

**MEDIA RELEASE 1.2.16**  
**Embargoed: 00:01 hours, 2.2.16**

## **Testing pupils at P1 and S3 level 'inappropriate and detrimental'**

**National standardised testing for P1s and S3s would be inappropriate and detrimental to pupils — and must not be introduced until it can be demonstrated that pupil wellbeing will be unaffected, Children in Scotland believes.**

We have been working with Liam McArthur MSP, who shares our concern over plans in the national improvement framework and has tabled two amendments to be heard in a debate on the Education Bill held in the Scottish Parliament today (Tuesday 2 February).

Jackie Brock, Chief Executive of Children in Scotland, said:

“There is clear evidence that high stakes standardised testing, as proposed in the National Improvement Framework, can have a detrimental affect on all children’s wellbeing. We have particular ethical concerns about this policy.

“Testing P1 children is simply not appropriate for their age or stage of development. We also have serious doubts about the quality of evidence that will be obtainable from pupils in P1.

“Testing of the kind proposed is similarly unsuitable at the other end of the scale in S3 when young people are already under significant exam pressure.

“We recognise that assessment is central to teaching and learning but believe that arrangements for national standardised assessments should be made by teachers.

“There should be no national day, week or window when

assessments must be completed – because of the pressure this puts on both pupils and teachers.”

Children in Scotland has expressed concerns over plans to reintroduce standardised assessment in primaries 1, 4 and 7 and in S3 since the First Minister’s announcement last year.

As it seems highly unlikely that the Scottish Government will pull back from introducing such tests at this late stage, Children in Scotland hopes the amendments will at least serve to defer the introduction of standardised assessments for P1 and S3 pupils.

Children in Scotland will also recommend that each local authority and NHS Boards should jointly publish reports that demonstrate they have contributed to reducing inequalities in pupil attainment.

“Education cannot be considered in isolation to wider children’s services planning, and any new duties introduced should be in harmony with the only very recently enacted Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014,” Ms Brock added.

Last month Children in Scotland wrote to Ministers asking them to extend the remit of the group reviewing the impact of testing on teachers to include children.

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### **Notes for Editors:**

**Children in Scotland** is the collective voice for: children, young people and families in Scotland; and organisations and businesses that have a significant impact on children’s lives in Scotland. We are an influencing and membership organisation, comprised of more than 500 representatives from the voluntary, public and private sectors. [www.childreninscotland.org.uk](http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk)