Template Letter for MSPs and Councillors

Dear

I am concerned about the inclusion of Primary 1 pupils in the new Scottish National Standard Tests (SNSA) testing regime. I agree that teachers need to know the capabilities of pupils to enable them to provide the most appropriate learning opportunities for individual children. However, I believe the inclusion of Primary 1 pupils (aged four and five years) in the SNSA is a step too far. My understanding is that teachers already undertake ongoing assessments of children in P1 without the need for standardised tests – a position supported by the Education Institute of Scotland (EIS).

I would prefer to see the adoption of more play-based learning for children in P1 and P2. I agree that children should have increased access to diverse play experiences and it is good that this is promoted through Curriculum for Excellence. However, a play-based approached is not consistent with the testing regime for P1 under the SNSA. Testing regimes and play-based learning are pulling in opposite directions. It is difficult to see how teachers can truly embrace and promote play-based learning when they also have the pressure of a testing regime **which begins in P1.**

We only get one shot at the amazing learning experience of pupils in the early years of schooling. I would be grateful of you could give this your careful consideration and check out the arguments at  [https://www.upstart.scot/play-not-tests-in-p1-campaign/](https://www.upstart.scot/play-not-tests-in-p1-campaign/" \t "_blank)

I urge you to take up the case of **dropping the requirement for P1s to be tested as part of the SNSA testing regime.**

I look forward to hearing from you.

pp: John Swinney, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills