

# The Scottish National Standardised Assessments

## Information for parents and carers

The Scottish Government has commissioned the Scottish National Standardised Assessments as part of the National Improvement Framework.

For children and young people to have the best chance of reaching their potential, parents, carers, teachers and the children themselves, need to understand how they are progressing, and what further support they require. Alongside a wide range of other assessment activity, the assessments help to inform that understanding by providing teachers with objective and nationally consistent information on children's progress. Teachers can then discuss children's progress with them and their parents, planning next steps accordingly, and ensuring parents understand how best to support their child's learning at home.

### **What you need to know as a parent or carer**

#### **What's new?**

The Scottish Government has introduced a single, nationally developed set of standardised assessments, designed to reflect the way we deliver education in Scotland, through Curriculum for Excellence. These assessments are expected to replace the variety of existing standardised assessments that local authorities and schools use at the moment.

Ongoing and informal assessment is, and will continue to be, a central part of everyday assessment. Teachers will continue to draw on all of the assessment information available to them, when considering children's progress and planning the next steps in their learning.

#### **What is being assessed?**

Scottish National Standardised Assessments focus on aspects of reading, writing and numeracy.

#### **Who is being assessed?**

All children in P1, P4, P7 and S3.

#### **When will Scottish National Standardised Assessments be introduced?**

They will take place in your child's school sometime in November 2017.

#### **When will the assessments take place?**

The assessments are administered to each child once within the relevant school year. Individual teachers and schools, with guidance from their local authorities, will decide the most appropriate time during the school year for your child to take the standardised assessments.

#### **How will the assessments take place?**

Assessments are completed online and are marked automatically giving teachers immediate feedback to help children progress.

### **How many times will your child take the assessments in a school session?**

P1 children will take two SNSA assessments: one in literacy and one in numeracy. P4 children will take three SNSA assessments: one in reading, one in writing and one in numeracy. P7 children will take three SNSA assessments: one in reading, one in writing and one in numeracy. S3 young people will take three SNSA assessments: one in reading, one in writing and one in numeracy.

### **What does this mean for your child?**

Children do not have to revise or prepare for assessments. The assessments are used as part of routine teaching and learning to help teachers understand how well your child is progressing and to plan next steps.

The system is designed so that if a child is experiencing difficulty, the questions will get easier, and if a child is doing well, the questions will become more challenging. In this way, the assessments establish children's capacity without them having to face lots of questions that are too easy or too hard for them to answer. There is no pass or fail.

The assessments are as short as possible and are age and stage appropriate. There is no time limit. This is to ensure children do not feel unnecessary time pressure when undertaking the assessments. We do expect, however, that the majority of children will complete each assessment in no more than 45 minutes. Your child will not be expected to take assessments covering reading, writing, and numeracy in one sitting.

### **How are the results being used?**

Scottish National Standardised Assessments data provides additional information to the teacher regarding how your child is progressing in school.

### **How will the new system benefit your child?**

#### **How will Scottish National Standardised Assessments benefit your child?**

The online assessment system will produce feedback information about where your child did well and where further support is required. Your child's teacher will use this feedback to help plan next steps and provide further support as appropriate. Providing the right support at the right time will help to ensure your child can reach his or her potential.

### **What will your child need to do?**

The assessments should be seen by children as another aspect of daily learning. Your child does not have to revise or prepare for assessments. There is no additional workload for your child and the assessments will not distract from daily learning.

### **What does this mean for you?**

#### **Will you get to see the results?**

Teachers will use this information, alongside a wide range of other assessment information, to discuss with you how your child is progressing with their learning, as part of the normal reporting process in your school.

**How will the information gathered be used?**

Teachers will discuss feedback from assessments with individual children and then plan next steps in learning using all available assessment information.

**How can you help?**

You have a key role to play in helping your child to progress in their learning. Teachers will keep you informed about how your child is progressing. Talk to your child's teacher if you have any concerns about their learning or assessment. Ask for information on how you can support your child's learning at home.

For further information about how to support your child's learning, their education and school life, visit Parentzone Scotland's website.

**Who can I talk to for more information?**

Your child's class teacher or headteacher should always be on hand to discuss any questions that you may have about your child's progress and the role assessment plays in this. Your Parent Council may be able to point you towards further advice or support.

If you have more general comments or questions about the way in which children's progress is being assessed as part of the National Improvement Framework, please email [nationalimprovementframework@gov.scot](mailto:nationalimprovementframework@gov.scot).

**Where can I find out more?**

Further information about the National Improvement Framework can be found at the Scottish Government's website, where you can also find *Assessing Children's Progress: A guide for parents and carers*.