

focusing on **people**





## Focus Learning Trust

Direction, Management,  
Programmes and Support in  
Education

### What is Focus Learning Trust?

Focus Learning Trust, a registered charity, was established in 2003 to provide expertise and support for schools in view of their working systematically and to uniform high standards. Focus also acts as a central body making representation to government on matters such as funding, National Curriculum, inspections, examinations, etc.

### What are Focus Affiliated Schools?

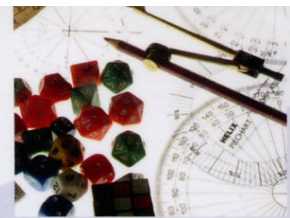
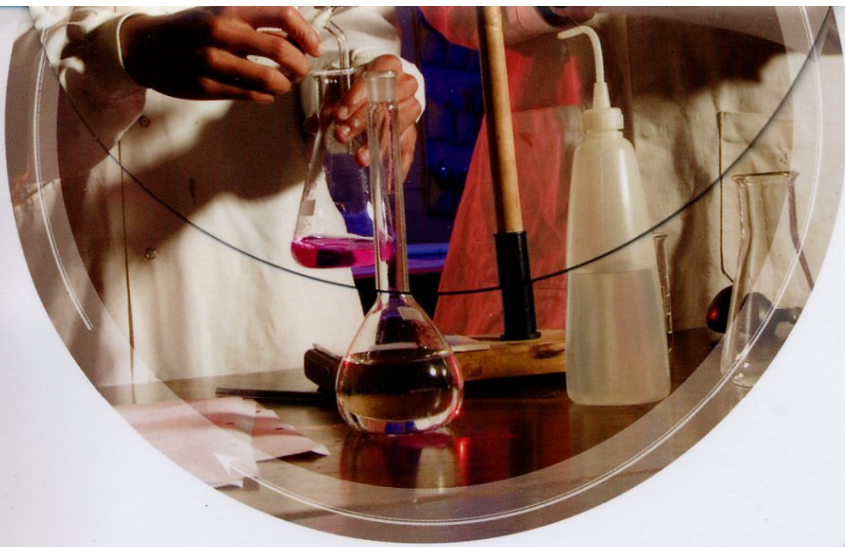
There are currently in excess of 60 primary and secondary schools which are affiliated to Focus Learning Trust, and all these schools are registered as 'Independent Schools with a Special Religious Character' to meet legal requirements.

Pupils are not selected according to their academic ability nor the ability of parents to pay for their child's education. Only the dedication of parents and other supportive persons has provided the operative impetus for these schools. Constant fundraising, personal commitment and charitable trading are the only sources of income for educating over 2,000 pupils.

Staff at Focus schools are selected for their educational ability and sympathy for the Christian ethos.







## How did Focus Schools start?

During the 1990s several education centres were established by Christian parents who for a time had educated their children at home (as provided for in the 1944 Education Act). Parents worked together to share tutors and resources and these arrangements became the embryos that developed into independent schools.

Thus these schools have a unique character in that they have not been established by ecclesiastics, but from the inception have been motivated by parental initiative.

