

This email is was sent to Hertfordshire Headteachers of Primary Schools, Middle Schools and All-through Schools on Tuesday 12th January 2021

Subject: [FYI] Assessment Update (KS1 and KS2)

Dear colleague

As I am sure you will already be aware, the DfE has taken the decision to cancel all KS1 and KS2 statutory assessments (tests and teacher assessments) for this academic year. This includes:

- KS1 teacher assessments
- KS2 tests and teacher assessments
- phonics screening check
- all statutory trialling
- the (optional this year) multiplication tables check

At the time of writing, a decision regarding assessment of the Early Years Foundation Stage has not been announced.

A statement from the Standards and Testing Agency says:

“We know that schools will continue to use assessment to inform teaching, to enable them to give information to parents on their child’s attainment in their statutory annual report and to support transition of KS2 pupils to secondary school. We strongly encourage schools to use [past test papers](#) in their assessment of pupils.”

The Herts for Learning assessment team would echo that statement, but would also add that a holistic assessment of children’s learning will include more than just the use of past tests. We are currently planning opportunities to support schools with all aspects of assessment (summative and formative) throughout the remainder of this academic year. Whilst no **statutory** moderation will take place in the summer for either KS1 or KS2, we will be putting plans in place to support schools with internal accurate assessment in the summer term. We also have a number of remote moderation clusters for teachers of Years 2 to 5 across this Spring term, starting with Year 2 clusters on Wednesday 20th January; more details below. Please note, these moderation clusters are designed to support formative assessment – helping teachers to identify gaps and next steps in pupils’ learning – not just about summative ‘categorisation’.

In addition, we understand that, at this time in particular, teachers may need support and guidance in implementing formative approaches to increase pupil engagement and enhance learning outcomes during home learning. I would like to take this opportunity, therefore, to highlight some useful free resources and blogs, some of which were written during the first lockdown, but are once again relevant:

[HfL | Supporting positive learning behaviours at home](#)

[HfL | Remote learning: maintaining connections](#)

[EEF | Best evidence on supporting students to learn remotely](#)

[EEF | Covid-19 school support resources – summary for parents](#)

We will be producing further [blogs](#) over the coming weeks to support with the implementation of effective assessment practices during home learning.

Moderation opportunities this term

Following the very successful use of Microsoft Teams for running remote Year 6 moderation clusters last term, we will be running remote assessment moderation clusters for Year 2 teachers, focusing on writing, between Wednesday 20th January and Tuesday 2nd February.

In this most unusual of academic years, it feels more important than ever for teachers to use assessment to develop learning and identify gaps. Teachers will also have the opportunity to reflect on where their pupils are in relation to the expected standards for KS1 and discuss areas to focus teacher input.

Each cluster session will consist of groups of a maximum of 5 teachers working with one adviser. We would ask each teacher to select one child that they particularly want to discuss (this could for example be a 'benchmark' child, whose writing is typical of many others in the class, or a child who is tricky to assess for some reason) and to also select a second child who we will discuss if time allows. For each child, teachers should select two pieces of recent writing that demonstrate the child's current standard. In order to share the writing in the session, these pieces would need to be either scanned to a pdf file, or photographed clearly. Guidance will be sent to all delegates booked onto clusters, but please also feel free to share the information in this email directly with your teachers.

All of the available moderation sessions can be found on the CPD Hub [here](#).

Teachers can sign up for whichever date and session is most convenient for them.

After the spring half-term, there will be moderation clusters for Years 5, 4 and 3, also focusing on writing, which can also be booked via the above link.

Please note, if you wish two or more teachers to attend the same cluster session, please book the required number of places, even if your teachers will be sharing the same connection. This is so that we can keep the number in each session limited to 5, ensuring each teacher has their fair share of the time available.

Further moderation opportunities to support in assessing and identifying gaps in learning will be available in the summer term, focusing primarily on Years 2 and 6.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to remind you that we are here to support you with any assessment needs and queries you may have, and to invite you to get in touch at hfl.assessment@hertsforlearning.co.uk if we can help you in any way.

Best regards

Ben

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Covid 19: We are doing all we can to adapt our services to ensure schools and educational settings continue to be supported by HfL through this unprecedented period. Please contact us if there is anything we can do to help you.