Email message from Liz Depper, President to members of Executive 29 June 2021

Dear All,

I contacted David Malcolm, Head of Policy at STA, with the following questions recently posed by an EA member. I have to confess that I couldn't resist adding a rider about the level of knowledge and understanding of EY learning and teaching that those monitoring the RB might have.

Firstly, members are anticipating questions from schools around the **quality monitoring visits for the Reception Baseline** that have been announced. These will not be done by LAs, but there is no information about who will be doing them. An educated guess is NFER staff, but it is reasonable of schools to want to know who they can expect to do these visits and also their level of knowledge and understanding of EY learning and teaching.

Secondly, the **Primary Assessment Gateway** and the fact that in LA staff don't see what schools see and so can't help them with queries they may have. There have been a lot this year about the optional multiplication tables check, so next year when all schools have to do it, LAs could be swamped. It is appreciated STA may not be able to let LAs have the same log in or view, but some screenshots of what schools should see, an indication of the kind of errors that can occur and maybe a troubleshooting guide, would help LAs to help schools more quickly than sometimes the assessment helpline can.

Regional reps. - Please circulate this information to members.

Thanks, Liz

David's reply:

Firstly, the RBA quality monitoring is indeed being undertaken by NFER, and we will look to update the text on the gov.uk page so that this is explicit. I can also confirm that all monitors have QTS and the vast majority have experience in EY.

In respect of access to the PAG and MTC, we don't give LAs full access to the relevant systems as we don't want to create unnecessary burdens on LAs. Where schools have questions relating to primary assessments, we would want them to contact STA with those questions so that we can support the school directly, we are able to monitor common issues that arise and address them as required, and so that the task of supporting schools does not fall on the LA. Therefore this could be a case of ensuring that LAs are happy to signpost schools to us if need be. Just so we can plan accordingly, do you have any sense of the volume of queries that have come to LAs? And do you think LAs have sufficient information to signpost?

Of course, we still do want LAs to feel that they understand what we are doing regardless. For the 2019 pilot, we produced a presentation for the LAs that set out how MTC worked and what to expect. Following your feedback, colleagues will look to revisit this

presentation ahead of the mandatory roll out next year. Likewise, we will provide them links to the MTC videos we have developed once they are updated for next year, as well as the IT guidance which we know is often overlooked by schools.

In the meantime, the existing videos, which include information on completing activities for assessments on the PAG as well as MTC, are on our YouTube site - [Standards and Testing Agency - YouTube](#)

Hopefully this helps answer your members' queries but as ever please do get back in touch if there's further help we can provide.