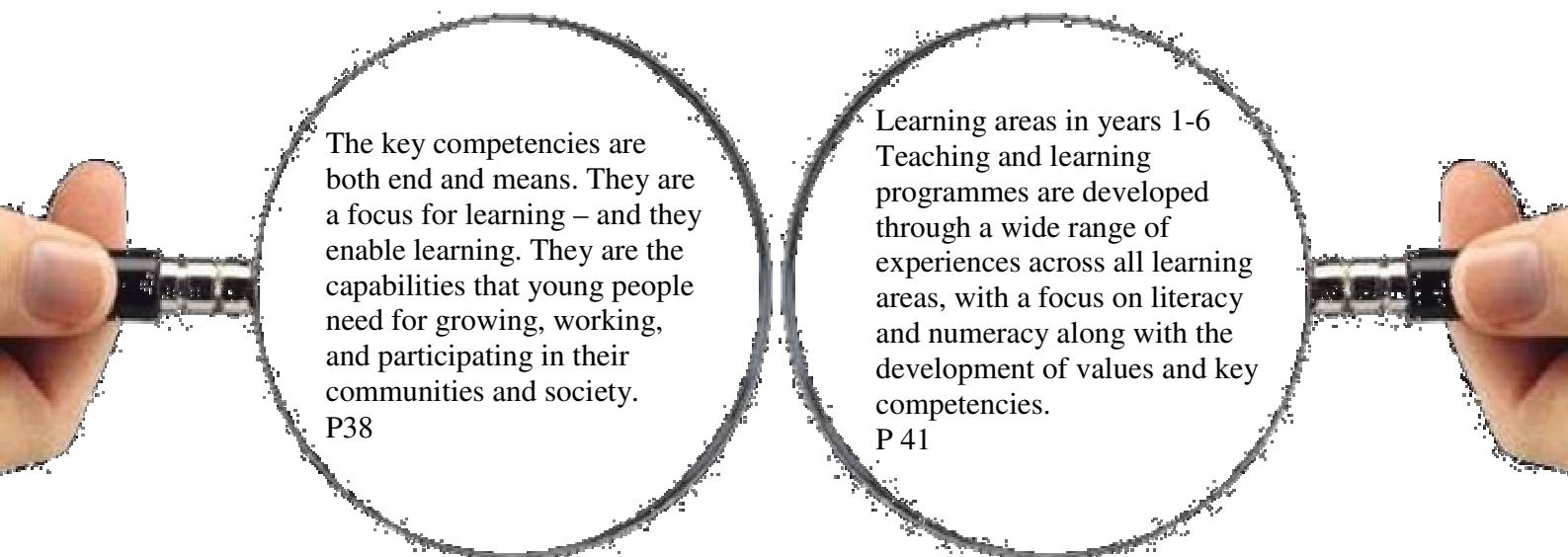


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This diagram shows the link between national and school curriculum. The directive is to establish your curriculum within this framework that learning and teaching is "meaningful and beneficial" for your students.



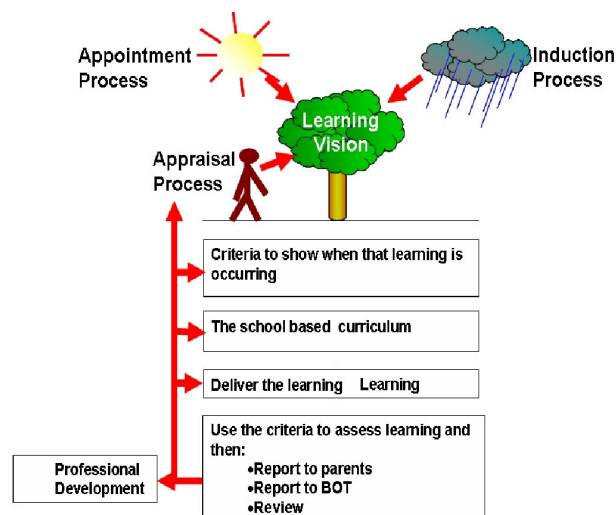
The competencies are the “ends and the means” and at primary level learning is to focus on Literacy, numeracy and developing the values and competencies.

Schools need to consider how to encourage and monitor development of the key competencies. (p38)

As you develop and implement your curriculum you need to decide how you are going to “monitor the development of the competencies”

Your school vision, should focus on the school’s core purpose which is learning. On this basis it should be a clear statement of what you are trying to achieve for your pupils to enable them as life long learners.

This diagram outlines how all these aspects link and can be used as a tool to structure a strategic plan for curriculum implementation and delivery. It also outlines how school vision is the driving force for success criteria, curriculum documentation, delivery, assessment, review, appointments, induction appraisal, and budgeting.



Mission and vision are often confused in our schools.



Vision is about **what** you are aiming to achieve.

