



2020-0032827POGibb

Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP

Minister of State for School Standards

Sanctuary Buildings, 20 Great Smith Street, Westminster, London, SW1P 3BT
tel: 0370 000 2288 www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus

Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP

By email: lena.mccormick@parliament.uk

10 August 2020

Dear George,

Thank you for your email of 19 June, addressed to the Secretary of State, on behalf of a number of your constituents, regarding the reception baseline assessment (RBA). I am replying as the Minister of State for School Standards.

The Department recently announced that due to the challenges faced by schools in the context of COVID-19, statutory implementation of the RBA will be postponed to 2021. We listened to feedback from a range of stakeholders about the particular impact that COVID-19 has had on schools' preparedness for the implementation of the RBA.

Instead, schools can choose to participate in the RBA early adopter year to familiarise themselves with assessment materials before the assessment becomes statutory. The early adopter assessment window will take place after the October half term and data gathered will not be used for any accountability purposes. All eligible schools received information on how to sign up on 25 June.

The Department remains committed to the RBA. Statutory assessments at primary school are an important part of holding schools to account to ensure that they support all pupils, regardless of background or prior attainment, to achieve sufficient progress.

The RBA is intended to replace Key Stage 1 assessments and act as a starting point for school progress measures. This will give schools recognition for the important work they do with pupils, including in their first three years of attending school. We have piloted the assessment in over 9,000 schools and are confident that the RBA is a reliable form of assessment. School leaders who took part in the pilot gave positive feedback.

The assessment is age appropriate and will complement the entry checks that the majority of schools already complete when pupils start school. We have always been clear that the purpose of the RBA is not to track individual pupil attainment, but to measure how schools are helping their pupils to progress between Reception and Year 6.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Neil', written in a cursive style.