

[redacted]

**From:** [redacted]  
**Sent:** 16 March 2015 11:21  
**To:** [redacted]@scis.org.uk  
**Subject:** Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy 2015 - Guidance to Schools 160315

[redacted]

I refer to previous correspondence about the Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy 2015.

Please find attached copies of recent correspondence sent to independent schools participating in the SSLN 2015, for your information.

1. Letter to schools
2. Guidance leaflet for schools
3. Parent / Carer letter
4. Guidance leaflet for parents
5. SSLN planning flowcharts
6. Staffroom posters



SSLN 2015 -



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Guidance - Final... schools leaflet... Guidance - Initia...Parents-carers le...Planning flowch... Staffroom Flyer ...

I hope you find this information useful.

Regards

[redacted]

Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy Team  
Scottish Government  
2-D South (mail 28)  
Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ  
tel: 0131 244 [redacted]  
fax: 0131 244 0354

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/SSLN>

«ContactName»  
«ContactPosition»  
«SchName»  
«Address1»  
«Address2»  
«Address3»  
«Address4»  
«Postcode»

SSLN School ID - «SchoolID»

13 March 2015

Dear «ContactName»

### SCOTTISH SURVEY OF LITERACY AND NUMERACY (SSLN) – NUMERACY 2015

Thank you for agreeing to coordinate the 2015 SSLN in your school which will be administered during the period 5 May to 5 June 2015. We are writing to inform you of the next steps involved in preparing your school for the 2015 survey, as set out in the enclosed documents:

- a leaflet for the SSLN Coordinator (*Guidance for Schools 1: Preparing for the SSLN*)
- a planning flowchart
- a staffroom poster
- parent/carer letters
- information leaflets for parents/carers.

Please familiarise yourself with all the information provided to ensure effective planning and communication with staff, parents and pupils.

The attached annex contains guidance on how you should randomly select pupils to participate in the SSLN and select teachers to complete a questionnaire.

As you are aware, the SSLN focuses on literacy and numeracy in alternate years. The 2015 survey will focus on numeracy and will also include a trial of literacy materials for future surveys. Survey materials and specific guidance on the assessments will be issued in late April 2015. Elements of the survey and further support for schools will be available through [www.ssn.org.uk](http://www.ssn.org.uk).

If you indicated on your registration form that you may require Gaelic versions of materials, we will contact you to confirm your requirements.

Previous SSLN results can be found at: [www.gov.scot/ssln](http://www.gov.scot/ssln).

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact the SSLN Helpline by email at [ssln@sqa.org.uk](mailto:ssln@sqa.org.uk) or by telephone on 0345 213 6964.

Once again, thank you for your support in delivering the 2015 SSLN.

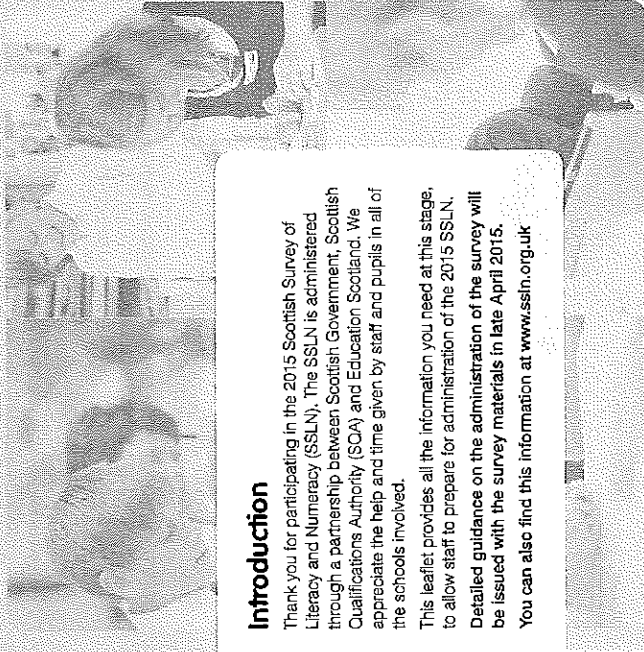
Yours sincerely

[redacted]

[redacted]

SSLN Project Coordinator  
Encs

## Curriculum for Excellence



### Introduction

Thank you for participating in the 2015 Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy (SSLN). The SSLN is administered through a partnership between Scottish Government, Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and Education Scotland. We appreciate the help and time given by staff and pupils in all of the schools involved.

This leaflet provides all the information you need at this stage, to allow staff to prepare for administration of the 2015 SSLN.

Detailed guidance on the administration of the survey will be issued with the survey materials in late April 2015. You can also find this information at [www.ssin.org.uk](http://www.ssin.org.uk)



## Curriculum for Excellence



## Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy

Curriculum for Excellence  
SSLN 2015 (Numeracy)  
Guidance for schools 1:  
Preparing for the SSLN



For SSLN preparation visit our independent website



## About the SSLN

The SSLN is a sample-based survey which monitors national performance in literacy and numeracy at P4, P7 and S2. Information from the survey is used to inform improvements in learning and teaching. The survey focuses on literacy and numeracy in alternate years. The 2015 survey will focus on numeracy and will include a trial of literacy materials for future surveys.

