

Does **Your** School's Assessment Policy Pass the EIS Test?

Question		Answer	
1	Does all assessment genuinely support learning?	YES ✓	NO
2	Are formative assessment and teacher professional judgement central to assessment practice?	YES ✓	NO
3	Has time been allocated for meaningful professional dialogue and moderation to inform teacher judgement of pupil progress?	YES ✓	NO
4	Do teachers have autonomy to use professional judgement in determining how and when pupils are assessed, matching methodology to individual needs?	YES ✓	NO
5	Are whole cohorts or classes of pupils assessed at the same time using the same assessment tool?	YES	NO ✓
6	Is standardised testing/assessment being used to gather data to enable the setting of pupils by ability, school to school comparison, or the creation of accountability measures?	YES	NO ✓
7	Are the results of standardised tests/assessments used as an exclusive measure of learners' progress and achievement?	YES	NO ✓
8	Are assessment judgements based on a range of assessments carried out during the time that a pupil has been working within a CfE level?	YES ✓	NO
9	Are broad approaches to assessment rather than narrow measures reflected in reporting to parents and carers, with information being fully contextualised?	YES ✓	NO
10	Is time made available at points of transition for teachers to share assessment information to support future learning?	YES ✓	NO

If your school's assessment policy doesn't pass the EIS test, our current advice on assessment could help. Find it here:

www.eis.org.uk/images/education/NIFAdvice.pdf

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Are SNSAs for P1 passing the EIS Test?

Yes
Pass

No
Fail

High

Medium

Low

Current EIS Position

This AGM resolve that, if the Scottish Government implements national standardised testing which the EIS determines as detrimental to learning and teaching in schools, all members in primary and secondary schools will be balloted on a boycott of the administration and reporting of the test results.

1. Does all assessment genuinely support learning?

CfE Alignment

Es and Os and Benchmarks – curriculum content

4 capacities

Principles for curriculum design -breadth, depth, relevance, enjoyment, coherence...

Cornerstone principles- bespoke curricula, formative assessment, teacher autonomy and professional judgement.

1. Does all assessment genuinely support learning?

Accessibility to 4 and 5 year olds

Digital and keyboard skills required

Accessibility of language

Font, layout, text density

Assessment tasks

Teacher Voice

‘The layouts of the comprehension tasks in the Literacy SNSA made the question too long and the majority of children lost focus. The content of the assessment tasks was, in general, extremely difficult. This made the children lose interest, become anxious and refuse to answer any more questions. No child had an assessment shorter than 32 questions. One child sat for 37 questions. There was also a practice assessment which lasted 10-12 questions. The length of the assessment was completely inappropriate for such young learners.’ (Glasgow)

1. Does all assessment genuinely support learning?

Usefulness of SNSA data

Unreliability

Revealed nothing new about strengths, learning needs and next steps

Too much information

No frame of reference to interpret the data

Lack of understanding

Teacher Voices

'I have been bombarded with data to such an extent this last year. It did highlight some pupils requiring support but I was already aware of these from my own assessments. I feel this data is not really for teachers.' (Clackmannanshire)

'I have been given a spreadsheet telling me which pupils were graded High or Medium, and which questions were answered correctly or incorrectly by each pupil. However, not knowing what the questions were means this information is of no real use. This morning I spent 2 hours opening cells on the spreadsheet to see word descriptions of each question, but some of these descriptions are so ambiguous that the exact nature/level of the question is impossible to determine. Still need to try to analyse these as best I can.' (Dumfries and Galloway)

1. Does all assessment genuinely support learning?

Balance of time and resource

Impact on teaching and learning time amidst curriculum cluttering

ASN Teachers' and Support assistants' time

PEF-funded posts and initiatives

Management time

Teachers' preparation and marking time

Supply costs

Teacher Voice

'My role this year has been to deliver STEM and raising attainment in Literacy across the school. Since Easter I have been released from my timetable to administer SNSA to all relevant classes...The primary 1 tests however have required administering on a 1 to 1 basis due to the amount of reading required and ensuring they do not click past the questions. This has been horrendously time consuming and I have still not completed them. It would be very difficult to administer them in small groups. It has been very demanding of my timetable and I am still to finish p1. The numeracy assessment can take a minimum of 20 minutes per child and the literacy one around 40 minutes minimum per child for primary 1.' (West Dunbart.)

Teacher Voice

'PSWs were taken off timetable for a fortnight to take groups of pupils to complete (P1s were taken individually). The laptop trolley was not able to be used by classes during this fortnight and there was constant disruption to lessons for pupils going for assessments and coming back and trying to catch up.' (West Lothian)

1. Does all assessment genuinely support... play-based... learning?

Play

EIS perspective: Building the Ambition, European counterparts, Upstart campaign

Benefits? Wellbeing, cognitive and social development, language acquisition, numeracy concepts, learning about risk, decision-making, compensates socio-economic disadvantage, supports holistic child-centred development.

