

Ian Dixon's responses to members' questions 13.07.20

N.B. Where members duplicated one another's questions, I have shown only one of these. Liz.

The exchange with Ian commenced with passing on thanks for the decision for moderators not to have to take the standardisation exercise again prior to moderating in 2021. Clearly he was pleased to receive this positive feedback.

A number of questions sought to understand what potential adjustments might be made to the 2020 – 2021 assessment cycle in the light of the many weeks of schooling that have been lost by pupils in 2020. Ian explained that ministers have decided that NC assessment has to be delivered in the coming academic year and it will be carried out to mirror, as closely as possible, how it took place during 2019 – 2020. However this does not mean that the following concerns are being ignored or set aside:

- in the months to come there may be localised lockdowns due to outbreaks of Covid 19
- individual schools may have experienced (and may continue to experience) specific challenges
- all pupils and specifically Y2 and Y6 pupils, have missed varying amounts of learning since lockdown began and are at a disadvantage as a result

With respect to the last two bullet points, practically it is impossible to make allowances which would be fair to all and would address appropriately the wide variations in lost learning that may exist across schools and between pupils.

MODERATION

1. *Will there be an expectation to moderate the 25% of schools that missed this year's visit as well as the 25% for 2021? And what about the additional schools that fall into the moderation category e.g. new to Y2, schools causing concerns etc.?*

Moderation aims to ensure that schools are making sound judgements. LAs will be expected to moderate just 25% of schools in 2021. How that 25% is selected is at each LA's discretion; however it is important that the reasons for selecting each school are very clear and can withstand being challenged.

2. *Could the moderation window be lengthened in 2021 as some LAs may not have the number of moderators needed to complete the process?*

Timelines will remain the same as in 2019 – 2020.

3. *When will the dates for the standardisation exercise in the autumn term be released? These are needed so that suitable arrangements can be made as there is no face to face training taking place in the autumn term in LAs.*

There will be only one exercise and Ian hopes to have this distributed in September. However, this is dependent on suppliers having the materials ready. It is anticipated that the number of materials required will be very small and LAs will be approached to determine how many will be needed.

4. *What are the dates for KS1 & KS2 moderation in 2021? As schools don't return from half term until 4th June next summer will moderation start before half term or be extended into July?*

Dates have yet to be confirmed as half term varies from LA to LA. There will be no extension into July.

5. *Will STA will be doing their own monitoring of LAs this year (2021) and if so will it be those who were informed in 2020 to expect a monitoring visit?*

STA will be monitoring in 2021. The selection of LAs is not Ian's responsibility.

PHONICS SCREENING CHECK

6. *Will all Y2s have to take the Phonics Screening Check in June 2021 as they did not take it as Y1s?*

There will be an announcement, probably this week, concerning the Phonics Screening Check in 2021.

SATs IN 2021

7. *Given the YR 6 children will have missed months of schooling will there be any adaptations to the SATs papers?*

There is recognition that children will have lost teaching time but this will be different in every school and different for individual pupils; however statutory assessments will be delivered in 2021 as if there had been a full year in school in 2020 and there will be no adaptations to the SATs papers.

8. *Is there a possibility that the tests could be moved later into the summer term to give pupils more time to catch-up – like they are considering doing with the GCSEs/A Levels etc.?*

All the published information indicates that timelines for the tests remain as 'standard', i.e. May 2021 for KS1 and 10th – 13th May 2021.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORKS

9. *It will be a challenge for schools to get Y2s and Y6s to the expectations of the writing TAFs. Will there be any flexibility on applying the 'pupil can' statements or will it remain an expectation that all will need to be attained to award a particular standard?*

Please see paragraph 2 on page 1 as well as the response to Q.7 above.

10. *Will there be either any change to, or re-iteration of, the TA frameworks at KS1?*

There are no plans to make any changes to the TA Frameworks at KS1 or KS2. N.B This questioner mentioned the excellent guidance on maths teaching:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-mathematics-in-primary-schools>

While this material, produced by the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM) was very useful, it did not appear to cover the whole curriculum or TA Framework. The questioner was concerned that there was a risk that the material could be used as worksheets to 'prove' achievement of the GD standard as is sometimes the case with TA exemplification materials.

Ian was not to be drawn on this comment, except to say that STA liaises closely with organisations such as NCETM.

REMOVAL OF KS1 TESTS

11. *Will there be a timeline available leading up to when KS1 tests become non-statutory? It would be very helpful.*

Ian anticipates that there will be one. He will ask the reference group that he consults what would be helpful to include in terms of content. He may also consult LAs.
Why not send him some ideas? – Liz

Liz Depper
14.07.20