Review of the cross-curricular topic curriculum: Use of Information and communication technology

Review by: Peter Maunder

1. Are the educational expectations and educational content appropriate for the developmental age of students?			
1 – inappropriate	2 – appropriate to a certain extent	3 – mostly appropriate	4 – completely appropriate
Please explain what should be modified if Your answer is 1, 2 or 3. The expectations are appropriate across all domains and there is clear progression across the 5 cycles. However, in the application of the educational expectations **A 1.3. in Cycle 1** the teacher will need to be vigilant and very clear when making sure such young students know how to stay safe and how to apply class rules.			

2. Are the educational expectations and educational content relevant and based on scientific knowledge and on the area of cross-curricular topic?			
1 – no	2 – to a certain extent	3 - mostly	4 – completely
Please explain what should be modified if Your answer is 1, 2 or 3. Yes. The content of the ICT cross-curricular curriculum and the way in which the document is presented encourages students to use information technology to create programs, systems and a range of content. Alongside the Computing curriculum it also ensures that pupils become digitally literate – able to use, and express themselves and develop their ideas through, information and communication technology – at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world.			

3. Are the domains that are necessary for the cross-curricular topic area well represented?			
1 – no	2 – to a certain extent	3 - mostly	4 – completely
Please explain what should be modified if Your answer is 1, 2 or 3. The four domains of this theme of using information and communication technology across the curriculum are interlinked and complementary and help provide the children and young people with a systematic development of general digital literacy, alongside the opportunities they will have to develop skills in computing and coding. The domains can easily be linked to the contents of other subject fields and other inter-subject themes.			

4. Does the curriculum contain an adequate ratio of skills, values and attitudes in the cross-curricular topic?			
1 – no	2 – to a certain extent	3 - mostly	4 – completely
Please explain what should be modified if Your answer is 1, 2 or 3. The cross-curricular content clearly sets out a progression in the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be developed across all four domains. It is helpful for teachers and students that each area has been developed separately and highlighted alongside the educational expectations for each cycle in each domain.			

5. Are the proposed education elements of the curriculum in line with the European and global recommendations?			
1 – no	2 – to a certain extent	3 - mostly	4 – completely
Please explain what should be modified if Your answer is 1, 2 or 3. Yes. Croatia is aware of the need to drive up both standards and levels of achievement in education, as well as to encourage the development of the transversal skills needed to ensure young people are able to be entrepreneurial and adapt to the increasingly inevitable changes in the Croatian and global labour market. The European Commission and UNESCO's transversal skills such as the ability to think critically, take initiative, problem solve and work creatively and collaboratively are emphasised throughout this document whilst encouraging the application of digital literacy across the wider curriculum. This will help prepare individuals for today's varied and unpredictable career paths.			

6. Are the educational expectations of cross-curricular topic comparable with those in your country?

The aims and expectations of the use of information and communication technology cross-curricular programme for Croatia are similar to those in the National Curriculum for England, however in the UK the cross-curricular use of ICT is included in the Computing Programmes of Study as shown below.

In the UK, the national curriculum for computing aims to ensure that all pupils:

1. can understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including abstraction, logic, algorithms and data representation
2. can analyse problems in computational terms, and have repeated practical experience of writing computer programs in order to solve such problems
3. can evaluate and apply information technology, including new or unfamiliar technologies, analytically to solve problems
4. are responsible, competent, confident and creative users of information and communication technology

Very similar themes in the ICT cross-curricular curriculum for Croatia are included in Aims 3 and 4 of the UK National Curriculum for Computing. Other cross-curricular links are established in the UK to create deep links with mathematics, science and design and technology, and provides insights into both natural and artificial systems. These may be included in the Computing Curriculum which I haven't evaluated.

7. Please suggest other modifications if you consider them necessary.

Consideration could be given to adding one more sentence in Section A – Description of the Inter-Subject Theme, in order to strengthen the emphasis of schools developing e-safety policies in order to safeguard children. An effective approach to online safety empowers a school to protect and educate the whole school community in their use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incident where appropriate.

8. Your conclusion about the proposed curriculum.

The content of the ICT cross-curricular curriculum and the way in which the document is presented encourages students to use information technology to create programs, systems and a range of content. Alongside the Computing curriculum it should also ensure that pupils become digitally literate – able to use, and express themselves and develop their ideas through, information and communication technology – at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world. Some aspects of e-safety could be made more explicit but whilst it is essential that schools ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, they should also be careful that “over blocking” does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.