

HEADTEACHERS' UNION: GIVE TEACHERS & PARENTS CONTROL OVER CURRICULUM



The national curriculum should be decided by an independent body of school leaders, teachers, parents and politicians and only be reviewed every five years, a headteachers' union is expected to say today.

Brian Lightman, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL), will call for an independent commission to be created to ensure that schools have a greater say in setting the curriculum.

Such a move would show that the government had trust in the teaching profession to shape what children learn, rather than "imposing relentless change from above".

Speaking at the ASCL annual conference in London later today, Mr Lightman will say that a commission made up of headteachers, teachers, parents, employers and politicians will bring more "relevance" to what pupils study.

Any potential tinkering with the curriculum would only take place every five years.

"Beyond that schools would build their own curricula, bringing creativity, dynamism and relevance into their development," he will say.

"To achieve this requires a climate of mutual trust in which professionals are trusted to use

their expertise to make the right decisions, and government is trusted to create the conditions for a world-class education system."

Mr Lightman will also use his speech to urge schools to continue teaching science practicals – despite the decision by Ofqual to abolish practical assessment at GCSE.

"Schools do not need to blindly follow decisions that have been made about testing. If our vision for the curriculum says that science practicals are important, then let's do them," he will say.

Mr Lightman will add that teachers should be allowed to assess students' practical work during courses as part of their final grades.

"The answer lies in trusting the teaching profession and the profession showing it is ready to step up to this challenge," he will say.

