



House of Commons  
Education Committee

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# Primary assessment

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**Eleventh Report of Session 2016–17**

*Report, together with formal minutes relating  
to the report*

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## The Education Committee

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## Summary

The way in which children at primary school were assessed changed considerably in 2016. New tests were introduced to reflect the new national curriculum, first taught in 2014, and national curriculum levels were replaced with a new measurement of attainment. The Standards and Testing Agency did not oversee the implementation of the new assessment system in 2016 effectively, with guidance delayed and test papers leaked online. This caused significant disruption in primary schools as schools felt there was too little time to implement effective new assessment systems and prepare teachers and pupils for SATs.

The design of the new tests was also criticised, particularly the reading and writing assessments. One issue with the writing assessment is the focus on technical aspects, like grammar and spelling, over creativity and composition. We are not convinced that this leads directly to improved writing and urge the Government to reconsider this balance and make spelling, punctuation and grammar tests non-statutory at Key Stage 2. There are also questions over the appropriate role of teacher assessment within the assessment and accountability system that the Government should explore.

While the new assessments were being introduced there was little additional support offered to schools to implement new assessment systems to cope with 'life after levels'. Primary school teachers only receive limited assessment training during initial teacher education and must have access to continuing professional development on assessment, as well as high quality advice and guidance on effective assessment systems.

Assessment is closely linked to the accountability system in primary schools, with Key Stage 2 results used to hold schools and teachers to account on the progress and attainment of pupils. However, the high stakes system can negatively impact teaching and learning, leading to narrowing of the curriculum and 'teaching to the test', as well as affecting teacher and pupil wellbeing.

The stakes should be lowered at primary school in order to combat some of these negative impacts. Performance tables should include a rolling three-year average of Key Stage 2 attainment and progress data to reduce the focus on an individual year's results. Ofsted must also ensure that it inspects the whole curriculum, not just English and maths, and does not focus too heavily on Key Stage 2 data. We support the introduction of an improved progress measure, but the Government must be cautious if a baseline measurement is introduced. It should be designed as a diagnostic tool to help teachers identify pupils' needs and must avoid shifting negative consequences of high stakes accountability to early years.

# 1 Introduction

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1. In 2016, primary schools faced a challenging year as new national curriculum assessments were rolled out across all state schools and ‘expected standards’ were raised.<sup>1</sup> It was the first year that national curriculum levels were no longer used to measure progress and attainment of pupils, and schools were given the autonomy to design their own assessment systems. Statutory assessment was introduced in primary schools in England in 1991 following the introduction of the first national curriculum, and has been a consistently debated area of education policy since. While there is widespread consensus that assessment is an essential part of the education system, through this inquiry we have heard of flaws in the implementation and design of the current assessment system, and negative consequences on teaching and learning.

2. We were focused on assessment in primary schools, but inevitably the wider question of school accountability arose throughout the course of our inquiry. It is clear to us that statutory assessment is inherently linked to school accountability, and many of the consequences of assessment on teaching and learning are in fact a result of how schools are held to account; a systemic issue rather than the effects of individual tests.

3. Teachers carry out formative assessment throughout their teaching practice, as well as internal summative assessment to inform teaching of individual pupils. In this inquiry we have focused on statutory summative assessment, as well as the support and structures that need to be in place for effective assessment to occur.

4. During our inquiry the Government launched two consultations into aspects of the primary assessment system.<sup>2</sup> The publication of this report is during the consultation period. Our recommendations are aimed at improving a system that currently puts great strain on the primary sector. We know that more change could cause further upheaval in the system and while we do not want to cause more pressure for schools, we feel there are important areas that could be improved.

5. Throughout the inquiry we have benefited from the expertise of our standing specialist adviser on education, Professor Jo-Anne Baird. Her knowledge and guidance has proven invaluable, and we record our gratitude for her assistance.<sup>3</sup>

## Our inquiry

6. Following the launch of the inquiry on 23 September 2016, we received 393 submissions of written evidence from a wide range of sources including teachers, unions, research organisations and assessment providers. We also received written evidence from the Department for Education (DfE). We held a series of oral evidence sessions to hear from a

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1 Expected standards are set by the Government and are what pupils are expected to achieve at Key Stage 2. A score of 100 is the expected standard.

2 Department for Education and Standards & Testing Agency, [Primary assessment in England Government consultation](#), launch date 30 March 2017, closing date 22 June 2017. Department for Education and Standards & Testing Agency, [Primary school pupil assessment: Rochford review recommendations Government consultation](#), launch date 30 March 2017, closing date 22 June 2017.

3 Professor Baird, Director of Oxford University Centre for Educational Assessment, declared interests as Pearson Professor of Educational Assessment, Professor II of Psychology at the University of Bergen, Member of the Ofqual Standards Advisory Group, Member of the AQA Research Committee, and Member of the Welsh Government Advisory Group on Curriculum and Assessment.

range of experts and stakeholders.<sup>4</sup> Our oral evidence sessions covered a number of areas related to primary assessment, including implementation of the new assessment system, design of the tests, impacts on teaching and learning and priorities for the Government.

7. In addition to our formal evidence sessions, we visited Eastbrook Primary Academy to discuss how the new assessment system had affected teaching and learning, and held an engagement event with a group of year 6 pupils from West Denton Primary School.<sup>5</sup> We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our formal witnesses, Eastbrook Academy and West Denton Primary School who gave their time to contribute to our inquiry.

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4 See Witnesses and Published written evidence for further details.

5 We visited Eastbrook Primary Academy on 1 November 2016 and met with pupils from West Denton Primary School on 2 February 2017.

## 2 Oversight and implementation

8. In 2016, a new assessment system was introduced across primary schools in England. The new tests, covering reading, writing and maths, were designed to reflect the revised national curriculum, introduced in 2014.<sup>6</sup> The delivery of the new assessment system was criticised throughout 2016, due to test papers being published online ahead of the test date and guidance being delayed.

9. The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) is responsible for developing national curriculum assessments and supporting schools to deliver them. The STA is an executive agency of the DfE and works with operational autonomy. However, we heard of a perception that STA works closely with ministers.<sup>7</sup> Ofqual, the independent regulator of qualifications and examinations, also has a role in ensuring the assessments are valid and the standards are consistent and appropriate.

