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Subject:

Circular Number: 2015/08

**END OF KEY STAGE ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS –
MOVING FORWARD IN 2014/15**

**Date of Issue:
4 March 2015**

Audience:

- Principals, Teachers and Boards of Governors of all grant-aided schools;
- Education and Library Boards;
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools;
- Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment;
- Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta;
- Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education; and
- Teachers Unions.

Summary of Contents:

This circular sets out the statutory responsibilities regarding assessment for Governors, principals and teachers.

Enquiries:

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Governor Awareness:
Essential

Status of Contents:
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Related Documents:
Not applicable

Superseded Documents:
Not applicable

Expiry Date:
Not applicable

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Introduction

1. The purpose of this circular is to notify Governors, principals and teachers of their obligations to execute their statutory responsibilities regarding assessment. The respective responsibilities of each are set out in the accompanying annex.
2. The Minister made clear in his letter to schools on 31 October that the Department is moving forward with the assessment arrangements for 2014/15 and beyond, and Governors, principals and teachers will each have their own crucial roles in embedding the statutory arrangements and fulfilling their statutory responsibilities. These roles are important; not because of the requirements of the legislation *per se* but because they are in the interests of children, as reflected in the legislation made by the Assembly. In particular the Department would emphasize the importance of reporting levels of progression to parents, governors and CCEA.
3. Concerted efforts to ensure compliance will serve the best interests of children and will favorably limit any future consequences arising from a failure to fulfil statutory obligations.
4. The Minister's letter outlines how End of Key Stage Assessment policy has developed in response to the views of teachers and their representatives, and indicates how the arrangements would operate in 2014/15 school year and beyond. The letter and Departmental position paper can be found at the following links:

[http://www.deni.gov.uk/end_of_key_stage_assessment_letter_to_teachers_and_principals - october 2014.pdf](http://www.deni.gov.uk/end_of_key_stage_assessment_letter_to_teachers_and_principals_-_october_2014.pdf)

http://www.deni.gov.uk/departmental_position_paper- october 2014_2 .pdf
5. You will also have seen the recent letter from Katrina Godfrey and Noelle Buick
http://www.deni.gov.uk/de1_15_6709_joint_letter_final_english_version.pdf

which sought to clarify how the Department uses schools' end of KS outcome data and to dispel some of the common myths around the requirements of the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) during the inspection process.

6. Parents need to know how their child is doing, based on a wide range of information available to the school, including for the Cross-Curricular Skills of Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT. One vitally important purpose of end of Key Stage Assessment is to assist teachers to provide this information at three key points in a pupil's school life (Year 4, Year 7 and Year 10). The teachers' assessment of a child's progress (in Communication and Using Mathematics) is also reported to the Department. This information lets the Department know very broadly whether our school system is serving our children well.

7. Whilst the Department recognises that industrial action by teaching unions has disrupted the effective operation of the assessment arrangements in many schools including hindering participation in CCEA standardisation, it is important to impress upon school leaders the importance of securing assessment in your own schools, and to fulfil those statutory duties to assess and report.

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Assessment and Qualifications Team

Annex: Legislative requirements on Governors, principals and Teachers

<p>Board of Governors</p>	<p>The Education (NI) Order 2006 (Article 13) places a duty on the Board of Governors to exercise its functions with a view to securing that pupils are assessed as required.</p> <p>The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 (Article 37) requires a number of bodies, including the BoG of a school, to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) make such reports and returns; and (b) give such information, to the Department as the Department may reasonably require for the purposes of its functions under any statutory provision.
<p>Principal</p>	<p>The Teachers' (Terms and Conditions of Employment) Regulations (NI) 1987 state that a principal is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) ensuring that the progress of the pupils of the school is monitored and recorded; (ii) making arrangements for parents to be given regular information about the school curriculum, the progress of their children and other matters affecting the school; <p>The Education (Assessment Arrangements) (Foundation to Key Stage 3) Order (NI) 2007 states:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Article 3 also places a duty on the principal of each grant aided school to arrange for the assessment of each pupil in each school year. (ii) Article 5(3) places a duty on the principal to send notification of the assessments to CCEA. <p>The Education (Assessment Arrangements) (Foundation to Key Stage 3) Order (NI) 2007 states that the principal must ensure that pupils are assessed in each school year against levels of progression specified by the Department.</p> <p>The Education (Pupil Reporting) Regulations (NI) 2009 state that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The principal must send notification to NICCEA, in such form and by such date as it may require, of the results of assessments in relation to cross-curricular skills in which the pupil was assessed in that school year with reference to levels of progression

	<p>2) In the case of a pupil in the final year of key stage 1, 2 or 3, the principal of each grant-aided school must make available to the parents of each pupil registered at the school the level of progression he has achieved in any cross-curricular skill in which he has been assessed in the final year of that key stage in accordance with the assessment arrangements for that key stage</p>
Teacher	<p>The Teachers' (Terms and Conditions of Employment) Regulations (NI) 1987 state that a teacher is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) assessing, recording and reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils; (ii) communicating and co-operating with such persons or bodies outside the school as may be approved by the employing authority; (iii) providing or contributing to oral and written assessments, reports and references relating to individual pupils and groups of pupils (iv) participating in arrangements for preparing pupils for public examinations and in assessing pupils for the purposes of such examinations; recording and reporting such assessments.