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Chuig Cathaoirligh na mBord Gobharnóirí agus Príomhoidí ar gach Scoil Gramadaí; ar Choláiste an Lagáin agus ar Choláiste Shliabh Mis

9 Mí na Samhna 2009

TORTHAÍ Ó MHEASÚNACHT INCAS I mBUNSCOILEANNA

Tuigim go bhfuil roinnt scoileanna gramadaí ag moladh go n-iarrfar ar thuismitheoirí, mar chuid d'iarratas iontrála a gcuid páistí go Bliain 8 i 2010/11, eolas a chur ar fáil faoi na torthaí a d'fhéadfadh a gcuid páistí a aimsiú sna measúnachtaí InCAS sa litearthacht agus san uimhearthacht. Tuigim, ach go háirithe, go bhfuil an t-eolas seo á iarraidh nuair a bhíonn gá leis le tacú le hiarratais de réir nósanna imeachta um imthosca speisialta na scoile.

Tá sé tábhachtach go gcuirim i gcuimhne do scoileanna gur úsáid mhíchuí ar thorthaí ó ghléas

To the Chairs of the Board of Governors and Principals of all Grammar Schools; Lagan College and Slemish College

9 November 2009

OUTCOMES FROM INCAS ASSESSMENTS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

I understand that some grammar schools are proposing to ask parents, as part of their child's application for admission into Year 8 for 2010/11, to provide information on the outcomes their child may have achieved in InCAS assessments in literacy and numeracy. I understand, in particular, that this information is being requested where it is needed to support applications under the school's special circumstances procedure.

It is important that I remind schools that such practice would be an inappropriate use of outcomes from an assessment tool

measúnachta a bheadh i gcleachtas de chineál seo, gléas nár ceapadh é ná nach raibh lá rúin é a úsáid lena haghaidh seo. Tá sé tábhachtach fosta go dtuigeann tú, de réir a nádúir, nach scrúduithe iad na measúnachtaí InCAS. Ní thugtar fúthu faoi choinníollacha rialaithe agus b'fhéidir go mbeadh difríochtaí in eispéiris aonair mheasúnachta sna agus ar fud na scoileanna. Chomh maith leis sin níl bealach ar bith ann inar féidir le scoileanna gramadaí aitheantas na n-aonán atá ag tabhairt faoin mheasúnacht a fhíorú.

that was neither designed nor intended for such a purpose. It is also important that you are aware that, by their nature, InCAS assessments are not tests. They are not taken under controlled conditions and this could mean that individual experiences of assessment may vary within and across schools. There is also no way for grammar schools independently to verify the identity of individuals taking the assessment.

Ar a bharr sin, mar a thuigeann tú, bhí roinnt fadhbanna le gairid leis na córais ríomhaireachta san Ionad um Measúnacht agus Monatóireacht in Ollscoil Durham, a fheidhmíonn InCAS. Mar thoradh orthu seo cuireadh roinnt scór contráilte ar fáil do scoileanna, agus tríothu, do thuismitheoirí. Is é an tuiscint atá againn gur dóiche go ndeachaigh na hearráidí i bhfeidhm ar dhaltaí ar éirigh leo scóir arda a bhaint amach. Cé gur ceartaíodh iad anois agus gur iarraidh ar scoileanna na torthaí cearta a chur ar fáil do thuismitheoirí, ní bheadh scoileanna gramadaí in ann an t-eolas atá ar fáil a dhearbhú.

Additionally, as you will be aware, there have very recently been some problems within the computer systems at the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring at Durham University, which operates InCAS. These have resulted in incorrect scores being provided to some schools and, through them, to parents. It is our understanding that the errors are most likely to have affected the scores of higher-performing pupils. While they have now been corrected and schools have been asked to provide correct outcomes to parents, it would not be possible for grammar schools to validate the information provided.

Leis an eolas seo, agus leis an eolas gur ceapadh InCAS mar ghléas um measúnacht fhátmheasach le cuidiú le múinteoirí a gcuid teagaisc a phleanáil le riachtanais dhaltaí a shásamh, is é Comhairle na Roinne nár chóir do scoileanna gramadaí ar chor ar bith smaoineamh ar thorthaí measúnachta InCAS a tuairiscíodh do thuismitheoirí a úsáid chun cinntí roghnúcháin a fhoirmiú.

With this in mind, and bearing also in mind the fact that InCAS has been designed as a diagnostic assessment tool to help teachers plan their teaching to meet pupil needs, the Department's advice is that on no account should grammar schools consider using InCAS assessment outcomes reported to parents to inform decisions on selection.

Bheinn buíoch díot ach cinnte a dhéanamh de go gcuirtear an chomhairle seo faoi bhráid do Bhord Gobharnóirí.

I should be grateful if you would ensure that this advice is brought urgently to the attention of your Board of Governors.

Ba chóir go dtuigfeadh Bord Gobharnóirí, mar gheall ar na fáthanna atá léirithe thuas, gurbh fhéidir go mbeadh baol ann go gcuirfí aighneachtaí isteach i leith cinntí bunaithe ar InCAS agus gurbh fhéidir nach mbeidh siad láidir go leor.

Boards of Governors should understand that, for the reasons indicated above, admissions decisions based on InCAS may be vulnerable to appeal and may not prove to be robust.

Is mise le meas

Yours sincerely

ROBSON DAVISON