10. The Department has previously agreed to a protocol for introducing reforms to the education system, which includes “a lead in time of at least a year for any accountability, curriculum or qualifications initiative coming from the department which requires schools to make significant changes”.<sup>8</sup> However, through written and oral evidence we heard that schools had too little time to prepare for the new assessment system and publications were continually delayed. For example, the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) told us:

The tests were poorly designed and poorly administered, with SATs papers mistakenly published online ahead of the test; delayed and obscure guidance for teachers; mistakes in test papers [ ... ]<sup>9</sup>

11. Test frameworks for reading and maths were published in the summer of 2015, but the interim framework for Key Stage 2 writing, which was due at the beginning of the school year, was delayed until November 2015. Sample test materials and exemplification documents were published late, with some not available until April 2016 when the tests were due to be sat in May 2016. This put extra pressure on teachers and did not give them a fair amount of time to prepare pupils for the upcoming assessments, adding to already high workloads.<sup>10</sup> Binks Neate-Evans from the Headteachers’ Roundtable described it as “unacceptable” and said it created an incredible workload for headteachers.<sup>11</sup> Russell Hobby, General Secretary of NAHT, said:

The implementation of the reforms this time was the worst I have ever seen [ ... ] to be receiving clarifications on the clarifications in February in the year that you are sitting those tests is an appalling distraction from what we need, which is just to focus on teaching the children rather than to try to second-guess what is coming our way.<sup>12</sup>

6 Department for Education, *The national curriculum in England Key Stages 1 and 2 framework document*, September 2013

7 Q75

8 Department for Education, *Protocol for changes to accountability, curriculum or qualifications*, first published March 2015 (reissued February 2017), p 1

9 National Association of Headteachers (PRI 225) executive summary

10 For example, St Helens Primary School (PRI 260) paras 5 and 6; Q74

11 Q73

12 Q74



12. Change is an inevitable aspect of any education system, but it must be communicated and implemented effectively, with enough time for teachers and school leaders to embed changes. The limited time for implementation of the new tests meant that crucial steps in the development process were missed. Claire Burton, Chief Executive of the STA, told us about the development process for the writing assessment:

[STA's] intention had been that we would consult on the [writing] performance descriptors and that we would come out with them in a near-final version, trial them in schools in the summer term, and then we would publish them in September. It was the trialling in schools that was missed out. The intention was always to publish the frameworks in September, but we did miss a step, and it was because of that change in approach that we took.<sup>13</sup>

13. Ms Burton went on to say that there was no option to delay the process by a year and carry out the original development plan because “the alternative was to have nothing”.<sup>14</sup> As well as delayed publication, there were two notable security breaches within the STA leading to test papers being published online ahead of the test date. This led to one test, the Key Stage 1 spelling punctuation and grammar test, being cancelled, and highlighted issues in the STA's security procedures, triggering a ‘root and branch’ internal review of the STA from the Department. This found major failings in its structures, including “a lack of end-to-end strategy, data and oversight; a defensive and silo culture; a shortage of commercial skills and an ineffective assurance process and culture”.<sup>15</sup>

14. *The Government must introduce longer lead in times for future changes to assessment or standards to mitigate the negative impacts of constant change, and the process of communication must be improved. The time allocated for design and delivery should enable schools to be given thorough information about changes at least a year before they will be implemented, without incremental changes throughout the year.*

15. *We remain to be convinced that the STA will be able to meet all the recommendations set out in the ‘root and branch’ review. We recommend that the Government should commission a further short review following the 2017 SATs to assess progress made against the recommendations of the internal report, particularly in light of further changes proposed by the Department in its ongoing consultation.*

16. As an executive agency, the STA is operationally distinct from the Department but is clearly influenced by policy changes. The Minister for School Standards has assured us that test design is not an area he is involved in. This is not the perception of much of the education sector. Russell Hobby, General Secretary of NAHT, said:

In many ways the STA is too close to ministerial interference in what goes on and not established enough to be able to fight back against that, nor do they have the capacity to work at the pace of change required. It would be a sensible recommendation to look at whether, for example, Ofqual should

13 Q171

14 Q172

15 Department for Education, [Standards and Testing Agency Review](#), November 2016, p4

be given more powers to oversee, audit and regulate what is going on or whether the design and oversight should be split up in some way at the moment, because certainly it has not worked this time round.<sup>16</sup>

17. Ofqual and the STA agreed that there was a lack of external clarity over their roles and how they work together, but Ofqual did not suggest it should have greater powers over the implementation of the test.<sup>17</sup> However, as Ofqual is the independent regulator of qualifications in England, with extensive experience in this area, it is surprising to have heard that it does not feel that it could have improved the process.

**18. There is a lack of clarity over the responsibilities of the Minister, STA and Ofqual through the development process of national curriculum assessments. Additionally, there is a lack of confidence in the STA's independence from Ministers.**

***19. An independent panel of experts and teachers should review the development process to improve confidence amongst school leaders and teachers. We recommend an independent review of Ofqual's role in national curriculum assessments to ascertain whether the regulator should have greater oversight.***

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16 Q75

17 Qq159–163

### 3 Design and development

20. Many senior leaders and teachers told us of specific flaws in the design of the new assessment system, some of which have arisen from the curriculum design and the choice of assessment methods. From the evidence we have heard, the biggest issues seem to have arisen in the reading and writing tests. This is reflected in the Department's current consultation on primary assessment, which outlines suggestions to improve the writing assessment in particular.<sup>18</sup>

21. The STA told us of its robust assessment development process, which Ofqual acknowledged was “far more robust than what is used for general qualifications, GCSEs and A levels”.<sup>19</sup> Ofqual assured us that it had “looked [ ... ] very hard at the test construction process, and assured [themselves] [ ... ] that teachers, and representatives from disability groups and so on, were involved appropriately at all the stages”.<sup>20</sup> However, there appears to be a lack of confidence in this approach from teachers, particularly with regard to the reading and writing assessments and the increased level of difficulty.

#### Reading

22. In 2016, the level of difficulty of all SATs tests was increased as a policy in line with the national curriculum. We heard support for raising standards at primary school, but not at the expense of ensuring children leave primary school with a love of reading. Russell Hobby told us:

Given the importance of loving reading as an outcome of primary school, to have that summed up with a test of reading, which you feel like a failure of, does more harm than all the value of the data that we could collect from that.

23. The level of difficulty was discussed through written evidence many times, with some teachers commenting on its inaccessibility to pupils with special educational needs and disability (SEND) or who are working at a lower ability.<sup>21</sup> Michael Tidd, a deputy headteacher, told us:

The reading test particularly, this year was virtually inaccessible for a good chunk of children who are not perhaps designated as having special needs but who are also not yet at the new expected standard.<sup>22</sup>

24. It was felt that the test had not been thoroughly tested with pupils and teachers. However, when we raised this issue with Claire Burton, STA, she assured us that the test went through a thorough development process:

It was scrutinised by teachers, inclusion experts, it had been sat and trialled in schools beforehand, and broadly the test did perform as we expected it

18 Department for Education and Standards & Testing Agency, [Primary assessment in England Government consultation](#), launch date 30 March 2017, closing date 22 June 2017, p 27–28

19 Q190

20 Q170

21 For example, Melanie Castle ([PRI 14](#)) para 12; Inez Burgess ([PRI 42](#)) para 3; Lisa Mutton ([PRI 78](#)) para 1; Victoria Bould ([PRI 126](#)) para 17; Margo Barraclough ([PRI 351](#)) para 14; Ashton Hayes Primary School ([PRI 370](#)) para 5; Alison Hoal ([PRI 389](#)) para 5.

