

Subject:

**ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS –
REPORTING TO GOVERNMENT DURING THE
TRANSITIONAL PERIOD**

Circular Number:

2006/26

Date of Issue:

4 December 2006

Target Audience:

- Principals 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.

Summary of Contents:

This Circular contains advice about transitional arrangements relating to assessment and reporting requirements.

Enquiries:

Any enquiries about the contents of this Circular should be addressed to:

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Governor Awareness:

Essential

Status of Contents:

Advice
Information for schools

**Related Documents:SR1998
No.11, SR1998 No.12, Circular
1998/3, Circular 1996/36**

Superseded Documents:

**SR1996 No.363, Circular
1996/28, SR1996 No.567,
SR1997 No.399, Circular
1997/25, SR1997 No.422,
Circular 1997/29, SR1998
No.457, SR1999 No.222**

Expiry Date:

Not applicable

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The Department's letter of 12 September provided an update on the development of the Pupil Profile and changes to statutory assessment as a result of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 2006. This circular now sets out the assessment information which the Department will be collecting over the period 2006/07 – 2008/09 (the transitional period).

- Schools are aware that, whilst they are able to discontinue the previous end of Key Stage 1 and 2 assessments/ Key Stage 3 tests, CCEA will continue to make the assessment units and moderation/ tests available on a voluntary basis.
- CCEA will have been in direct contact with those schools that have indicated their intention to avail of this service to make the necessary arrangements, and will respond to any subsequent requests.
- For all schools, including those who choose not to avail of the CCEA service, there will still be a need to provide information to CCEA relating to Language and Literacy, and Mathematics and Numeracy for pupils at the end of Key Stages 1-3, ie in Years 4, 7 and 10. This will enable Government to monitor whether pupils continue to make appropriate progress and to support schools as the revised assessment arrangements are phased in.
- Schools should therefore provide assessment results based either on a combination of teacher assessment and CCEA assessment units and moderation / tests, or purely on teacher assessment.
- For reasons of consistency, and to minimise disruption to schools as we move to the revised assessment arrangements, schools are asked to provide assessment outcomes in terms of levels. CCEA will contact schools directly to arrange for the collection of this information, which will continue to be via class assessment records or electronic data information.

Benchmarking and Target- Setting

- Schools should continue to set their own targets for improvement and the Department will continue to provide benchmarking data to assist them in doing this. The Department is currently reviewing its School Improvement Policy and further information will issue separately as this work progresses.

Forthcoming Transitional Recording and Reporting Legislation

The Department will also be making Regulations to simplify the reporting requirements for schools during the transitional period, whilst ensuring parents and pupils continue to receive meaningful information.

- They will apply from and including this school year, 2006/07.

- These Regulations will require schools to continue to:
 - report annually to parents by 30th June on each pupil's achievements in the curriculum and in other activities; and
 - specifically provide assessment outcomes in Language and Literacy (including Irish as appropriate in Irish-Medium schools), and Mathematics and Numeracy - both to parents and to CCEA.
- They will not specify a reporting format, enabling schools to move more easily over the transitional period to the Pupil Profile format, which will be introduced on a phased basis from 2007/08.

Schools will be provided with further information about these Regulations in the New Year. In the interim the Department would be happy to receive schools and school managing authorities comments on these proposed regulatory requirements.

Information relating to the Pupil Profile roll-out

This circular deals only with transitional arrangements and relates only to those Year Groups at the end of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. Progressively, as the Pupil Profile and associated assessment arrangements are rolled-out, schools will also be required to report these assessment outcomes. In the timescale covered by this circular, i.e. the transitional period, this will only relate to Years 5 (from 2007/08) and 6 (from 2008/09). From 2009/10 there will be a general shift to the revised arrangements.

In Summary

- All schools should provide assessment outcomes via CCEA relating to Language and Literacy, and Mathematics and Numeracy for Years 4, 7 and 10;
- CCEA will contact schools directly to make necessary arrangements;
- Schools will provide information in terms of levels (ie using the existing end-of-key stage level descriptions); based either on teacher assessment supported by CCEA assessment units and moderation/ tests, or purely on teacher assessment;
- Schools should continue to set targets for improvement based on data provided by the Department;
- The Department will be making Regulations to simplify the reporting requirements on schools during the transitional period, whilst ensuring parents and pupils continue to receive meaningful information;
- During the transitional period schools will progressively provide assessment outcomes related to the Pupil Profile roll –out for Years 5 and 6.

I trust this information is helpful.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shirley McKee". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Shirley" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "McKee".

SHIRLEY McKEE
CURRICULUM AND QUALIFICATIONS BRANCH