## Quality of Education?

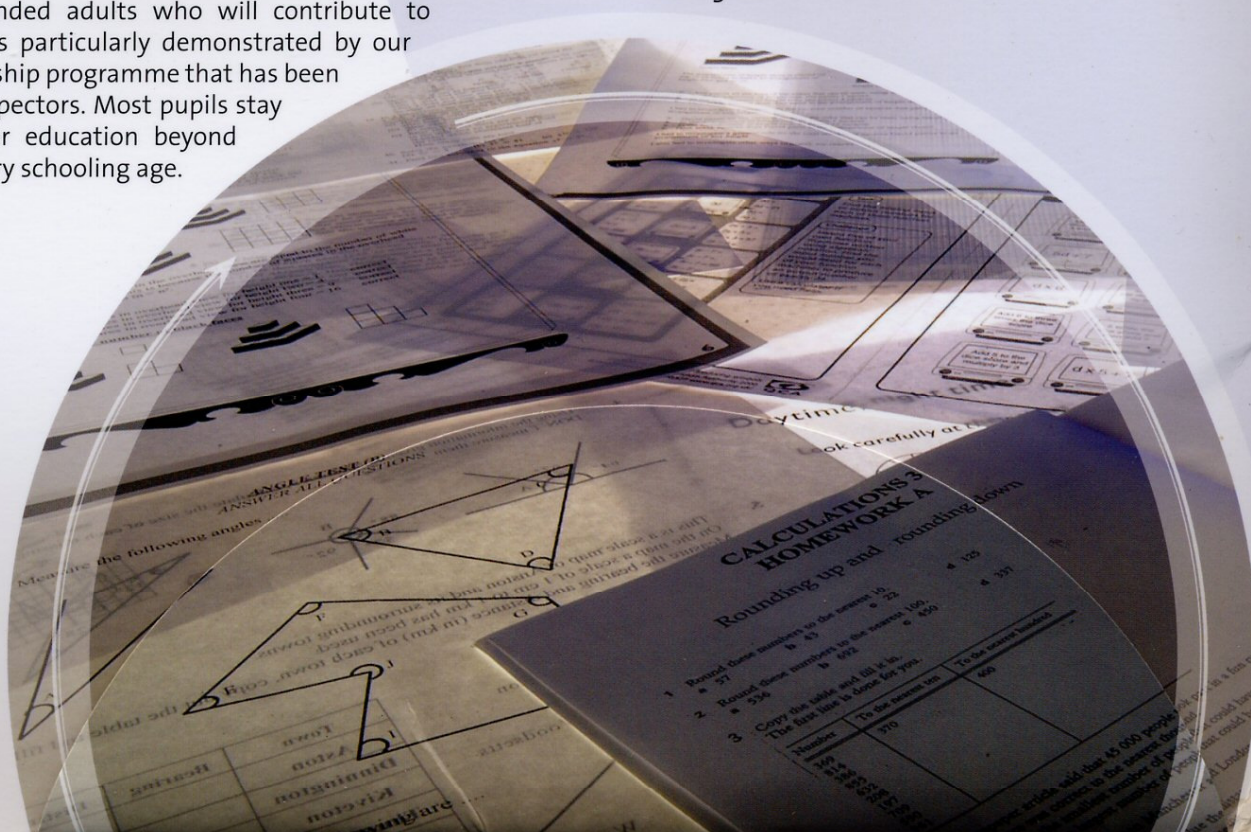
High standards of education are being achieved at FOCUS schools, based on the National Curriculum plus additional subjects. A total of nearly 600 professional teachers are employed at Focus schools taking the pupils through to public examinations. The curriculum is constantly being developed with the objective that all pupils reach their full potential in view of becoming mature, responsible and broadminded adults who will contribute to society. This is particularly demonstrated by our strong citizenship programme that has been praised by inspectors. Most pupils stay on for further education beyond the compulsory schooling age.

## Legal Standards

Schools are inspected by professional inspectors to comply with DCSF stringent regulations on independent schools. Focus also carry out their own 'monitoring inspections' to maintain high standards at all times. Policies such as Child Protection, Health & Safety, Bullying, SEN, etc. are provided by Focus and are used in all the schools.

The following is an extract from The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools 2004/5:

*'Among these schools, the group of 38 Focus schools catering for around 1,300 pupils (sic) aged 11-17 made particularly good progress. Since their first visits, which identified the improvements needed, all the schools have progressed sufficiently such that by the end of July 2005, 37 have been finally registered and the remainder have been recommended for registration. The schools now offer pupils full-time education of a high standard - the curriculum is well planned, teachers are well qualified and experienced and the vast majority of lessons seen by inspectors were good.'*







## Future Development

Focus schools are committed to the Professional Development of teachers and are continually introducing new concepts such as 'Virtual Classroom' to improve the quality of education.

MPs, police, local authorities are encouraged to visit Focus schools to help 'social cohesion' of students and to increase public awareness of what is being achieved through the dedication of parents, staff, trustees and volunteers.

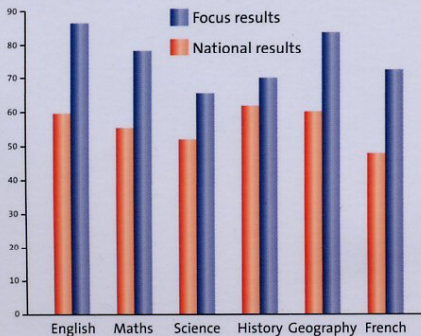
The Focus Development Plan includes large investments into primary education and into new school buildings across the UK.