22 Q41

to. It had sufficient marks at the lower end of the scale that we were able to differentiate pupils there. It also included that higher-level content, so we were able to look at the pupils who had previously perhaps been performing at that level 6 test that had been removed. It did all of those things.<sup>23</sup>

25. However, she admitted that “there is more that we can do around the child’s experience of the test”.<sup>24</sup> In the Government’s consultation document, the Secretary of State for Education wrote that the Department has “considered how this year’s test experience could be improved for pupils” and has taken steps to ensure this.<sup>25</sup> Ofqual also told us it would be carrying out research into how the reading test has performed for different groups of pupils.<sup>26</sup> At the point of publication of this report, this research had not been published.<sup>27</sup>

**26. *The STA should do more to explain the development process of national curriculum assessments to schools and ensure that teachers have confidence that they are involved from an appropriate stage. The Department and STA should publish plans to improve the test experience for pupils, particularly for reading.***

## Writing

27. During our inquiry, several issues were raised with the interim framework for writing assessment introduced in 2016, which the Government is currently consulting on.<sup>28</sup> One of the main issues discussed through the inquiry was the place of teacher assessment in writing, an area that seems to have divided opinion within the education sector. Some teachers and unions support the use of teacher assessment. For example, Simon Hawley, a headteacher, stated:

I believe that the assessment of pupils at KS2 should be based on greater level of teacher assessment. There needs to be greater trust of teachers and schools.<sup>29</sup>

28. This view was supported by many other senior leaders and teachers, and was also a key recommendation of the Bew review of Key Stage 2 testing, assessment and accountability, which stated “we would like to see a greater emphasis on teacher assessment within statutory assessment”.<sup>30</sup> Teachers are best placed to assess pupils in their classroom and this happens continuously regardless of statutory assessment.

29. However, we have heard a wealth of evidence of the disadvantages of using teacher assessment within a high-stakes accountability system. Tim Oates from Cambridge Assessment told us:

We have to be very realistic in terms of the level of dependability that we can yield from teacher assessment and whether it is always fair to expect

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23 Q189

24 Ibid.

25 Department for Education and Standards & Testing Agency, [Primary assessment in England Government consultation](#), launch date 30 March 2017, closing date 22 June 2017, p 4

26 Q197

27 For more information on Ofqual’s research study, see Ofqual, ([PRI 421](#))

28 Q219

29 Simon Hawley ([PRI 317](#)) para 9

30 Lord Bew, [Independent review of Key Stage 2 testing, assessment and accountability](#), June 2011, p 9

teachers to assess with a level of consistency that we expect when we use the data for particular purposes.<sup>31</sup>

30. Removing teacher assessment from the statutory assessment system is also supported by other teachers and senior leaders. Juliet Nickels, a primary school teacher, said:

Teacher assessment for accountability, or in any high-stakes, or for any reliability purposes, is impossible. I don't think that works at all. I don't understand how it has ever been thought to be a workable system because you are basically judging yourself.<sup>32</sup>

31. An alternative method of assessing writing that has been raised many times through our inquiry is comparative judgement. Comparative judgement is a method where pupils writing is judged by comparing the quality of one piece of children's writing with another and using the resulting data with statistical analyses to build a measurement scale. With the right methods, this could be applied to produce a consistent measure across schools. Dr Becky Allen from Education Datalab said that comparative judgement works well when:

We deliberately want [the test] to be open-ended and we do not want to write a mark scheme of criteria the child has to meet to do well or not. [ ... ] In this very particular circumstance comparative judgement is such a compelling way for us to judge the standard of writing of 11 year-olds.<sup>33</sup>

32. Comparative judgement has been suggested as one way to ensure that composition and creativity are given a high status in assessment criteria. However, comparative judgement could pose a significant workload burden on teachers. Professor Coe, University of Durham, said "my worry is that we would introduce it as a solve-all, solve all our problems in a single stroke, and find that some of those same problems are there because it is the high stakes rather than the assessment that drives the problems."<sup>34</sup>

33. Much of the criticism of the writing assessment in 2016 was down to the prescriptive nature of the mark scheme, including the 'secure fit' model, which meant pupils were unable to reach the 'expected standard' because of poor handwriting or spelling, even if the overall quality of their writing was strong. The DfE is currently proposing to revert back to the 'best fit' model, where teachers are able to use more of their professional judgement on pupil's writing, for the 2017–18 academic year to help ease some of the consequences of the 'secure fit' approach.<sup>35</sup>

34. However, moving away from the 'secure fit' model will not remove the focus on technical aspects of writing, something that was raised in evidence to our inquiry. Professor Dominic Wyse, UCL Institute of Education, wrote:

The assessment of writing in statutory tests in England in 2016, and for some years previously, suffers from two major flaws: 1. the undue separation of the composition of writing from the transcription elements of grammar,

31 Q113

32 Q21

33 Q112

34 Q147

35 Department for Education and Standards & Testing Agency, [Primary assessment in England Government consultation](#), launch date 30 March 2017, closing date 22 June 2017, p 27

spelling and punctuation; 2. An undue emphasis on decontextualised grammatical knowledge. Both of these flawed features of assessment are contrary to research evidence.<sup>36</sup>

35. The Minister said that the focus on spelling, punctuation and grammar had arisen following the Bew review.<sup>37</sup> However, the review specifically stated “writing composition should always form a greater part of overall writing statutory assessment.”<sup>38</sup>

**36. *The balance of evidence we received did not support the proposition that focusing on specific grammatical techniques improved the overall quality of writing. We support the Department’s proposal to use a ‘best fit’ model for teacher assessment of writing. We recommend the Department should make the Key Stage 2 spelling, punctuation and grammar test non-statutory, but still available for schools for internal monitoring. As well as short term changes to writing assessment, the Government should carry out a thorough evaluation of the reliability of teacher assessment judgements and reconsider whether it is appropriate to use these judgements for accountability purposes.***

37. Underlying many of the criticisms of the new assessment system is its inaccessibility for pupils with SEND. The focus on spelling and handwriting can disproportionately affect pupils with dyslexia or dyspraxia, and there has been criticism of the level of difficulty of the tests. A survey conducted by NAHT found that “an overwhelming majority of respondents (98%) reported that tests at KS2 were not appropriate for children with SEND, with 82% reporting the same issue at KS1”.<sup>39</sup> The Government is currently consulting on recommendations from the Rochford review of assessment for pupils working below the standard of national curriculum tests.<sup>40</sup>

**38. We welcome the Rochford review and look forward to seeing the implementation of its conclusions.**

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36 Professor Dominic Wyse ([PRI 417](#)) para 1

37 Q222

38 Lord Bew, [Independent review of Key Stage 2 testing, assessment and accountability](#), June 2011, p 62

39 NAHT ([PRI 225](#)) para 10

40 Diane Rochford, [The Rochford Review final report](#): Review of assessment for pupils working below the standard of national curriculum tests, October 2016

## 4 Support and training

39. National curriculum levels were removed following the recommendations from the Expert Panel for the National Curriculum review and from the Commission on Assessment without Levels.<sup>41</sup> Schools have faced the considerable challenge of replacing this system, which has been in place in some form since 1991, with new assessment systems to suit their school and their curriculum. Statutory assessments are only able to sample a small range of the curriculum and it is important that schools are supported to develop effective ongoing assessment systems.

