
COUNCIL MOTION ON HIGH-STAKES TESTING IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

.....welcomes the commitment of the Labour Party, the Liberal Democrats and the Green Party to abolish SATs and other high-stakes testing in primary schools.

It notes that:

- 1) Statutory testing in primary schools has increased since 2010 and is increasing further: by 2020, children will be tested in Reception (the Baseline Assessment), Year 1 (the Phonics Screening Check), Year 2 (SATs), Year 4 (the Multiplication Tables Check) and Year 6 (SATs).
- 2) The pressures of statutory assessment contribute to the crisis of teacher morale, workload, recruitment and retention.
- 3) Tests are focussed on the requirements of school accountability rather than on support for children's learning.
- 4) The pressures of testing in primary schools have a detrimental effect on children's mental health.
- 5) Educational research has demonstrated repeatedly that teaching to the test narrows the curriculum and the educational experience of children, focussing on labelling not learning.
- 6) The National Education Union has agreed to carry out an indicative ballot of its members to ask for their views about the campaign to abolish high-stakes primary testing and whether they would be prepared to boycott statutory high-stakes tests in primary schools.

This council believes that campaigning, by those who work in primary schools, parents and academics, to end the current high-stakes system of primary assessment should be welcomed, in particular the More Than A Score campaign.

..... resolves:

- 1) To express its support for campaigns against the current system of primary assessment, including those organised by teacher unions and More Than A Score.
- 2) To call a meeting of trade unions, parents and school governors to discuss the council's position on these matters and to coordinate a response.
- 3) To lobby the Secretary of State for Education to listen to the growing number of voices who are calling for the abolition of high-stakes testing in primary schools.
- 4) To offer support to schools within the area which adopt an alternative approach to assessment (for example by taking the More Than A Score pledge).