## Sustainability

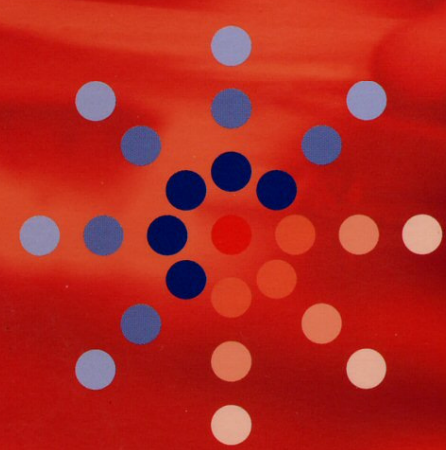
Focus schools currently meet a total annual budget of over £10,000,000 with an estimated capital investment programme of up to £30,000,000. This investment includes staff training, professional development, new schools, equipment, research, etc.

Staff at Focus schools enjoy unique challenges and opportunities which help further their career path.

Average % of Candidates achieving A\* to C



83% pass rate A\* - C for GCSE exams







**Focus Learning Trust**

Siskin House

Siskin Drive

Coventry CV3 4FJ

0870 330 0197



Reply to:  
Debra Amor  
Focus Learning Trust  
Siskin House, Siskin Drive  
Coventry CV3 4FJ  
Tel: 024 7630 8186

E-Mail: [debra.amor@focuslearningorg.com](mailto:debra.amor@focuslearningorg.com)

Dear Applicant

Please find enclosed an Application Pack in respect of the recently advertised vacancy within a Focus Learning Trust School.

In this pack you will find:

- An Application Form.
- School Profile and vacancy details.
- Various information sheets regarding working in a Focus School.

Please return your completed Application Form stating the post and school that you are applying for by the closing date as specified in the advertisement.

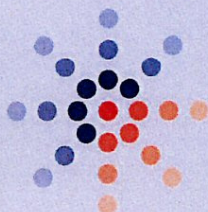
Please return to:

Debra Amor  
Central Office  
Focus Learning Trust  
Siskin House  
Siskin Drive  
Coventry CV3 4FJ

We look forward to receiving your completed application. In the meantime if you have any queries in this respect then please contact us at Siskin House.

Yours sincerely

Debra Amor  
Focus Learning Trust



### Focus Learning Trust

Direction, Management, Programmes  
and Support in Education

Siskin House, Siskin Drive, Coventry CV3 4FJ  
tel: 024 7630 8186 fax: 024 7630 8187

Registered Charity No. 1099725



## Secondary School

### **SPRINGVALE SCHOOL**

Castle Way  
Ellon  
Aberdeenshire  
AB41 9RG

Tel: 01358 723777  
Fax: 01358 723301

CEO Trustee:  
Mr. George Smith

Senior Teacher:  
Mrs. Jane Ross

Number of pupils on roll: 22

Springvale School has been established since November 2002, serving pupils from Aberdeen, Balmedie and Peterhead.

The age of pupils ranges 11 to 18, studying a wide spectrum of subjects.

It is an Independent School of Special Religious Character.

On 9<sup>th</sup> January 2008, Springvale School opened up in a brand new location in Ellon, Aberdeenshire.

With improved facilities and a new central location we are enjoying an enhanced experience for staff and pupils alike.

## Primary School

Linked to the Secondary School

### **SPRINGVALE PRIMARY**

Castle Way  
Ellon  
Aberdeenshire  
AB41 9RG

Tel: 01358 723777  
Fax: 01358 723301

Primary Contact:  
Mr. Simon Whiteside

Number of pupils: 17

Achievement at senior level is augmented by the Primary Department.

This is located on the same site as Secondary School and will provide for Years 3-6.



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## Focus Primary Schools

### Primary Schools Development Plan

Up to September 2006 all Focus affiliated schools were secondary schools catering for pupils aged 11 to 17 (Years 7 to 12). In September 2006 three pilot schemes were set up at existing Focus schools to provide education for Years 5 and 6. These schools are in Hull, Alton and Falkirk.

Initial feedback from the pilot schemes was extremely positive. In the light of this, and utilising experience gained in these trials, more schools opened in September 2007 and additional schools with primary provision for Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 will open in September 2008.

### Staff Opportunities

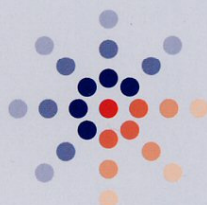
Whilst staff working at these schools will be directly employed by the local school trust, they will benefit from the central resources, support and Professional Development offered on a continuing basis from Focus Learning Trust. It is a unique experience working in a small school with small groups of pupils but having the backing of a large organisation with more than 600 professional staff to share experiences with.