40. Many teachers who gave evidence to our inquiry supported the removal of levels due to the negative impact of levels on teaching and learning. The Department decided to remove levels because “[levels] had been too often viewed as thresholds, with teaching focused on getting pupils across the next threshold with undue pace and progression”.<sup>42</sup>

41. However, many teachers and senior leaders feel that the aims of removing levels have not been realised, as stated by Alex Gingell, a deputy headteacher:

Life without levels was an exciting opportunity to do something different [ ... ] we had an amazing opportunity to innovate in terms of learning and in terms of assessment. What did not happen is I don’t think there was enough support given from above, from DfE, and it was up to schools to go and identify what they wanted to do.<sup>43</sup>

42. Dr Becky Allen told us that “we do not have a system of training for teachers that makes them in any way experts in assessment”.<sup>44</sup> Ofsted found that this has led to a very mixed picture across the country with one in three schools only at the early stage of developing a system for ‘life after levels’.<sup>45</sup> Some schools resorted to buying commercial options of varying quality, as described by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers:

ATL is concerned about several dubious “solutions” commercially available to schools which do not offer value for money or a high-quality assessment framework.<sup>46</sup>

43. The Government does not seem to have appreciated the scale of the change that removing levels represented for most primary schools, and needed to offer much more continuous support and training. School autonomy and increased flexibility is one aim of the removal of levels, but research shows that when the results of statutory assessment are still closely linked to accountability measures, teachers need support and training alongside autonomy.<sup>47</sup>

44. We have heard of a range of suggestions to improve the support and training offered to schools. Michael Tidd, a deputy headteacher, suggested a more comprehensive ‘item

41 Expert Panel for the National Curriculum review, *The Framework for the National Curriculum*, December 2011, p 9; Commission on Assessment without Levels, *Final report*, September 2015

42 Department for Education (PRI 403) para 35

43 Q11

44 Q122

45 Ibid.

46 Association of Teachers and Lecturers (PRI 345) para 26

47 Christopher DeLuca and Sandra Johnson, “*Developing assessment capable teachers in this age of accountability*”, *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, vol. 24 (2017), pp 121–126

bank' of assessment tools for internal, formative assessment.<sup>48</sup> Professor Rob Coe, Durham University, suggested ongoing assessment training should take place through continuing professional development (CPD) as Initial Teacher Education (ITE) already had limited available time.<sup>49</sup>

45. In its consultation on the Rochford review recommendations, the Department proposes introducing interim teacher assessment frameworks for pupils working below the standard of national curriculum tests.<sup>50</sup> This may require further changes to a school's assessment procedures, and further training for teachers. The Rochford review called for:

Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for staff in educational settings [to] reflect the need for teachers to have a greater understanding of assessing pupils working below the standard of national curriculum tests, including those pupils with SEND who are not engaged in subject-specific learning.<sup>51</sup>

46. The Minister and the STA told us that they were concerned by poor quality commercial solutions, and were currently working on an item bank for schools.<sup>52</sup> In our report on the recruitment and retention of teachers, we called on the Government to support all teachers to have an entitlement to continuing professional development, and this should include assessment training.<sup>53</sup>

**47. National curriculum levels were removed without enough support in place for schools to implement their own assessment systems successfully. Many schools have now adopted ineffective assessment systems.**

**48. Professional development training on effective assessment procedures should be carried out by senior leaders and classroom teachers after ITE. This should include assessment for pupils working below the standard of national curriculum assessments. The Government should provide adequate resource for this training as part of its commitment to continuing professional development.**

**49. The availability of more high quality advice and guidance would mitigate the risk of schools purchasing low-quality assessment systems from commercial providers. The Government must make that advice and guidance available. This could include a more developed 'item bank' of case studies, professional development training, guidance on good assessment and links to research into effective assessment.**

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48 Q23

49 Q135

50 Department for Education and Standards & Testing Agency, [Primary school pupil assessment: Rochford Review recommendations Government consultation](#), launch date 30 March 2017, closing date 22 June 2017, p 8

51 *Ibid.*

52 Qq 183, 184, 218

53 Education Committee, Fifth Report of Session 2016–17, [Recruitment and retention of teachers](#), HC 199, para 93



## 5 Impact of high-stakes assessment

50. Statutory assessment and school accountability are currently closely connected within the education system in England.<sup>54</sup> We heard during our inquiry that this link can distort the education delivered to pupils in primary schools. A particular issue that arose was narrowing of the curriculum due to a focus on English and maths. One description was given by Angela Griffiths, a primary school senior leader and specialist leader in education for assessment, who wrote:

In classrooms across the country, the arts, sciences, humanities and PE have been squeezed out of the timetable in order to ‘achieve coverage’ of the curriculum in preparation for end of Key Stage assessments. The biggest impact has been in Y2 and Y6, but in some schools this has extended beyond the assessed year groups. In addition, some teachers were reduced to just ‘covering content’ in the core subjects, rather than spending time considering the most creative, appropriate teaching strategies which would enable their children to learn most effectively.<sup>55</sup>

51. The narrowing of the curriculum at primary school was commented on last year by Sir Michael Wilshaw, the previous Chief Inspector, who said that during a focused set of inspections, inspectors found that there was a “lack of time allocated to the study of science and foreign languages”. Most schools were spending four hours or more a week teaching English and maths, yet around two thirds of schools spent one to two hours per week teaching science, and around a fifth spent less than one hour.<sup>56</sup> This data is supported by a survey carried out by the Wellcome Trust and NFER.<sup>57</sup>

52. The Department of Learning and Leadership at UCL Institute of Education also suggested the accountability system can lead to a focus on curriculum areas that are covered in statutory tests. This includes narrowing of content and ‘teaching to the test’, which can distort results to “become severely inflated in being far larger than true gains in students’ learning”.<sup>58</sup> However, scientific organisations do not support a return to science SATs at Key Stage 1 or 2, and instead want to ensure school leaders and the inspectorate focus on science provision, as well as other areas of the curriculum.<sup>59</sup>

53. The new HMCI, Amanda Spielman, has announced that the first thematic Ofsted review will be on the curriculum offered within schools. However, many inspection reports currently focus on English and maths and can neglect other national curriculum subjects, like science. The Wellcome Trust has published statistics showing that in the first half of 2016, half of primary school inspection reports did not mention science at all.<sup>60</sup>

54. Ofsted has significant power to influence school behaviour, and neglecting to comment on core parts of the curriculum contributes to the overemphasis on English and

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54 Q136

55 Angela Griffiths (PRI 206) para 5

56 HMCI, *HMCI monthly commentary*, May 2016

57 Wellcome Trust, *NFER Teacher voice omnibus survey*, April 2016

58 Department of Learning and Leadership, UCL Institute of Education (PRI 348) paras 4 and 6

59 The Association for Science Education (PRI 311) para 2.3

60 Wellcome Trust (PRI 378) appendix 1

maths teaching at primary school. The Ofsted framework already includes the importance of a broad and balanced curriculum, but this does not appear to translate into every inspection report.<sup>61</sup>

