

The UK School System for Science

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The (Simplified) School System for Science in England and Wales

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A Complex Picture

- There is a great variety of schooling types in the UK. We will discuss the simplest version.
- The education system in England and Wales is different to that in Scotland and northern Ireland.
- 'Public Schools' are independent/fee paying schools.
- State schools are for the general public (free)
- Compulsory education currently to 16 and to be 17 (2013)

Primary

- Reception (4 years of age)
- (Key Stage 1) Years 1-3 5 - 8 years old
- (Key Stage 2) Years 4-6 9- 11 years old
- These pupils are usually housed in separate schools to the secondary students.
- There is a National Curriculum science component (State Schools).
- Schools are controlled by local education authorities.

Secondary

(Key Stage 3) Years 7-9 11 - 14 years

(Key Stage 4) Years 10-11 14- 16 years

Science, mathematics, English, religions, Physical education are all compulsory.

Post 16 ('Key Stage 5') 16+

- No compulsory subjects

Primary Science

Science, including elementary practical science, is taught by mainly non science specialists. The time varies as the science can be tied up with maths and English literacy.

There are very few labs in primary schools.

Training has been a challenge.

Secondary Science

Science, including elementary practical science, is taught by mainly science specialists.

The time varies with KS:

KS3 is about 10-12% (could be all specialists)

KS4 varies 10-30% (66% biologists)

Post 16 by specialist scientists

(Re)training is a challenge in practical work.

Examination System

- National examinations are through independent companies under Government supervision.