



General Secretary · John Dunford

Mr K. Humphreys
Policy Adviser
Public Service Broadcasting Policy Branch
4th Floor
Department for Culture, Media and Sport
2-4 Cockspur Street
London
SW1Y 5DH

1st July 2002
JED/GR

Dear Mr Humphreys,

BBC Application for new Digital Curriculum Service

I write on behalf of the Secondary Heads Association in response to various e-mails inviting comment on the BBC's Digital Curriculum proposal.

The Association welcomes the initiative from the BBC in committing £150m to the development of learning resources, which will be available free to all. This will help bridge the so-called 'digital divide'. This is fully compatible with the BBC's primary public service role. The existence of the BBC news service has not stopped the development of other news services, such as Sky News and ITN.

We also welcome the Government initiative in committing £50m to schools to buy online curriculum materials at reduced rates. This will help the market.

Although the Association can understand that some software suppliers may be concerned about the BBC initiative adversely affecting the market, we do not believe that this level of funding will prevent other suppliers from producing materials. The software market is so large that this level of investment is hardly likely to have a detrimental effect on competition. There will always be a market in schools and among parents for high quality materials. We see no reason why the market should be afforded the level of protection that some would wish to see.

It is important the money is used wisely and effectively. The BBC should be required, as part of the approval for the scheme, to present a structure to ensure that the profession has a major and significant input into the development of the materials.

SECONDARY HEADS ASSOCIATION
Telephone: 0116 299 1122
Facsimile: 0116 299 1123



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

130 Regent Road · Leicester LE1 7PG
E-mail: info@sha.org.uk
Web site: www.sha.org.uk

SHA's prime interest in this matter is the educational learning opportunities available to the students in the schools. Our students already report very good support from the BBC learning resources sites.

I hope the foregoing will assist you in your consultation process.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Carstairs', written in a cursive style.

Robert Carstairs
Assistant General Secretary