55. We heard that the pressure that schools are under to achieve results at Key Stage 2, particularly with the new higher expected standard, can also affect pupil and staff wellbeing. Pupils in 2016 had only been taught the new curriculum for one full year since it was introduced, and yet were still judged on it using the new more difficult standard. This resulted in 47% of pupils not reaching the expected standard in English and maths in 2016.<sup>62</sup> Achieving for Children, a social enterprise that provides children's services in Kingston and Richmond, said that pupil wellbeing suffers as pressure is put on them to achieve, and that being labelled 'failures' at a young age can be very damaging.<sup>63</sup> However, this view wasn't echoed in all schools that submitted evidence, nor with the teachers and school pupils we met over the course of the inquiry.<sup>64</sup>

56. During our joint inquiry on children and young people's mental health with the Health Committee, this issue was raised with Edward Timpson MP, Minister for Vulnerable Children and Families, who said:

We want to make sure that children leave school with the absolute basic and necessary skills and academic attainment that they are going to need to be successful in later life, but we also have to recognise that in order to make sure that that happens there needs to be that underlying ability for them to be in a mental and emotional state to be able to maximise that opportunity.<sup>65</sup>

57. In the Department's current consultation on primary assessment, it outlines plans to remove statutory assessment at Key Stage 1, which it hopes will help ease teacher workload and reduce "the overall burden of statutory assessment".<sup>66</sup> However, the accountability system relies mainly on data from Key Stage 2 tests so this will not have the desired effect across the whole of primary school teaching. The Government also proposes to introduce a baseline measure in reception year in order to measure pupil progress.<sup>67</sup> There is a risk that introducing accountability into the early years will lead to narrowing of teaching and added pressure in the early years, shifting the issue from Key Stage 1 to a lower age group.

**58. Many teachers reported 'teaching to the test', narrowing of the curriculum and increased pressure and workload as a result of statutory assessment and accountability. Although Ofsted is required to monitor whether schools are teaching a broad and balanced curriculum, reports suggest there is often too strong a focus on English and maths teaching.**

61 Ofsted, *School inspection handbook*, August 2016, p 41, 42, 62, 63

62 Department for Education, *National curriculum assessments at Key Stage 2 in England (revised)*, SFR 62/2016, 15 December 2016

63 Achieving for Children (PRI 379) para 1.3

64 Annex 1; On 1 November the Committee visited Eastbrook Academy

65 Oral evidence taken on 29 March 2017, HC (2016–17) 849, Q116

66 Department for Education and Standards & Testing Agency, *Primary assessment in England Government consultation*, launch date 30 March 2017, closing date 22 June 2017, p 20

67 *Ibid.* p 16

***59. Ofsted should ensure that it reports on a broad and balanced curriculum in every primary school report. Every report should specifically include science as a core subject alongside English and maths, as well as a range of other areas of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities.***

***60. School leaders and governors should support a culture of wellbeing amongst staff and pupils and ensure that external assessment does not result in unnecessary stress for pupils.***

## 6 Accountability

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61. As discussed in the previous chapter, the assessment and accountability systems are inherently linked at primary school. Key Stage 2 assessments are carried out in order to hold schools and teachers to account for the attainment and progress made by their pupils. Professor Harvey Goldstein from the University of Bristol described the situation:

The problem is at the moment the accountability component dominates everything else and it distorts the curriculum, it distorts learning, it distorts children's behaviour.<sup>68</sup>

62. In primary schools in England, Key Stage 2 results and progress measures are used in a number of different ways to hold schools and teachers to account.

- School league tables are published based on the percentage of students reaching the expected standard and expected progress in English and maths;
- Floor standards and coasting standards are both based on the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard for attainment and/or progress;
- Ofsted uses Key Stage 1 and 2 data to inform its judgement of a school;
- Teachers' pay is linked to their performance—individual schools can design their own pay policies but Government guidance suggests this should include a teacher's impact on progress and outcomes.<sup>69</sup>

63. With such high-stakes use of data it is unsurprising that there are negative consequences on teaching and learning, as described in Chapter 5. Throughout the inquiry we heard calls for the stakes to be lowered at primary school.<sup>70</sup>

64. In England, performance tables are published each year with data on pupil attainment and progress for reading, writing and maths. Publishing these results gives information to parents and other stakeholders, but also has drawbacks. The limitations were discussed by Professor Harvey Goldstein:

If you are looking at the differential performance comparatively across schools, for those who come in with very low achievement or very high achievement or, for example, for different ethnic groups or for boys versus girls, then you begin to start dealing in comparison with very, very small numbers. [ ... ] So there is an inherent difficulty relating to this whole uncertainty associated with small numbers. [ ... ] It should be way back in the background, of use as backing up or indicating where there may be issues, but not as the primary source for making judgements about schools.<sup>71</sup>

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68 Q129

69 [“New advice to help schools set performance related pay”](#), Department for Education press release, first published 16 April 2013, updated 29 April 2013

70 For example, Michael Wilson ([PRI 80](#)) para 2.3, Simon Nixon ([PRI 160](#)) para 10, Sandwell School Improvement Team ([PRI 243](#)) para 1.2, Q84

71 Q87

65. Russell Hobby suggested that the Department should “look at a rolling average across three years or so, particularly when you are talking about 10 or 12 pupils in a sample.”<sup>72</sup> This suggestion was echoed by Catherine Kirkup from National Foundation for Educational Research who told us:

I would retain the national testing but I think, as others have suggested, there is too much focus on one year’s results and I would like a move to rolling averages and trends so that you can look at how a school is performing over time but still look at the overall attainment of all schools.<sup>73</sup>

**66. Many of the negative effects of assessment are in fact caused by the use of results in the accountability system rather than the assessment system itself. Key Stage 2 results are used to hold schools to account at a system level, to parents, by Ofsted, and results are linked to teachers’ pay and performance. We recognise the importance of holding schools to account but this high-stakes system does not improve teaching and learning at primary school alone.**

*67. The Government should change what is reported in performance tables to help lower the stakes associated with them and reduce issues of using data from a small number of pupils. We recommend publishing a rolling three year average of Key Stage 2 results instead of results from a single cohort. Yearly cohort level data should still be available for schools for use in their own internal monitoring.*

## Pupil progress

68. The increased focus on pupil progress is a positive step to make performance tables fairer for schools with more challenging intakes. However, there are still issues with how progress is measured. Currently, Key Stage 1 data is used as a baseline for pupils, which is collected after pupils have already been in school for three years. The Government is consulting on plans to introduce a baseline measure in reception in order to measure progress more effectively. The plans include:

- Introducing a new assessment early in the reception year, which is teacher mediated and can correlate with Key Stage 2 data;
- Using the data only at the end of Key Stage 2 as a way to measure progress, not to ‘judge’ individual pupils or schools on attainment in reception; and
- Introducing the new baseline assessment in 2019/20 to measure progress for pupils who will finish primary school in 2026.<sup>74</sup>

69. The reasons behind this shift are to improve accuracy of the progress measure and to ensure it is a fair depiction of a pupil’s progress throughout the whole of primary school. Measuring progress from Key Stage 1 has been shown to lead to ‘gaming’ of results to increase progress scores. Education Datalab stated in its written evidence:

the replacement of the Key Stage 1 externally marked test with teacher assessment in 2003 led to primary schools depressing their scores, knowing

72 Q56

73 Q145

74 Department for Education and Standards & Testing Agency, [Primary assessment in England Government consultation](#), launch date 30 March 2017, closing date 22 June 2017, p 15–20

it would be used as a baseline for Key Stage Two value-added measures. This did not happen in infant schools where Key Stage One is the outcome metric.<sup>75</sup>

70. However, introducing a baseline measure for pupils at the beginning of primary school also has challenges. The Government has not outlined how it will ensure that any new baseline measure will not be subject to the same ‘gaming’ that Key Stage 1 results were. There are also other factors to take into account when deciding whether a baseline measure should be introduced in reception:

- Whether the data collected is valid and reliable and can accurately be used to measure progress to Key Stage 2;
- The impact on pupils’ experience and wellbeing;
- The impact on early years practitioners, including workload.