Mission is about **how** you are going to try and achieve it.

Recommendation 1: Review and revitalise your school vision... this is more than compliance, it is an essential foundation.

Tidy it up so it is a learning vision

Ensure it is commonly held

The competencies

As New Zealand schools look towards implementation of the Key Competencies there is the growing realisation that because each Competency is a complex composition of skills, attitudes and understandings they are difficult to get to grips with, understand, implement and assess.

The five competencies are outlined in the document (P 12 – 13) in isolation from each other as if they are separate entities. However they can not be separated because they are tightly interwoven in the process of learning, living and working where people interact together.

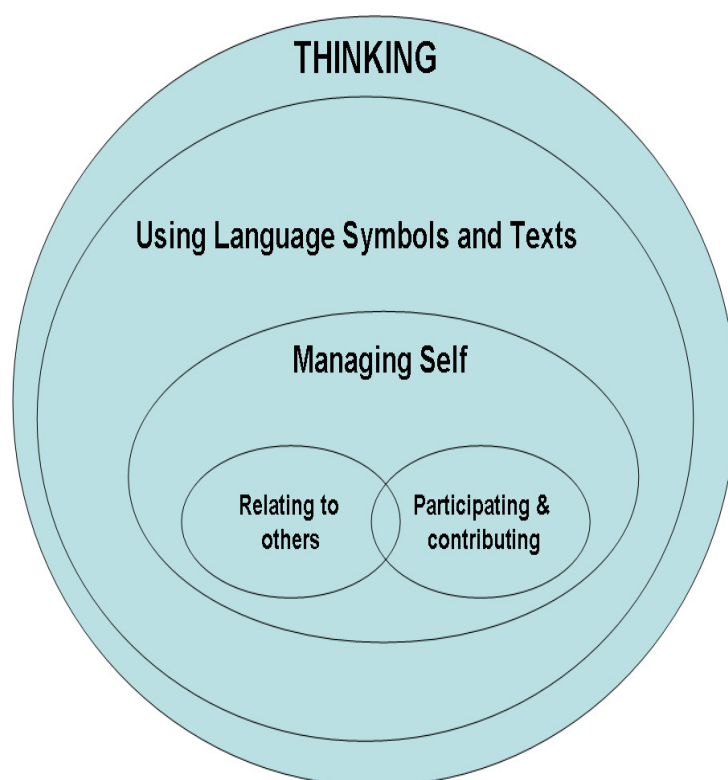
Thinking dominates every aspect for we cannot learn or interact effectively without thinking.

Language symbols and text are central to interaction and communication but are also central to thinking because conceptual thinking requires us to think in linguistics and symbols.

Managing self is a crucial aspect of interacting with others. It certainly includes the management of my health and well being, but actually goes way beyond into aspects like managing time, resources, emotions and interactions.

Relating to others and **participating and contributing** are all about how interact effectively with others in work, play, learning and social situations.

Thinking and communication are obviously central to every interaction.



One approach to understanding the competencies is to identify the skills, attitudes and understandings explicit in each competency. Once this has been done the school needs to decide which aspects will be assessed.

The following is my analysis of the competencies. It is probable that there will be aspects of my analysis that you disagree with. It is important for each school who uses this approach to make the analysis and decisions themselves, but also be prepared to justify your decisions.

Relating to others

Relating to others is about interacting effectively with a diverse range of people in a variety of contexts. The competency includes the ability to **listen actively**, **recognise different points of view**, **negotiate**, and **share ideas**. Students who relate well to others are likely to be **open to new learning** and **able to take different roles in different situations**. They know **when it is appropriate to compete** and **when it is appropriate to co-operate**. By **working effectively together**, they can come up with new approaches, ideas and ways of thinking

Key Understandings: ■

They know when it is appropriate to compete and when it is appropriate to co-operate.

Attitudes and Values: ■

They are open to new learning

Key Skills: ■

They listen actively,
They can recognise different points of view,
They can negotiate and share ideas.
They are able to take different roles in different situations
They work effectively together
They can come up with new approaches, ideas and ways of thinking

Managing self

Managing self is associated with **self-motivation**, a **"can-do" attitude**, and with students **seeing themselves as capable learners**. It is integral to **self assessment**. Students who manage themselves are **enterprising**, **resourceful**, **reliable**, and **resilient**. They establish **personal goals**, **make plans**, **manage projects** and **set high standards**. They **have strategies for meeting challenges**. They **know when to lead**, **when to follow** and **when and how to act independently**

Key Understandings: ■

They see themselves as capable learners.
They know when to lead,
They know when to follow
They know when and how to act independently

Attitudes and Values: ■

They are self-motivated,
They have a "can-do" attitude,
They are enterprising, resourceful, reliable, and resilient.
motivation,

Key Skills: ■

They set personal goals,
They make plans,
They manage projects
They set high standards.
They have strategies for meeting challenges.
They self assess



Participating and contributing

Participating and contributing is about participating actively in communities. Communities include family, whanau, and school and those based, for example, on a common interest or culture. They may be drawn together for purposes such as learning, work, celebration, or recreation. They may be local, national, or global.

