

Dear Colleague

As we approach the 2018 National Test window and the last time all three tests will be together in paper format, I am writing to share with you some key messages about the tests and their delivery in schools.

Firstly, I'd like to draw your attention to the Test Administration Handbook for 2018, which was published on the Learning Wales website last November. For ease of reference the link is here for you:

<http://learning.gov.wales/resources/browse-all/national-reading-and-numeracy-tests-administration-handbook/?lang=en>

This document contains all the important information you will require to successfully deliver the tests to your pupils. I should like to reiterate WG's view, as outlined on p.2 of the guidance, *"the National Tests are for diagnostic use so that teachers in all maintained schools will have information on the reading and numeracy skills of their learners and have a common understanding of strengths and areas for improvement in these skills. They are focused on understanding learner progress, and not school performance or accountability. This is why National Test results are not included in the set of performance measures for school categorisation."*

In order to achieve this, it is very important that learners are not drilled before hand. We would strongly discourage you from using teaching time to revise for the tests, and from setting past years' papers as homework, as this not only causes unnecessary stress for pupils but also has the potential to mask difficulties that some may be experiencing.

### **Key dates for 2018**

<http://learning.gov.wales/resources/collections/national-reading-and-numeracy-tests?lang=en>

### **Tests dispatched to schools**

*Primary schools: week commencing 23 April 2018*

*Secondary Schools: week commencing 16 April 2018*

*Middle schools and other secondary settings ordering tests for both primary and secondary learners will receive materials for Years 7, 8 and 9 during the week beginning 16 April 2018 and materials for Years 2 to 6 during the week beginning 23 April 2018.*

**Testing timetable** must be submitted to [tests@gwegogledd.cymru](mailto:tests@gwegogledd.cymru) by **20<sup>th</sup> April 2018**. Please complete the proforma attached to this letter. If you have to amend the timetable at any point you must inform us at the same email address, and also inform parents.

### **Schools administer tests**

*Primary schools: 2–9 May 2018*

*Secondary schools: 25 April – 9 May 2018*

### **Last Date for Data upload**

*As set by local authority, but by 6 June 2018*

### **Results to schools**

*Before the end of the summer term*

The sitting of an individual test – e.g. the Y2/3 and Y4/5 Reading Test – should take place on the same day. **The Y7 Reading Tests must be sat between May 2nd – 9th 2018.**

### **Support**

To raise any queries about information in this handbook, schools can contact the Test Order Helpline on 029 2026 5327 or [wgto@nationaltests.cymru](mailto:wgto@nationaltests.cymru).

### **Supported Marking Sessions**

Supported marking sessions for the Numerical Reasoning test will be held for **Secondary** schools, organised and delivered by NFER, who will contact schools directly

with details of how to register. **Primary** school sessions will be held locally **9<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> May 2018** (details to follow via email to all schools and GwE Bulletin).

### Disapplication

This will only be relevant in the case of a small minority of pupils in mainstream schools. Please take time to consider the full range of access arrangements suggested in Annex 5 p. 34 of the 'Test Administration Guidance'. Should you decide that disapplication is the **only** route available to you with an individual pupil, please email Llyr Gilmour-Jones, Disapplication Nominated Officer at [tests@gwegogledd.cymru](mailto:tests@gwegogledd.cymru) to indicate this and to ask for further guidance. NB – signed approval will be required by **23rd of March 2018**.

### Monitoring

We will be visiting a sample of schools before and during the test administration window, to monitor compliance with the guidance. Local Authorities are required by Welsh Government to monitor the implementation of the tests in schools, as part of their wider responsibilities, in relation to assessment and they have asked GwE to undertake this on their behalf. Below you will find (for information only) the criteria that will be used by those individuals who will be involved in this task. I know that I can, as always, be confident in asking you for your support and cooperation if your school is selected for a visit during this period.

### Headteacher's Declaration

Within seven school days of the final date for data submission, the Head teacher must sign and submit a declaration to the regional consortium confirming that the test packs were received and stored securely, that the tests were administered correctly according to the requirements set out in the NT administration handbook (this handbook), and that the tests were marked in accordance with the mark scheme. A downloadable declaration form is available at [www.learning.wales.gov.uk/resources/browse-all/headteachers-declaration/?lang=en](http://www.learning.wales.gov.uk/resources/browse-all/headteachers-declaration/?lang=en)

Kind regards

Arwyn Thomas

**Managing Director, GwE Gogledd Cymru**

## Criteria for monitoring visits 2018

### *Pre-test visit*

Has the delivery of the tests been checked against the delivery note?
Has the disk and the teacher script for the numeracy reasoning test been issued to the member of staff who will be responsible for test administration in each class/year group?
Have the boxes containing the tests been resealed?
Are the boxes containing the tests stored in a secure place where no learner has access to or sight of the test content?
Has the school checked that the disk required to deliver the numeracy reasoning test is fully functional?

### *Visit during the testing period*

Are learners able to work undisturbed and individually?
Do learners have access to materials that could, with reference to the test content, give them an unfair advantage, e.g. wall displays or similar classroom resources, mobile telephones?
Are learners reminded that the work they produce in the tests must be their own and that they should not discuss questions or copy answers?
Are learners given the appropriate length of time to complete the test, with reference to the timings given in the test manuals?
Are learners reminded that they should not discuss the content of the tests or the answers outside their immediate peer group?
Is there appropriate supervision at all times proportionate to the number of learners being supervised?

Do learners have access to the test materials and all necessary resources?
Is the test administered according to the guidance given in the handbook and with regard to the information in the test manuals?
Is any additional support, information or help given to learners with the content of the tests, other than in line with the provisions of the National Reading and Numeracy Tests – access and disapplication arrangements guidance?
Are learners aware of what they are required to do and the time they will be given to complete the test?
Are learners allowed to return to and revise their answers to the tests after the allotted time has passed?
If any pupils have been disapplied from the test, has written approval been secured?