The SSLN will take place in schools between 5 May and 5 June 2015. You should plan to administer the SSLN on the dates that suit you best within this timeframe. Please see the final page of this leaflet and the separate planning flowchart for key actions and dates.

Up to three pupils will be selected to participate at each primary stage (P4 and P7) and up to 14 pupils at S2.

The activities allocated to each pupil will be listed in the Assessment Allocation Sheet which is issued along with the survey materials in late April. Pupils participating in the survey may be asked to do one or more of the following:

- complete two pencil and paper numeracy assessments
- participate in an interactive teacher/pupil assessment
- complete an online questionnaire

Pupils pre-reading literacy materials will complete a pencil and paper reading assessment and/or an online reading assessment. A sample of teachers who teach pupils at the survey stages (P4, P7 and S2) will be invited to complete an online questionnaire about their numeracy teaching experiences and opinions.

Detailed guidance on the administration of the assessments and questionnaires will be provided along with the survey materials.

## Selecting your school's sample

You will select both your pupil and teacher sample using the procedure explained in Annex A of the guidance letter.

## Pupil sample

Please select the required number of pupils from each stage following the instructions in Annex A. Unique SSLN identifiers are assigned to every school and pupil to ensure the anonymity of the selected pupils.

## Informing parents/carers of pupils selected to take part

Parent/carer letters and information leaflets are enclosed with this leaflet. Once you have finalised your pupil list, you will need to complete and send the enclosed letter and information leaflet to the parents/carers of each pupil that has been selected as soon as possible.

The letter informs parents/carers about the purpose of the SSLN and about how the information gathered will be used. The letter makes it clear that parents/carers have the opportunity to withdraw their child from the survey, should they so wish. Please note the letter asks parents/carers who wish to withdraw their child from the survey to inform their school directly.

Please also note that the same letter should be used for all pupils irrespective of whether they will be completing numeracy assessments or reading literacy materials. The parent/carer letter can also be provided in other languages. To request this please contact the SSLN team.

## Finalising the list of pupils who are taking part

The list of pupils selected to take part can be affected by the following changes:

- the pupil has left your school – It is possible that a pupil may leave the school following selection for participation in the SSLN.
- the pupil is withdrawn by the school – Should you feel that a particular pupil will be unduly stressed or adversely affected by taking part in the survey, you can withdraw the pupil at your discretion.
- the pupil is withdrawn by their parent/carer – Parents/carers who want to withdraw their child from the SSLN are asked to inform their school.

Schools are asked to record any withdrawals or absences on the Pupil Record sheet, which will be sent to schools for return to SSLN along with the survey materials.

Please note, schools should not use pupils that were not originally sampled to replace those that are absent or withdrawn. Schools should carry out the survey with all remaining sampled pupils completing the assessments they are allocated.

## Pupils with additional support needs (ASN) or English as an additional language (EAL)

Pupils attending mainstream schools, including pupils with ASN or EAL, are part of the population of pupils which the survey results represent and so are therefore eligible for sampling. Sample pupils are selected at random from each school so it is likely that some pupils with ASN or EAL will be selected for participation.

Pupils should be given the same level of support they would normally have for assessments in class. For example, where pupils are usually provided with scribes or photographic enlargement of materials, teachers may also provide this support within the SSLN. However, pupils must complete the survey in English or Gaelic; translations of the assessments into other languages should not be provided.

If the school feels that completing the survey would be distressing for any pupils selected in their sample, the pupil can be withdrawn at any time, before or during the survey. This should be recorded on the Pupil Record Sheet.

## Teacher Questionnaires

A sample of teachers at each survey stage will be asked to complete an online teacher questionnaire. For schools with primary stages either P4 or all P7 teachers at their school will be asked to complete an online questionnaire. This information is given in Annex A of the guidance letter.

For schools with secondary stages, we require your assistance in selecting the random sample of S2 teachers to complete the survey's online teacher questionnaire. Full instructions are provided in Annex A of the guidance letter.

Further information on the questionnaires will be provided with the survey materials.

## Arranging accommodation and supervision

No special accommodation is necessary for pupils to complete the assessments so long as they are able to complete them without being unduly disturbed or distracted. You may decide to use a separate room or to integrate the assessments alongside other work in the classroom where appropriate.

For part of the survey, pupils must be able to access a computer with internet access. However not all pupils need to have access at the same time.

It is important that all teachers administering the assessments have a copy of the list of SSLN pupil IDs matched to the names of participating pupils. This will help ensure that each pupil receives the correct assessments.

## Key actions and dates for the administration of the 2015 SSLN

Action	Date
Preparation for the SSLN	
Schools select the pupil and teacher sample (see letter)	By end March 2015
Schools inform parents and finalise the pupil and teacher sample	By end April 2015
Schools prepare for the administration of the SSLN	By end April 2015
Administration of survey and return of materials (detailed guidance to follow)	
Assessment materials and further guidance arrive in schools	Late April 2015
Schools administer assessments and questionnaires	5 May – 5 June 2015
Schools return all materials to SSLN	By 12 June 2015

See SSLN 2015 – Planning Flowchart for a more detailed overview of key actions.