1. Does all assessment genuinely support play-based learning.

Play-based learning

- Socially interactive
- Engaging
- Child agency and self-direction
- Exploration, learning, enquiry and discovery
- Skilful teacher intervention
- Creative and imaginative
- Builds confidence and self esteem
- Enjoyable...FUN!

SNSAs

- Solitary
- Lack of engagement and boredom
- Prescription/ absence of agency
- Narrow literacy and numeracy focus
- Teacher as data analyst
- Confidence and morale eroding
- Not fun.

Teacher Voice

'There is no way these assessments have been matched up to the early level benchmarks! It's as if the person who devised these has not even read the early level benchmarks!! These assessments are awful, in my opinion, they are verging on being cruel and harmful to our young learners. With such long passages to read it was dreadful hearing my children saying, "I can't read that". At such a young age they were experiencing failure when in fact they should be feeling "successful & confident" in their learning & skills!' (Dundee)

Teacher Voice

‘Some questions appeared to be beyond the benchmarks for early level. Children in P1 have been experiencing a play-based learning approach as recommended by SAC..... the test did not marry with this.’ (East Ayrshire)

1. Does all assessment genuinely support learning?

YES

NO



2. Are formative assessment and teacher professional judgement central to assessment practice?

- Knowledge of learners – **lives, experience and contexts; needs, preferences, can and can't do; teachers not involved in design**
- Appropriateness for developmental stage- **duration, number of questions, scrolling, language, text heaviness, lack of engagement**
- Reflective of the learning focus- **reading skills, number, data-handling**
- Usefulness of feedback to learners- **inaccessible**
- Adaptive element- **not responsive enough, impact on morale, guessing**
- Teacher judgement in determining what, why, when and who of assessment- **SG guidance, local authority practice**

3. Has time been allocated for meaningful professional dialogue and moderation to inform teacher judgement of pupil progress?

- SNSA Training Year 1- **patchy, local authority determined, WTAs, incomplete picture**
- SNSA Training Year 2- **expansion, data interpretation**
- Perception of relationship of SNSAs to teacher judgement- **'to confirm' rather than 'to inform'**
- Perception of relationship of SNSAs to wider assessment- **overemphasis on importance and utility, lack of clarity of purpose**

4. Do teachers have autonomy to use professional judgement in determining how and when pupils are assessed, matching methodology to individual needs?

- One SNSA fits all
- Teacher voice muted
- ASN
- Single episode or 'chunking' of assessments

Teacher Voices

'I was told I had to blanket test the whole class regardless of whether I thought they were ready for the test or not. I said this was against Scottish government and E.I.S. advice and was told that authority said we had to blanket test the whole class by end of May.' (Dumfries and Galloway)

'Aberdeenshire Council provided dates which the assessments had to be completed within. These dates were in term 4 for P1.' (Aberdeenshire)

'None. I was told to do them by SMT. I had no warning, just came in on the first Monday after the Easter holidays and told to do them.' (Argyll and Bute)

5. Are whole cohorts or classes of pupils assessed at the same time using the same assessment tool?

YES

Assessment windows- comparison of schools by local authorities

Purpose of the assessments- diagnostic: summative

Manageability

Teacher Voice

'I was told by management that these tests must be started as soon as possible as we were already aware of how long it would take to get through them with three sets of Primary one children. I have a class of 22 and it took 8 full school days of constant testing (classroom assistant and I). During this time, no formal teaching took place. Each child took roughly 20 minutes to complete Numeracy and 40-45 minutes for Literacy. This was time spent after having a formal whole school Assessment Week.' (Inverclyde)

6. Is standardised testing/assessment being used to gather data to enable the setting of pupils by ability, school to school comparison, or the creation of accountability measures?

7. Are the results of standardised tests/assessments used as an exclusive measure of learners' progress and achievement?

8. Are assessment judgements based on a range of assessments carried out during the time that a pupil has been working within a CfE level?

9. Are broad approaches to assessment rather than narrow measures reflected in reporting to parents and carers, with information being fully contextualised?

10. Is time made available at points of transition for teachers to share assessment information to support future learning?


So overall, are SNSAs for P1 passing the EIS Test?

No

Fail

Low

Two wishes and a star from the EIS:



Try to keep faith with the sound principles of CfE and resist abandoning them when the going gets politically tough.



Try to listen to teachers and learn to trust their professional judgement, and don't be afraid to learn from your mistakes.

Intensify the good work that's being done on moderation.

Come on, you can do it!