*"The experience of being part of a Focus Primary School has given me scope to be involved in many management and planning issues that, as a class teacher in a state school, I would not normally have experienced.*

*Teaching in a class with smaller numbers of pupils allows me to spend more time in direct teaching and especially meeting the needs of individual pupils.*

*This initial period has been a significant challenge and I am extremely encouraged by the commitment and support I have received."*

Focus Primary School Teacher



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## Focus Secondary Schools

Focus Learning Trust are a charitable Education Trust responsible for 31 affiliated secondary schools of special religious character.

Over 2000 children aged 11 to 18 (years 7 to 13) are educated in these Schools which are situated in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

After the successful pilot scheme in 2006, primary provision has extended to 18 schools in 2007 with further development planned on a yearly basis.

### Career Opportunities

Whilst staff working at these secondary schools will be directly employed by the Local School Trust, they will benefit from the central resources, support and professional development offered on a continuing basis from Focus Learning Trust.

It is a unique experience working in a small school with small groups of pupils but having the backing of a large organisation with more than 600 professional staff to share experiences with.

A quote from a Focus Secondary School Teacher on the Benefits of working as a Teacher in a Focus School –

*“Pupils are friendly, willing to learn and well behaved. The majority even say thank you at the end of a lesson!*

*Small numbers of pupils in a class enable maximum individual attention, so pupils are involved and as a consequence make excellent progress.*

*Their eagerness to learn, which helps make teaching enjoyable.*

*The staff and pupils are like a small community, as they all know each other; this means that there is a lovely atmosphere within the school.*

*Staff Training and support from the Central Office. Regular Inset's for individual subjects”.*



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## Who runs Focus schools?

Focus schools are run by Christians known as The Exclusive Brethren.

### The Exclusive Brethren

The Brethren movement originated in the 1820s. There are over 40,000 Brethren, in 19 countries throughout the world.

They believe in the Bible as the word of God, and follow its teachings, including those of the apostle Paul.

For more information see

[www.theexclusivebrethren.com](http://www.theexclusivebrethren.com)

This is the only site endorsed by the Exclusive Brethren.

### How they live

Brethren believe in marriage and the family: virtually all their marriages endure for a lifetime. Families, including children and old people, attend regular assemblies, with other Brethren from the same town or city. They find their life together, spend time in each others houses world wide, keep separate from the world of sport and entertainment, and do not have radio or TV. Many Brethren run their own businesses and employ those of other faiths.

### Their aims for education

Parents generally place great importance on having their children educated up to University entrance level, challenging them to ensure they reach their best potential, and providing support if there are special needs.

### How do Brethren regard teachers?

Teachers are valued as professionals, and rewarded for their expertise. They do not need to agree with Brethren beliefs, or necessarily have any religious faith. However teachers are asked to respect Brethren beliefs and way of life - such as the sanctity of marriage - and not undermine them, and to respect the ethos and motivation of Focus schools.

### How are Focus schools run?

Each school is run by a trust with Brethren trustees who liaise closely with the senior teacher and other professional staff. These trusts are affiliated to a central trust - Focus Learning - which provides financial, legal and other support, and employs professionals. This arrangement gives the benefit of strong central support combined with local responsibility and control.



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## Working at a Focus School

### Focus schools provide:

- ✓ good moral standards and Christian ethos
- ✓ the advantage of supportive parents
- ✓ professional development for staff
- ✓ high standards of teaching
- ✓ an ordered environment
- ✓ good career prospects

### Focus schools value:

- ✓ staff who are dedicated to the development of every pupil's potential
- ✓ the moral, spiritual, social and cultural development of all pupils
- ✓ high standards of behaviour and discipline
- ✓ service to others and the community
- ✓ academic and practical achievement

### Focus schools provide for:

- ✓ children from England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales
- ✓ over 2000 pupils in over 60 schools in the UK
- ✓ children aged 11 to 18 in secondary schools
- ✓ children from families at every income level
- ✓ children aged 7 to 11 in primary schools
- ✓ children with special educational needs
- ✓ children of all abilities

### Focus schools are looking for:

- ✓ primary school teachers to assist in setting up and maintaining primary units
- ✓ secondary school teachers who are looking to further their experience and professionalism
- ✓ individuals who can contribute to the whole school environment
- ✓ committed and enthusiastic staff who care about children
- ✓ teachers who have leadership potential or experience
- ✓ people who are passionate about their subjects
- ✓ teachers who inspire others