The competency includes a capacity to contribute appropriately as a group member, to make connections with others, and to create opportunities for others in the group.

Students who participate and contribute in communities have a sense of belonging and the confidence to participate within new contexts.

They understand the importance of balancing rights, roles, and responsibilities and of contributing to the quality and sustainability of social, cultural, physical, and economic environments.

Key Understandings: ■

They will understand the importance of balancing rights, roles, and responsibilities
They will understand about contributing to the quality and sustainability of social, cultural, physical, and economic environments.

Attitudes and Values: ■

They will have a sense of belonging
They will have the confidence to participate within new contexts

Key Skills: ■

They can contribute appropriately as a group member
They can make connections to others
They can create opportunities for others in the group

Thinking

Thinking is about using creative, critical, metacognitive processes to make sense of information, experiences, and ideas. These processes can be applied to purposes such as developing understanding, making decisions, shaping actions, or constructing knowledge.

Intellectual curiosity is at the heart of this competency. Students who are competent thinkers and problem-solvers actively seek use, and create knowledge. They reflect on their own learning, draw on personal knowledge and intuitions, ask questions, and challenge the basis of assumptions and perceptions.

Attitudes and Values: ■

They have intellectual curiosity

Key Understandings: ■

Key Skills: ■

They use creative, critical, metacognitive processes to make sense of information, experiences, and ideas.

They apply processes to purposes such as developing understanding, making decisions, shaping actions, or constructing knowledge

They actively seek use, and create knowledge.

They reflect on their own learning, draw on personal knowledge and intuitions, ask questions, and challenge the basis of assumptions and perceptions.

Using language, symbols and texts

Using language, symbols, and texts is about working with and making meaning of the codes in which knowledge is expressed. Languages and symbols are systems for representing and communicating information, experiences, and ideas. People use languages and symbols to produce texts of all kinds: written, oral/aural, and visual; informative and imaginative; informal and formal; mathematical, scientific, and technological.

Students who are competent users of language, symbols and text can interpret and use words, number, images, movement, metaphor, and technologies in a range of contexts. They recognise how choices of language and symbol and text affect people's understanding and the ways in which they respond to communications. They confidently use ICT (including where appropriate, assistive technologies) to access and provide information and to communicate with others.

Attitudes and Values: ■

Key Understandings: ■

They can recognise how choices of language, symbols and text affect people's understanding and the ways in which they respond to communications

Key Skills: ■

They can interpret and use words, number, images, movement, metaphor, and technologies in a range of contexts

They can use ICT confidently to access and provide information and to communicate with others.

Go deeper:

Probe deeper into the competency and identify any further essential understandings, attitudes and skills that may not be specifically mentioned in the competency

Explore the Learning areas: Extract a set of key understandings, attitudes and skills from each learning area.

Prioritise:

From the resulting set of understandings, attitudes and skills define what the school sees as being core for its pupils.

During each year teachers will:

- use curriculum contexts to expose students deeply to a range of key understandings and attitudes drawn from the competencies and curriculum areas
- Facilitate the students to self reflect, assess and share their development in attitudes, values. and understandings
- work with and assess pupils against a group of skills, identified as core or foundational, drawn from the competencies and the curriculum areas.
- support students to reflect on their attitudes values and understandings.

This, is proving to be a workable approach and assists schools in meeting the curriculum requirements in terms of key competencies, learning areas, values, attitudes, strands and achievement objectives.

Recommendation 2: Ensure that all teachers understand how the competencies interact and their relationship to the learning areas

Implementing the competencies

Once each competency is understood, (and further understanding will come through the process of implementation) schools have to implement the competencies.

Successful implementation requires a number of steps.

- Setting your success criteria
- Developing appropriate curriculum
- Addressing the how of delivery
- Designing and implementing assessment
- Ongoing review

