

Discussion with Ian Dixon, Teacher Assessment and Moderation Manager, STA on 21.04.20

I am very grateful to those who submitted questions and to regional reps who collated them, especially as the request came at the last minute and for which I apologise.

Members' questions fell broadly into the 5 themes as shown below. In most cases the detail of the questions has been, omitted. This is not to deny its worth as it was useful to cite at times when making a point or to offer an example, but Ian's replies were, of necessity, general rather than specific.

1. REPORTS and TRANSITION INFORMATION Y6 into y7

The key message that Ian stressed on a number of occasions during our discussion was that **National Curriculum Assessments and everything related to them have ceased to be.**

At present statutory reporting remains in situ in law, but its removal, with a view to reinstatement in the future, is being dealt with by lawyers. When the wording is completed it will be put before parliament for approval by MPs. This is an essential process that is necessary for any piece of legislation and it takes time to prepare.

Whilst it will not be a statutory requirement it is anticipated that schools would want to update parents on the progress of their children via some form of reporting. However, the content as determined by ARAs in previous years, will be impossible to adhere to as there will be no KS1 or KS2 assessments to offer and expressing attendance will be difficult etc.

Nevertheless, Ian felt that teachers would still be able to say a good deal about how their pupils had been learning up to the point when schools closed. If at all possible, schools may want to involve parents in determining the content of the reports that are issued.

As has been promised, there will be guidance on reporting, including the aspects that with which members were seeking assistance. Ian is fairly certain that this will be available sometime in May. He could not give me any details or a publication date as the ideas that have been proposed for inclusion in this guidance are to be put to an LA reference group* that he works with for their responses, suggestions and amendments. In addition, the release of any guidance has to be delayed until parliamentary approval has been granted for the associated legislation.

*The sharing and discussions with the LA reference group will be carried out via electronic means given the Covid 19 situation. Ian commented that STA have ensured that their staff are well equipped to connect safely with correspondents and there is the added advantage of reducing the carbon footprint incurred with meetings where individuals are brought together. This may be a development that the Agency could encourage more of once the pandemic is over.

2. TRANSITION

This was a concern to all the members who submitted questions and the aforementioned guidance will touch on this area. Outline plans are in place for how feeder and receiver schools might handle the transition from Y6 to Y7 and these will be presented for comment and adjustment to the reference group mentioned above. With CTF files in mind, the STA data team will be formulating guidance for schools; whether this will be included with the general 'reporting' guidance or published separately is not clear at this time.

3. KS1 and 2 MODERATION

Members had asked whether the moderation accreditation for the 2020 cycle would stand in 2021 – a potential saving of time and money. Also put to Ian were i) potential capacity issues arising from the possible reluctance of school based moderators to leave their classes for

training in the autumn term 2020 and ii) if training is to take place, it is scheduled for January 2021. He was quick to make clear that he was aware of (i) and (ii) and he had a number of proposals to put to the reference group for their consideration and comments.

4. IMPACT OF 2020 ON 2021

Ian is in discussion with the school accountability and data teams and they are all very much aware of the effects that extended school closures will have on school populations, in particular the current Y5s who will be taking SATS in 2021 and the children in Reception classes when schools closed who will have the check administered in June 2021. Until an exit strategy is announced by the government and a national reintegration plan for schools is made public, it is not possible to determine what might be done.

5. ORGANISATIONS USING END OF YEAR DATA

Members asked about FFT collecting end of year data. Again Ian said that he was aware that FFT would be talking to schools about data collection and referred to government policy which is:

'All those working with schools and colleges, such as Ofsted, Department for Education regional teams and local authorities, should use data from previous years when assessing school and college performance, and not the 2020 data.'

This and the range of changes to accountability arrangements were published on 8th April 2020 and can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-school-and-college-performance-measures/coronavirus-covid-19-school-and-college-accountability>

The next update and discussion with Ian will be on **Tuesday 26th May, 10.30 am.**