### Focus schools offer the following opportunities:

- ✓ teaching in an environment where dedication to excellence is valued
- ✓ teaching motivated pupils up to GCSE and A Level
- ✓ developing specialist subject expertise and progression
- ✓ working in small schools with unique community support
- ✓ teaching small classes in a structured environment
- ✓ opportunities for newly-qualified teachers

### And...

- ✓ you can teach and train on the job
- ✓ you can transfer easily in and out of the independent sector
- ✓ continuing professional development is always considered a priority
- ✓ schools are inspected under a DCSF approved framework with published results
- ✓ you will have access to a wide range of contacts and support at all other Focus schools



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Focus on  
Policy and Procedure

Ethos and Guiding Principles  
For Primary and Secondary  
July 2007

This policy has to be adopted as it appears in this document (legal requirement).	
Trust Name:	
School Name:	
Date Policy Adopted:	
Signature:	
Printed Name:	
Up-dates:	



## **Ethos and Guiding Principles of the Focus School Community**

The Trustees are committed to a way of life which is governed at all times in every detail by the Holy Bible. It is the duty of the Trustees to ensure that all aspects of school life are in accord with the Holy Bible. The conduct of the students, staff and parents must reflect Bible values. The Trustees can in their absolute discretion determine what conduct or activity is in accord with the Bible.

At no time can conduct or activity in violation of the Bible be allowed. In particular, teaching staff are required to conduct themselves in their duties modestly and decorously and not engage with students in any manner which encourages over-familiarity. Interaction with students should be positive and professional at all times.

The Trustees uphold chastity as a first principle and the teaching staff must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with such principle and especially with respect to setting a proper example for students at the school.

The Trustees see that God as Creator is worshipped in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Bible.

Focus Learning Trust has developed a series of policies and procedures that are used to govern school activities. These policies and procedures have been developed to reflect the cultural requirements of the Brethren community and are to be implemented in all schools. There are some areas of school life that require specific statements: -

1. All teaching programmes implemented at Focus Schools are required to be approved by the Focus Learning Trust before implementation. The Trustees reserve the right to vary teaching methods and programmes as they see fit. The Trustees desire that students be educated to tertiary education entrance level. Any decisions about post school educational opportunities are the preserve of the student and his/her family and therefore not the responsibility of the teaching staff. Teachers are to refrain from influencing students on matters of tertiary education.
2. Only educational resources, including texts, film and digital media approved by the Trustees of Focus Learning Trust as part of the educational programme are to be used in Focus Schools.
3. The students, staff and parents are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible manner at all times. Smoking, drinking of alcohol and use of drugs of addiction are not permitted at the school including any school venue or at any school related function.
4. There will be no inter-school competitions and, in general, activities will be restricted to those within the school grounds. Neither dancing nor any other body contact activities will be included or promoted as part of the school activities. Supervising teachers are required to refrain from participating in sports or daily recess (break and lunch time) activities with students. Only Trustees, parent supervisors and PE teachers should interact with students in this way.



5. Participation in excursions is determined on the merits of each venue and the value it has in enhancing the learning opportunities for students. Any overnight and long day trips are to be approved by the CEO. In general, excursions are undertaken on a family basis and parents will be involved in these activities.
6. Outside the range of scholastic activities there is one aspect of the Brethren lifestyle that occasions comment from time to time. This is our social life which is limited to participants of our communion. This is an area that is vital to us and is most deeply understood by young children as they enter school life. Older children usually have no difficulty with our lifestyle, which is accepted simply without conflict.
7. A strict dress code applies consistent with the standards set by the Trustees and acknowledged by teaching staff. The Trustees have adopted a code of beliefs that includes maintaining strict differentiation between male and female dress. The wearing of short trousers by male teaching staff is not considered appropriate. Equally female staff should ensure that dresses or skirts are of at least knee-length, and can be adjusted in the interests of modesty when seated.

In general, dress should be appropriate to both the need to promote a necessary level of respect for the Focus community as well as to suit individual physiology. Clothing must not be revealing or low cut in design. Unorthodox or casual dress and unshaven and long hair for men is inconsistent with the professional image promoted by the School within its community.

Teachers and students are required not to wear excessive jewellery while engaged at the school or as a representative of the Focus community in any capacity.

Students are required to wear the prescribed uniform while at the school or school related functions.

8. Most Focus Schools are registered as Schools Having Special Religious Character. This concedes certain rights to the schools enabling them to preserve their Christian Ethos and to ensure that nothing exists within the school which would mitigate or contravene this Ethos. Teaching staff are required to respect this Registration at all times and to refrain from doing anything, or behaving in any way, that might prejudice their own position, or the reputation of the school, or the Focus community, in regard to the provisions give by this Registration.



