

## **Falkirk**

### **Response for the Education and Skills Committee**

Falkirk Council previously used CEM assessments across all of our schools at stages P1 (PIPS), P3, P5, P7 (INCAS) and S2 (SOSCA). When SNSA was introduced, the decision was made to stop using CEM.

Following consultation with a representative group of Headteachers and Depute Headteachers from primary and secondary schools, the decision was made to conduct the assessments at the following times:

P4, P7 and S3 – at any point during September/October

P1 – at any point during April/May

There are several reasons for identifying these specific times. In P1, it was felt that the children needed time to settle into school and gather the necessary skills and confidence to allow them to complete the assessments successfully. The individual reports would then be used alongside other evidence to determine achievement of Early Level.

For P4, P7 and S3, it was thought to be more useful to have the results early in the session and to use these as a sign post towards the recording of the level at the end of the session. Schools could then make use of the individual reports and the information within to determine any specific support that was required for individual pupils.

It was also considered appropriate that all children in the same stage be assessed in either the first half or second half of the year, as it relates to the national norming studies. This provides schools and the authority with a consistency regarding the data and allows high level messages to be drawn out at these times. For example, if it was discovered that pupils in a particular stage had a weakness in a specific area of reading then this could be addressed with the cohort, or indeed addressed by the authority if the issue was more widespread.

The time periods set are sufficiently broad to allow schools to determine the best time within the window to assess pupils.

Some schools are sharing information with parents as part of their overall engagement at parents' evenings and in pupil reports.

As an authority we have developed guidance for schools on the sharing of data based on what is suitable and can be easily understood by parents.

The reports within SNSA have been developed around the individual and schools and we support that approach. An authority report was made available at the end of session 2017-2018 although this came so late and was based around high, medium and low that it had limited use with regard to impact on those cohorts. We did do some analysis between SNSA capacity and achievement of CfE levels.

Following an enquiry by one of our officers, we have been informed that there isn't a solid timeline in place to provide access to an authority report within the live system. To create an authority report at present for numeracy would involve a download for each and every one of our schools at P1, P4, P7 and S3. This would need to be replicated for reading and writing. We look forward to this report being available and hope that it comes at a time that we can make use of the data appropriately.

The authority has produced guidance for schools on how to interpret their data and how to make use of it with regard to improvement. Officers will continue to work with schools in this regard.

In the main, the P4, P7 and S3 assessments were conducted successfully this session. Obviously, schools learned much from year one and were able to adapt and develop their approaches.