71. We heard mixed opinions about the introduction of the baseline measure throughout the inquiry. Many early years practitioners are understandably sceptical about the introduction of a test at an age before ‘formal’ schooling has started. ‘Better Without Baseline’, a group of early years organisations and teaching unions who express concern about baseline assessment, argued:

it is crucial that this should not have a negative and distorting effect on the Early Years Foundation Stage, which differs from the national curriculum for sound reasons relating to children’s development.<sup>76</sup>

72. In 2016, the Government carried out a pilot of three baseline measures - one used only teacher observation and the other two used a combination of tests and observation.<sup>77</sup> NFER, which provided one of the pilot baseline measures in 2016, believes that there would be significant benefits in introducing a baseline to better measure pupil progress, although accepts that it may be difficult to achieve.<sup>78</sup> It also calls for any accountability measure to be used alongside a diagnostic tool, like the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, to gain a more detailed picture of children’s development.<sup>79</sup>

73. However, Dr Mary James, former Professor of Education Research at the University of Cambridge, described unresolved issues with introducing such a baseline, such as measuring small cohorts, or children who move or join schools part way through primary.<sup>80</sup> Dr James also questioned what early years education should be for:

is it just preparation for secondary schools at the age of four? This is where the early years specialists will come down and say, “We are about children’s

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75 Education Datalab ([PRI 288](#)) para 10

76 Better Without Baseline ([PRI 396](#)) para 3

77 The three providers of the reception baseline assessments during the pilot that ran during the 2015 to 2016 academic year were the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring, Durham University; Early Excellence; and the National Foundation for Educational Research.

78 National Foundation for Educational Research ([PRI 415](#))

79 Ibid.

80 Q149

development, socially, physically, as well as cognitively” and so forth. To narrow it down to preparation for spelling, punctuation and grammar is completely distorting [ ... ]<sup>81</sup>

74. Professor Dominic Wyse argued that the focus should be on improving teacher assessment, and not on the introduction of a formal test.<sup>82</sup> The Minister told us he was “open minded” as to whether the assessment was a formal test or an observational model.<sup>83</sup> The consultation proposal states “this assessment would need to be appropriately teacher mediated, given the age of the children.”<sup>84</sup> However, it does not give detail about the nature of the test.

75. The consultation suggests pupils should sit the test at the beginning of the second half term, “after pupils have been given enough time to settle into primary school”.<sup>85</sup> Tim Oates suggested that the assessment could be carried out at different points in the year, as “5/6 year olds take time to settle into school, this can affect their ability to complete tests, and affect their scores, compromising dependability”.<sup>86</sup> It has also been suggested that the measurement could take place in year one, rather than the reception year.

**76. We welcome the increased focus on progress in performance measures and the Government’s commitment to introduce an improved baseline measure. However, in its consultation document, the Government fails to appreciate potential harmful consequences of introducing a baseline measure used for school accountability in reception.**

***77. The Government must conduct a thorough evaluation of potential benefits and harmful consequences of introducing any baseline measure, involving early years experts and practitioners, including impacts on pupil wellbeing and teaching and learning. The primary purpose of a measure of children at age 4 should be a diagnostic tool to help early years practitioners identify individual needs of pupils and should only be carried out through teacher assessment. We welcome the Government’s commitment that no data from a baseline will be used to judge individual pupils or schools.***

## Lowering the stakes

78. We heard a range of ideas for how accountability measures could be made less high-stakes. A major change would be to replace school performance tables with a system of national sampling. This would remove the pressure on individual schools but still provide the Government with data on the overall performance of the primary education system for different groups of pupils. This approach is currently used for monitoring science performance at primary school. Professor Harvey Goldstein suggested:

If you want a monitoring system of testing for the whole of education, you can do that by sampling. [ ... ] You do not need to test every single student

81 Q154

82 Q150

83 Q213

84 Department for Education and Standards & Testing Agency, [Primary assessment in England Government consultation](#), launch date 30 March 2017, closing date 22 June 2017, p 16

85 *ibid.* p 17

86 Tim Oates ([PRI 418](#)) para 10

several times. The more you have good, formative testing that is used by the teachers to understand where pupils are and what they need to know the better.<sup>87</sup>

79. However, in order to hold individual schools to account for the performance of pupils at Key Stage 2, statutory testing is arguably the best method, as stated by NFER.<sup>88</sup> There are also ways to improve how performance data is used, and what data is published, to lower the stakes associated with performance tables, like publishing three year averages of results.

80. In 2016, the Government raised the expected standard at primary schools, in turn increasing the pressure on schools to achieve higher results. Setting a more difficult target with a short lead-in time for many pupils will not automatically achieve higher standards, as described by Binks Neate-Evans from the Headteachers' Roundtable:

Children have gone through their entire primary career and then we have the goalposts in February to say, "That is what you are shooting for." It wasn't manageable.<sup>89</sup>

81. Dr Mary James was involved with the curriculum review. She told us that "as soon as we say [pupils] have to get 100 then that is what teachers will drill to".<sup>90</sup> This was not the original aim of the curriculum review, which was to encourage more 'mastery' of concepts at primary school.<sup>91</sup> We received evidence suggesting the Government should remove the expected standard threshold completely as it "encourages excessive focus on students at the margin of meeting the standard".<sup>92</sup>

82. Alongside performance data, Ofsted plays an important role in holding schools to account and giving parents and other stakeholders more detailed information about a school. However, Ofsted has been criticised in the past for focusing too heavily on Key Stage 2 data when making its judgement. Dr Mary James suggested that the Ofsted inspection process should be strengthened by making it based on more qualitative judgements, such as teaching and learning in the classroom.<sup>93</sup>

83. Professor Dominic Wyse agreed that "expert judgement as part of rigorous and perceptive inspection (including observations of teaching) should be a major means for judging school effectiveness".<sup>94</sup> Professor Harvey Goldstein also supported a change in the Ofsted model:

What you really want is an independent judgement of what is going on inside the school, which you can then put together with the statistical information. [ ... ] [Ofsted judgements] confound the measurement the inspectors make when they go into schools, judging classrooms and teachers and so on, with

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87 Q92

88 National Foundation for Educational Research ([PRI 397](#)) para 2a

89 Q73

90 Q141

91 Expert panel for the National Curriculum Review, *The Framework for the National Curriculum*, December 2011

92 Education Datalab ([PRI 288](#)) para 21

93 Q136

94 Professor Dominic Wyse ([PRI 417](#)) para 5



the statistical evidence that is measuring something different. It would be much better and provide much more useful information if those were completely separate.<sup>95</sup>