## **Appendix D: Guidance notes for teaching the theory of evolution in Focus schools**

Students attending *Focus* schools believe in God as the Creator and accept the Bible as the inspired Word of God. They reject the theory of evolution as a fallacy. However, in order to avoid students being disadvantaged in examinations, they need to be aware of the theory. These notes are intended to give students enough information so they are not disadvantaged this superficial coverage has been shown to be adequate in the past. Any conflict with religious beliefs must be avoided by sensitive delivery and concentration on the fact that it is just a theory and so has not been proved.

WALT: (*we are learning to* – formally objectives)

- know what the theory of evolution is
- understand the evidence put forward to support the theory
- know the limitations of the theory.

From the specification: *The theory of evolution states that all species of living things which exist today – and many more which are now extinct – have evolved from simple life forms which first developed more than three billion years ago.*

### **Evidence for evolution**

- **Fossil evidence** – the fossil record suggests that:
  - the variety of life on Earth today did not arise all at once.
  - the first life was in water; life on land came much later.
  - as each ‘new’ type of animal evolved, the older ones declined. These animals were less well suited to their environment (they were less well ‘adapted’) and often became extinct.
  - some fossils give us clues as to how a particular group evolved. For instance, Archaeopteryx is thought to have been an early type of bird living 150 million years ago. The fossil remains show that it had feathers (like birds) but also it had teeth and other reptile features. Some fossils provide a link to show that reptiles and birds evolved from a common ancestor.
- **Anatomy:**
  - mammals have the same type of heart;
  - vertebrates have similar bone structure.
- **Cytology:**
  - electron microscopy has shown similar cell structure in all organisms.

### **Learned examples**

Two examples which should be briefly explained are the theory of the evolution of the horse from small marsh dweller to the current horse and, as an example of possible natural selection, the distribution of the peppered moth in industrial and non-polluted areas. The idea of natural selection should be discussed so that it could be applied to any other example which may be given.

### **Against the theory of evolution**

- Religious beliefs
- Incomplete fossil records
- Intelligent design
- Genetics
- Hybrids
- Thermodynamics

It should be stressed that there is absolutely no need for the pupils to believe any aspects of the theory. If asked in an examination for their own ideas then the theory, as written above, should be included in the answer, but a student’s own religious beliefs are equally valid and should also be included. Throughout, the theoretical aspect of the subject should be emphasised.



01 NOV 2011

# Focus Learning Trust - Book Report

ISBN-13	978 1408508220	List Date	19/07/2011	FLT REF	SC341
TITLE	<b>New AQA Science: GCSE Science A Student Book</b>			SUBJECT	Science
AUTHOR	Breithaupt, Jim			Category	C4,PB*
PUBLISHER	Nelson Thornes Ltd	RRP	£17.99	Approved	YES
Distributor	CBZ	Print Status	40560	LEVEL	KS4
TYPE	Textbook	Media	Paperback	Fiction / NF Non-Fiction	Checked By GW
Study Unit				Dewey:	500
				Publication Date:	2011

**COMMENT / \*CAUTION** REMOVE pp 50-53; 58; 66/67; 70/71; CAUTION: pp 122-129 and 300-301, Theory of Evolution and Big Bang Theory should used with care and taught in accordance with the Focus ethos. These are the ONLY approved GCSE Science resources for Focus schools.

Information above this line will appear on the published Book List. FULL reports are available on request: books.libraries@focuslearningorg.com

## Full Report:

Teacher Name

Teacher

Evaluation date:

Teacher  
Evaluation

SLO Name Gordon Wallach

SLO\_Report\_Date:

26/07/2011

SLO Comments This is the only recommended Science course for September 2011  
Student books to be ordered through Focus Educational Supplies and to be edited before supply to schools, before student use.

Pages 50 - 53 deal with hormone control and fertility and should be REMOVED

Page 58 - REMOVE

Pages 66 and 67 deal with drugs and should be REMOVED

Pages 70 and 71 also deal with drug addiction and should be REMOVED

Pages 122 to 129 deal with evolution and can stay in with caution

Pages 300 and 301 deal with the Big Bang theory and can stay in with a caution

Copy pages 49; 54; 57; 65; 68; 69; 72 [on a CD] will be supplied with purchases.

Where necessary Student Books will be edited before supply



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EDITED FOR USE IN

21 OCT 2011

FOCUS SCHOOLS

01 September 2011