

P1 Practitioner Forum 2 (Jan 14th 2019)

Practitioner Responses

As a result of discussions what are important key messages about SNSA and Play?

THEMES

Links to the benchmarks and Scottish curriculum

Points made	Number of comments
SNSA fits well with the benchmarks / Early level pathways	6
SNSA captures skills not observed through play based learning; an additional tool, providing important information about the learner journey	2
Play and SNSA are linked because both are informed by benchmarks	4
The clear links to benchmarks need to be shared more obviously	2
SNSA helps with teacher reflections and progress discussions re. benchmarks & teaching.	1
SNSA offers a consistent element and a language common across classes, schools & authorities.	1

The relationship between assessment and play-based pedagogies

Points made	Number of comments
Pedagogy and assessment don't need to be the same thing	2
Play based observations and assessments are valuable but subjective	1
SNSA was not designed with play-based learning in mind, but includes elements compatible with blended/ play based learning e.g. flexibility in when completed, not timed, expectation is not for pupils to answer all questions correctly (and this is okay).	4
P1 children have experience of formal/structured and play learning; SNSA relate to/support teacher led/teacher initiated learning.	4
SNSA allows an opportunity to transfer skills to a different context	3
Every school does 'play' differently (from Froebelian approaches to adult led play)	3
It should be not be 'pretended' that SNSA is a form of play, however it may be a reasonable demand; assessments both summative & formative have/are being undertaken in all our classrooms	3
Adult demands for assessment are not 'play', and may be strange for children. Children are not used to being extracted 1 to 1 on technology to showcase their learning; Children may not have the skills to demonstrate their understanding.	5

Examples of comments:

- If play is an opportunity for children to make sense of their learning, how can the SNSA capture this?
- Play-based learning may look different but the aim is that children can transfer skills.

- The SNSA are an opportunity to see where a child is in their progress in literacy & numeracy at particular point time in. While some elements of SNSA are consistent with PBL, the assessments are not play, as such. However they can be used to help teachers guide children's learning within the context of a play based pedagogical approach.
- Various play-based approaches are used in P1 across Scotland. Schools need to articulate a policy on how learning through play fits with the benchmarks and with the SNSA. P1 play-based pedagogies must not replicate or widen social disadvantage.
- SNSA is measuring literacy & numeracy skills which I feel fits in with the core teaching that is being done within the classroom- direct teaching. It does not measure other skills which children are developing through play, however this can be assessed by the teacher using different sources/tools.
- Play based learning is delivering & developing children's understanding based on the expressions and outcomes. Assessments are measuring progress and are designed around these e's and o's so there is synergy. Difficulty is to ensure that children have the skills to demonstrate their understanding.
- The assessments do not fit into the play-based curriculum but still can be useful for data analysis and next steps. Why not just acknowledge that these assessments are not play based assessments and be clear?
- SNSA assessment is not play, but is one time when they demonstrate learning and do respond to adult 'demand' – so is 'ok'.
- The difficulty might be that, where play is wholly child-led, coverage of outcomes and experience of ICT might affect familiarity with being 'assessed'.

What we need to think about

Technology and transfer

- Some experience of computer based responding may need to be developed pre-assessment, linked to the school's digital education curriculum/policy. Technology in schools differs greatly – some children have more opportunities to experience it.
- How can we help children to transfer skills from a play based curriculum to SNSA?
- Schools/teachers should make decisions about the administration at their level.

Navigating the link to teacher judgment:

- SNSAs need to sit alongside teacher judgment.
- SNSA cannot evidence children's ability to apply and use their knowledge effectively in real contexts. Key learning/knowledge some young children in numeracy & literacy could be missed.
- SNSAs have a place to support professional judgements.

Administration in schools/ national level:

- Data; inform next steps, trends, opportunity to moderate
- How to administrate to benefit children & inform next steps/gaps in teaching/ learning.
- P1 teaching approaches vary widely across Scotland.
- Planning for assessment means children need some exposure to assessment friendly approaches.
- Technologies are a real barrier in some schools.

Recommended actions:

- SNSA P1 Assessment Guidelines should include clear statements on:
 - the difference between play as a learning pedagogy and assessment (which is not a learning pedagogy);
 - how teachers navigate between SNSA and wider professional judgement to benefit the child's learning.
 - teachers should be aware of the capacity of a child to undertake the SNSA and note this.
 - schools need to articulate a policy on how learning through play fits with the benchmarks and with the SNSA.
- The SNSA report could include the benchmarks so teachers can see the links.