**84. *For future reforms, the Government should carefully consider the impact of setting thresholds for schools with short lead in times. We agree with the Government's aim of raising standards at primary school but think that setting extremely challenging targets only leaves many students feeling they have failed, when in a previous year they would have succeeded. Expected standards should be raised over a much longer time period to give schools a chance to adjust to new expectations.***

**85. *We recommend a thorough review of how Ofsted inspectors use Key Stage 2 data to inform their judgements and whether inspectors rely too heavily on data over observation. This could include a pilot of inspections where data is only considered following the inspection.***

## Conclusions and recommendations

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1. *The Government must introduce longer lead in times for future changes to assessment or standards to mitigate the negative impacts of constant change, and the process of communication must be improved. The time allocated for design and delivery should enable schools to be given thorough information about changes at least a year before they will be implemented, without incremental changes throughout the year. (Paragraph 14)*
2. *We remain to be convinced that the STA will be able to meet all the recommendations set out in the 'root and branch' review. We recommend that the Government should commission a further short review following the 2017 SATs to assess progress made against the recommendations of the internal report, particularly in light of further changes proposed by the Department in its ongoing consultation. (Paragraph 15)*
3. *There is a lack of clarity over the responsibilities of the Minister, STA and Ofqual through the development process of national curriculum assessments. Additionally, there is a lack of confidence in the STA's independence from Ministers. (Paragraph 18)*
4. *An independent panel of experts and teachers should review the development process to improve confidence amongst school leaders and teachers. We recommend an independent review of Ofqual's role in national curriculum assessments to ascertain whether the regulator should have greater oversight. (Paragraph 19)*
5. *The STA should do more to explain the development process of national curriculum assessments to schools and ensure that teachers have confidence that they are involved from an appropriate stage. The Department and STA should publish plans to improve the test experience for pupils, particularly for reading. (Paragraph 26)*
6. *The balance of evidence we received did not support the proposition that focusing on specific grammatical techniques improved the overall quality of writing. We support the Department's proposal to use a 'best fit' model for teacher assessment of writing. We recommend the Department should make the Key Stage 2 spelling, punctuation and grammar test non-statutory, but still available for schools for internal monitoring. As well as short term changes to writing assessment, the Government should carry out a thorough evaluation of the reliability of teacher assessment judgements and reconsider whether it is appropriate to use these judgements for accountability purposes. (Paragraph 36)*
7. *We welcome the Rochford review and look forward to seeing the implementation of its conclusions. (Paragraph 38)*
8. *National curriculum levels were removed without enough support in place for schools to implement their own assessment systems successfully. Many schools have now adopted ineffective assessment systems. (Paragraph 47)*
9. *Professional development training on effective assessment procedures should be carried out by senior leaders and classroom teachers after ITE. This should include assessment for pupils working below the standard of national curriculum assessments. The Government should provide adequate resource for this training as part of its commitment to continuing professional development. (Paragraph 48)*

10. *The availability of more high quality advice and guidance would mitigate the risk of schools purchasing low-quality assessment systems from commercial providers. The Government must make that advice and guidance available. This could include a more developed 'item bank' of case studies, professional development training, guidance on good assessment and links to research into effective assessment. (Paragraph 49)*
11. Many teachers reported 'teaching to the test', narrowing of the curriculum and increased pressure and workload as a result of statutory assessment and accountability. Although Ofsted is required to monitor whether schools are teaching a broad and balanced curriculum, reports suggest there is often too strong a focus on English and maths teaching. (Paragraph 58)
12. *Ofsted should ensure that it reports on a broad and balanced curriculum in every primary school report. Every report should specifically include science as a core subject alongside English and maths, as well as a range of other areas of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. (Paragraph 59)*
13. *School leaders and governors should support a culture of wellbeing amongst staff and pupils and ensure that external assessment does not result in unnecessary stress for pupils. The Government should assess the impact of changes to curriculum and standards on teacher and pupil wellbeing before they are introduced and publish plans to avoid such negative consequences. (Paragraph 60)*
14. Many of the negative effects of assessment are in fact caused by the use of results in the accountability system rather than the assessment system itself. Key Stage 2 results are used to hold schools to account at a system level, to parents, by Ofsted, and results are linked to teachers' pay and performance. We recognise the importance of holding schools to account but this high-stakes system does not improve teaching and learning at primary school. (Paragraph 66)
15. *The Government should change what is reported in performance tables to help lower the stakes associated with them and reduce issues of using data from a small number of pupils. We recommend publishing a rolling three year average of Key Stage 2 results instead of results from a single cohort. Yearly cohort level data should still be available for schools for use in their own internal monitoring. (Paragraph 67)*
16. We welcome the increased focus on progress in performance measures and the Government's commitment to introduce an improved baseline measure. However, in its consultation document, the Government fails to appreciate potential harmful consequences of introducing a baseline measure used for school accountability in reception (Paragraph 76)
17. *The Government must conduct a thorough evaluation of potentially harmful consequences of introducing any baseline measure, involving early years experts and practitioners, including impacts on pupil wellbeing and teaching and learning. The primary purpose of a measure of children at age 4 should be a diagnostic tool to help early years practitioners identify individual needs of pupils and should only be carried out through teacher assessment. We welcome the Government's commitment that no data from a baseline will be used to judge individual pupils or schools. (Paragraph 77)*

18. *For future reforms, the Government should carefully consider the impact of setting thresholds for schools with short lead in times. We agree with the Government's aim of raising standards at primary school but think that setting extremely challenging targets only leaves many students feeling they have failed, when in a previous year they would have succeeded. Expected standards should be raised over a much longer time period to give schools a chance to adjust to new expectations. (Paragraph 84)*
19. *We recommend a thorough review of how Ofsted inspectors use Key Stage 2 data to inform their judgements and whether inspectors rely too heavily on data over observation. This could include a pilot of inspections where data is only considered following the inspection. (Paragraph 85)*

## Annex 1: Discussion with year six pupils

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On 2 February 2017 we held an informal engagement event with year six pupils from West Denton Primary School and their teachers. The pupils were visiting Parliament, as arranged by Parliament's Education Service, and as part of their trip spoke to us about primary assessment in their school.

The aim of the session was to understand how primary assessment affects pupils and how they felt about their upcoming SATs tests. There were several themes that were discussed during the session, which helped with our inquiry:

- In general, the pupils were positive about taking SATs. They felt that SATs were a good opportunity to demonstrate what you knew and getting good SATs results would help you later in life.
- Some pupils told us they could get nervous or anxious about taking the tests, and that feeling nervous during the test might affect how well they did.
- Some pupils pointed out that focusing on tests meant that they didn't have as much time to do other things, like art or PE. Some suggested that there should be more tests in these subjects to make things fairer.
- The children suggested some improvements to the SATs. Many pupils thought they should be given more time for each test, and that it was time pressure that made them most nervous. Others thought that the writing assessment was unfair. In particular, they felt that pupils who struggled with spelling or handwriting were unfairly penalised in the writing assessment, even if their creativity or composition was of a high standard.