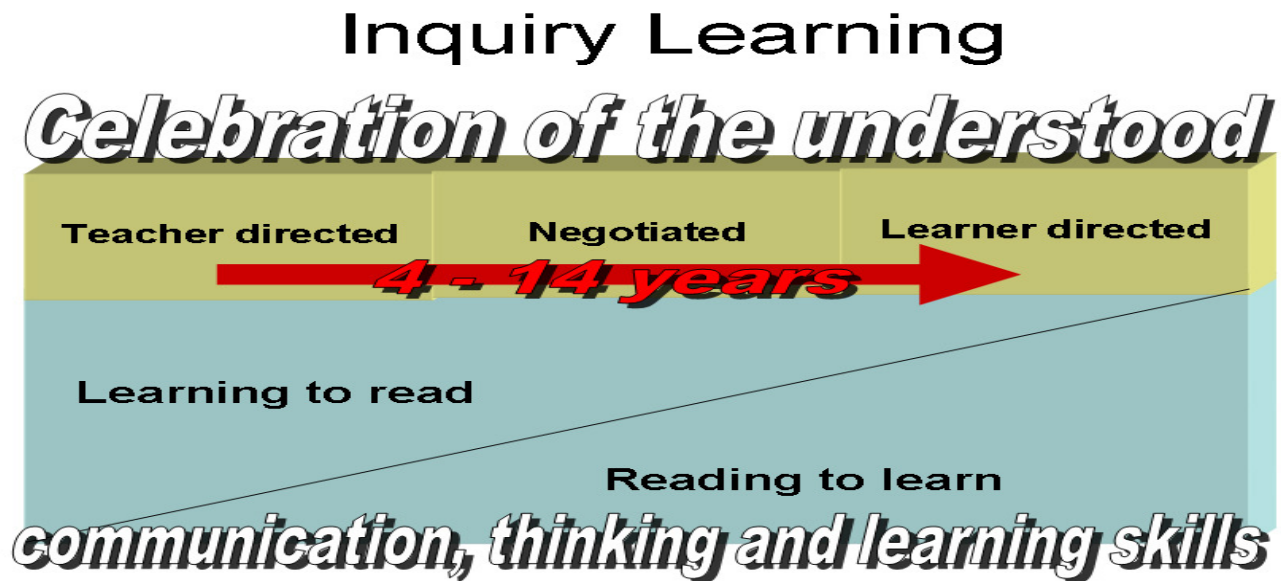
Setting success criteria is crucial because it stops us talking educational waffle and helps us to be clearly focused on what we are trying to achieve. The following examples come from schools I have worked with. They are offered here with the understanding that they are drafts and open to review as the schools work towards implementing and evaluating them in classroom settings.

Clarifying relevant contextual vocabulary	
Stage 1	I attempt to use vocabulary correctly for the context but sometimes I get confused.
Stage 2	I can, with support, seek to understand the meaning of words in context. I can ask questions to clarify definitions.
Stage 3	I can independently use a range of strategies to seek understanding of the meaning of words in context.
Stage 4	I can independently use a range of strategies to seek understanding of the meaning of words in context. I ensure that those around share a common understanding.

<p>Arguments.</p> <p>Arguments are developed to promote, defend or critique a point of view.</p>	Unaware that a position is being defended, promoted or challenged.
	Can follow, but is unable to create, a logical argument that defends, promotes or challenges a point of view.
	Creates a logical argument, possibly containing flaws, based on 1 or 2 crucial points that defends, promotes or challenges a point of view
	Reflectively creates and critiques multi-faceted arguments to support or challenge a point of view.

<p>Decision. Making</p> <p>Appropriate decisions and actions should follow sound reasoning and should consider relevant Implications and Consequences.</p>	Decisions or actions are made with no awareness of relevant evidence, assumptions, arguments and consequences.
	Decisions or actions are made in accordance with the obvious consequences or outcomes, there is little weight given to long term outcomes.
	Decisions or actions are made in relation to a wide range of possible consequences or outcomes. Weight is given to positive and negatives as well as short and long term predictions. Utilises this material to support or attack a piece of reasoning
	Reflectively examines short and long term implications and consequences, creating a wide range of choices which are then evaluated in terms of possible outcomes. Reflects on actual outcomes in the light of decisions and utilises this reflection to assist in further situations

Having a carefully defined set of learning, thinking and information skills that you see as being foundational to lifelong learning is a huge step forward in the process of implementing your new curriculum. If this is matched by an approach to learning and teaching that centres on moving students on towards independence in those skills that is the next step. Many schools are finding an inquiry learning approach is a powerful way to action this. Be aware that becoming an independent and skilled learner is not an overnight process, specially when you match it with the parallel functions of learning to read and reading to learn.



There are 3 waves of school reform:
Doing the same, but more of it

Doing the same, but doing it better
Peter HOLLY 1990

Recommendation: 3 Establish how to develop and monitor the competency aspects you agree are important. Avoid shifting from curriculum overload to skill overload.

Recommendation: 4 Establish how to use the learning areas as contexts for developing competencies in increasingly complex and unfamiliar situations

Recommendations:

**Recommendation 1: Review and revitalise your school vision... this is more than compliance, it is an essential foundation.
Tidy it up so it is a learning vision.
Ensure it is commonly held.**

Recommendation 2: Ensure that all teachers understand how the competencies interact and their relationship to the learning areas.

Recommendation: 3 Establish how to develop and monitor the competency aspects you agree are important. Avoid shifting from curriculum overload to skill overload.

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