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Directors of Education

By email

2 June 2020

Dear Director

ACHIEVEMENT OF CFE LEVELS DATA 2019/20

The Scottish Government has been considering whether the collection of Achievement of CfE level (ACEL) data for 2019/20 should go ahead this year. Although our priorities for improvement remain the same, we recognise the challenges faced by schools and education authorities in dealing with the Covid-19 crisis, and want to minimise any additional work that might be required at a time when resources are stretched.

While the schools are closed, it will not be possible to gather the 2019/20 ACEL data in the normal way. My officials have held discussions with ADES and the professional associations about possible options for collecting the data. The consensus was that, no matter which approach is taken to collecting the data, it would add considerably to the other pressures on school and education authority staff, and we cannot be sure that it will be comparable with previous years. I have concluded, therefore, that there is no strong rationale for gathering the ACEL data under the current circumstances and have decided to suspend the data collection for this year.

However, it remains important to ensure that education authorities, schools and settings continue to promote, support and gather evidence of children's learning at this difficult time. My officials will continue to liaise with Education Scotland and ADES around any further guidance and support that schools may require to enable this to happen. I am confident, therefore, that teachers will continue to assess the progress that children and young people are making whilst learning at home, and report that progress back to parents.

Improvement planning in 2020/21 is being considered in detail by workstream 8 of the Education Recovery Group, and further guidance on this will be issued shortly. The Education Recovery Group has been convened to provide guidance on education policy and delivery to Ministers and Local Government leaders in the context of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic as we move towards the recovery phase.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

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