# Formal Minutes

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**Wednesday 26 April 2017**

Members present:

Neil Carmichael, in the Chair

Marion Fellows

William Wragg

Ian Mearns

Draft Report (*Primary assessment*) proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

*Ordered*, that the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 85 read and agreed to.

Annex and summary agreed to.

*Resolved*, That the Report be the Eleventh Report of the Committee to the House.

*Ordered*, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

*Ordered*, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available (Standing Order No. 134).

[The Committee adjourned

# Witnesses

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The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

## Wednesday 14 December 2016

*Question number*

**Alex Gingell**, Deputy Head, Marlborough Primary School, **Juliet Nickels**, Primary School Teacher, and **Michael Tidd**, Deputy Head, Edgewood Primary School

[Q1–53](#)

**John Coe**, Information Officer, National Association for Primary Education, **Russell Hobby**, General Secretary, National Association of Head Teachers, and **Binks Neate-Evans**, Head Teacher, Headteachers Roundtable

[Q54–81](#)

## Wednesday 18 January 2017

**Dr Rebecca Allen**, Director, Education Datalab, **Professor Harvey Goldstein**, Professor of Social Statistics, University of Bristol, **Joanna Hall**, Deputy Director for Schools, Ofsted, and **Tim Oates CBE**, Group Director of Assessment Research and Development, Cambridge Assessment

[Q82–130](#)

**Professor Rob Coe**, Director of the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring, Durham University, **Dr Mary James**, Former Professor and Associate Director of Research, University of Cambridge Faculty of Education, **Catherine Kirkup**, Research Director, National Foundation for Educational Research, and **Professor Dominic Wyse**, Head of Department of Learning and Leadership, UCL Institute of Education

[Q131–156](#)

## Wednesday 22 February 2017

**Claire Burton**, Chief Executive Officer, Standards and Testing Agency, **Sally Collier**, Chief Regulator, Ofqual, and **Dr Michelle Meadows**, Executive Director for Strategy, Risk and Research, Ofqual

[Q157–204](#)

**Nick Gibb MP**, Minister for School Standards, Department for Education

[Q205–242](#)

## Published written evidence

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The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

PRI numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

- 1 5Ways Learning Network, Liverpool ([PRI0278](#))
- 2 Achieving for Children ([PRI0379](#))
- 3 Advisory Committee on Mathematics Education ([PRI0367](#))
- 4 Alison Ali ([PRI0134](#))
- 5 Alison Hoal ([PRI0389](#))
- 6 Anonymous 1 ([PRI0016](#))
- 7 Anonymous 2 ([PRI0095](#))
- 8 Anonymous 3 ([PRI0194](#))
- 9 Anonymous 4 ([PRI0301](#))
- 10 Anonymous 5 ([PRI0136](#))
- 11 Anthony Curton and Tilney All Saints C of E Partnership ([PRI0258](#))
- 12 Ark Schools ([PRI0371](#))
- 13 Ashley Seymour-Williams ([PRI0204](#))
- 14 Ashton Hayes Primary School ([PRI0370](#))
- 15 Association for Achievement and Improvement through Assessment ([PRI0362](#))
- 16 Association for Language Learning ([PRI0395](#))
- 17 Association of Child Psychotherapists ([PRI0325](#))
- 18 Association of School and College Leaders ([PRI0357](#))
- 19 ATL ([PRI0345](#))
- 20 Babcock LDP Primary Mathematics Team ([PRI0199](#))
- 21 Barnacre Road Primary School ([PRI0068](#))
- 22 Ben Young ([PRI0209](#))
- 23 Beryl Jackson ([PRI0299](#))
- 24 Better Without Baseline ([PRI0396](#))
- 25 British Educational Research Association ([PRI0327](#))
- 26 Buxton Infant School ([PRI0383](#))
- 27 C Chase ([PRI0346](#))
- 28 Carol Frankl ([PRI0055](#))
- 29 Castle Hill Primary School ([PRI0063](#))
- 30 Centre for Research in Writing, University of Exeter ([PRI0106](#))
- 31 Cheshire EAST Council ([PRI0368](#))
- 32 Christ Church Primary School ([PRI0117](#))
- 33 Christchurch Infant School ([PRI0174](#))



- 34 Christchurch Junior School ([PRI0186](#))
- 35 Claire Robinson ([PRI0232](#))
- 36 Claire Turner ([PRI0373](#))
- 37 Clare Atkins ([PRI0075](#))
- 38 Council for Subject Associations ([PRI0402](#))
- 39 Department for Education ([PRI0403](#))
- 40 Department for Education ([PRI0420](#))
- 41 Department of Learning and Leadership, UCL Institute of Education ([PRI0348](#))
- 42 Discovery Education ([PRI0334](#))
- 43 Dr Charlotte Nicholls ([PRI0031](#))
- 44 Dr Clement Adelman ([PRI0235](#))
- 45 Dr Helen Williams ([PRI0240](#))
- 46 Dr Jennifer Deegan ([PRI0025](#))
- 47 Dr Julian Gardiner ([PRI0043](#))
- 48 Dr Mary James ([PRI0416](#))
- 49 Dr Nicola Ray ([PRI0200](#))
- 50 Dr Ollie Minton ([PRI0212](#))
- 51 Dr Pauline Seymour ([PRI0167](#))
- 52 Dr Terry Wrigley ([PRI0318](#))
- 53 Duncan Haslam ([PRI0076](#))
- 54 Early Excellence ([PRI0249](#))
- 55 Early Excellence ([PRI0414](#))
- 56 Education Datalab ([PRI0288](#))
- 57 Education Policy Institute ([PRI0407](#))
- 58 Emeritus Professor Michael Bassey ([PRI0198](#))
- 59 Emiley Davies ([PRI0287](#))
- 60 Emily Burnham ([PRI0401](#))
- 61 Emma Jones ([PRI0251](#))
- 62 Erin Zohrehie ([PRI0065](#))
- 63 Essex Primary Headteachers' Association ([PRI0268](#))
- 64 Essex Specialist Teaching and Pre School Service ([PRI0234](#))
- 65 Fiona Robertson ([PRI0398](#))
- 66 Fit 2 Learn CIC ([PRI0123](#))
- 67 Geraldine Bennett ([PRI0001](#))
- 68 Gerard Swan ([PRI0061](#))
- 69 GL Assessment ([PRI0352](#))
- 70 Hannah Needham ([PRI0092](#))
- 71 Headteachers Roundtable ([PRI0223](#))

- 72 HEARTS Academy Trust ([PRI0290](#))
- 73 Helen Irving ([PRI0019](#))
- 74 Helen Ryan ([PRI0125](#))
- 75 Hemingford Grey Primary School ([PRI0231](#))
- 76 Henley Primary School ([PRI0166](#))
- 77 Hoo St Werburgh Primary and Marlborough Centre ([PRI0107](#))
- 78 I CAN, the children's communication charity ([PRI0359](#))
- 79 Ivan Wels ([PRI0060](#))
- 80 Jacqui Taylor ([PRI0124](#))
- 81 Jennie Jones ([PRI0322](#))
- 82 Jessica Edmonds ([PRI0173](#))
- 83 Joel Marshall ([PRI0057](#))
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