

May 2015

Dear Headteacher

Welsh Government Verification Arrangement for 2014-2015

External verification of mathematics and science – Summer 2015

You will be aware that, Welsh Government consulted schools last term in relation to Teacher Assessment, moderation and external verification (*Strengthening arrangements to improve reliability, consistency and confidence (12Dec 14 – 6 Mar 2015)*). As a consequence, a national programme will be introduced this summer to provide external verification of mathematics and science, with the focus moving to English and Welsh in summer 2016.

The contract to manage the verification process was put out to tender and was won by a partnership consisting of the four regional consortia. The process will be jointly managed and implemented by the four consortia in partnership with school leaders and subject specialists will have a key role in the verification process. On 12 May a Ministerial statement confirmed confidence in The Partnership being best placed to provide a rigorous and cost effective process which will ultimately lead to increased reliability and greater confidence in the Teacher Assessment process.

Arrangements

The key focus of the work will be on strengthening the accuracy and consistency of teacher assessment through high quality feedback to teachers and headteachers, and rebuilding confidence in the system.

A team of verifiers in each consortium will be jointly trained to ensure consistency across Wales. Within each verification team, a lead verifier will co-ordinate activities and collaborate with other lead verifiers working across Wales to quality assure the process. No team will work within their own consortium.

In line with WG requirements, verification will include both targeted and randomly selected schools. In 2015, 10% of primary and secondary schools will take part in each region, increasing to 20% in 2017.

Schools selected to take part in the national verification process this year, will be contacted during the first week of June.

Submission of final data for Key Stages 2 and 3 Teacher Assessment and target setting process for 2014/15.

This is a critical year for schools, Local Authorities (LAs), regional consortia and Welsh Government, and we all need to establish greater confidence in the reliability of teacher assessment. We need fellow education professionals, parents and the media to have increasing confidence in teachers' professional judgement whilst still focussing the impact of teacher assessment on the achievement and progress of children and young people.

Welsh Government want schools to be particularly diligent in scrutinising the levels of assessments made this year for all pupils. It is appreciated that many of you are already finalising the 2014/15 data but we would urge you to use this year as an opportunity to review how assessment judgements are made and quality assured. There is a possibility that this may result in the levels being lower than the targets set for 2015 and we will be working with Estyn to make them aware of the approach being applied across all four regional consortia.

In applying this greater level of rigour we expect the 2014/15 school, LA, regional and national data sets to provide a new, more accurate, baseline for ongoing monitoring and evaluation within and outside of the profession.

If you wish to discuss this matter please speak with your Challenge Adviser.

Yours sincerely,



Sandra Aspinall
Project Director
Securing Teacher Assessment Partnership (STAP)



Steve Davies
EAS Managing
Director



Betsan O'Connor
ERW Managing
Director



Huw Foster-Evans
GWE Managing
Director



Hannah Woodhouse
Managing Director
Central South
Consortium Joint
Education Service