

Leas Phrìomh Mhinistear agus Rùnaire a' Chaibineit
airson Foghlam agus Sgìlean
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for
Education and Skills



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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Larry Flanagan
General Secretary
The Educational Institute of Scotland

By email

12 May 2021

Dear Larry

Thank you for your letter of 30 April about the collection of ACEL data and the use of national standardised assessment in the current school year.

I recognise the concerns you express about the pressure that secondary schools are currently facing and whether we should be asking them to submit ACEL data for S3 learners this year. I have decided therefore that, as an exception, S3 data should not be collected this year. I have asked officials to write to Directors of Education to confirm that approach. I am sure you will agree that it remains vitally important that teachers continue to gather evidence of children and young people's progress to tailor learning and teaching appropriately and ensure that they can report on that progress to parents.

I remain, however, firmly of the view that we should collect ACEL data in primary schools this year. Given there was no collection of data in 2020, ACEL data this year will be particularly helpful in supporting our understanding of the impact that COVID-19 has had on children and young people's achievements and on the attainment gap.

Tha Ministearan na h-Alba, an luchd-comhairleachaidh sònraichte agus an Rùnaire Maireannach fo chumhachan Achd Coiteachaidh (Alba) 2016. Faicibh www.lobbying.scot

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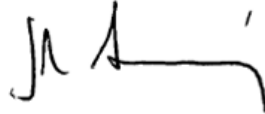
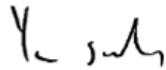


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Similarly, I believe that national standardised assessments should be available for use in schools to help teachers assess where children and young people are at in their learning and to tailor support plans for individual learners. Since primary schools returned earlier this year, teachers are making use of the assessments in similar volumes to those from the same period last session. As you know, the national standardised assessments represent just one assessment tool as part of the approach to assessment through the broad general education. We do not expect schools to focus disproportionately on standardised assessments or to divert children away from learning to complete them.



JOHN SWINNEY

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