## Support for you

All online assessments and questionnaires are accessed through the SSLN web area [www.ssln.org.uk](http://www.ssln.org.uk). From here you can also access information and advice, exemplification, interactive demonstrations and a discussion forum. Electronic copies of all documentation and a list of frequently asked questions are also available.

## SSLN Team – contact us

You can contact the SSLN Team with any queries by e-mail at [ssln@sqa.org.uk](mailto:ssln@sqa.org.uk) or by telephone on 0345 213 6964.

March/April 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

### SCOTTISH SURVEY OF LITERACY AND NUMERACY (SSLN) – NUMERACY 2015

I am writing to inform you that your child, ....., has been randomly selected to take part in the 2015 Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy (SSLN). The survey takes place in May/June of this year.

The SSLN is an annual, sample-based survey which monitors performance in literacy and numeracy across Scotland. All mainstream schools in Scotland are asked to take part in the SSLN and a small sample of pupils at P4, P7 and S2 are randomly selected from all participating schools. Information collected for the survey is anonymous and will not be used to produce any individual information on your child or their school. The information will remain confidential in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998).

The enclosed leaflet contains more information on the SSLN and how the findings are used. Results from previous surveys can be found at [www.gov.scot/ssln](http://www.gov.scot/ssln).

You may find it helpful to discuss the survey with your child to ensure they understand why they have been asked to take part and how the information it collects is important to Scotland.

We are always grateful for the help we receive from participating schools, pupils and their parents and we hope that you agree to your child taking part in this year's survey. If you have any questions or wish to withdraw your child from the survey, **please contact your child's school**.

Yours faithfully

*[redacted]*

[redacted]  
Head of Learning Analysis  
Education Analytical Services

Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ  
[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE





Curriculum for Excellence



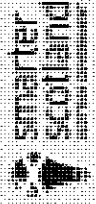
For parents/carers



Curriculum for Excellence

SSLN 2015 (Numeracy)

Information for parents/carers





## What is the Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy (SSLN)?

The SSLN is an annual, sample-based survey which monitors performance in literacy and numeracy at P4, P7 and S2. The 2015 survey will focus on numeracy, with some pupils trialling literacy materials for future surveys.

## Why do we need a survey?

The Scottish Government, local authorities and other partners, including Education Scotland and the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), require accurate and up-to-date information on pupil performance in literacy and numeracy, and on pupils' attitudes to learning. This helps to establish the quality of Scottish education and identify opportunities to improve the education service.

## How will the survey help?

We are keen to help all of Scotland's young people to progress through their education, to succeed in all aspects of school life and achieve their full potential. Accurate and up-to-date data collected through the SSLN allows the survey partners to meet the following objectives:

- plan and deliver better policies for the benefit of all pupils
- better understand factors which influence pupil performance in literacy and numeracy
- share good practice
- develop professional learning resources to support teachers

## What will be expected of pupils taking part in the survey?

Most pupils selected to take part in the 2015 SSLN will:

- answer written questions to show their numeracy skills (the questions are in two booklets)
- carry out three short numeracy assessment activities with their teacher
- fill in an online questionnaire

Other pupils will take part in trialling literacy assessment materials in preparation for future surveys.

## When will the survey take place?

Your school will arrange for this to happen during class time between 5 May and 5 June 2015.

## Why has my child been selected to take part in the survey?

All mainstream schools in Scotland are asked to take part in the SSLN. Within each school, a small number of pupils are selected at random by the Scottish Government's Education Analytical Services to participate in the survey. The survey involves a sample of pupils at P4, P7 and S2.

## Will I get to see my child's results?

Results for individual children, schools or local authorities will not be published. The survey is completed anonymously and each child's results form part of a much bigger picture that allows us to assess overall performance across Scotland.

## How will taking part in the survey benefit my child's learning?

Assessment is a regular part of your child's learning. Participation in the survey will involve no longer than 2-3 hours of your child's time and will provide them with the opportunity to practise their skills. The assessments have been specially designed by teachers for the survey and we hope that your child will enjoy participating in the SSLN and contributing to an important national survey.

## Is there anything I can do to help my child prepare?

There is no requirement for parents/carers or schools to prepare participating pupils for the survey. You might wish to discuss participation in the survey with your child to ensure they understand why they have been asked to take part and how the information collected is important to Scotland.

## What if my child requires additional support?

Schools are asked to judge whether additional support is necessary for any of the pupils selected to take part. Pupils should be given the level of support they would normally have for assessments in class. For example, where pupils are usually provided with a scribe or photographic enlargement of materials, teachers may also provide this within the SSLN.

## What data is collected about my child and how is it used?

Information collected for the SSLN is for statistical and research purposes only. Pupil names and addresses are not collected. Your child will be given an SSLN ID number which ensures their anonymity and acts as a unique identifier throughout the survey. To minimise the amount of data we collect in the SSLN, the data will be linked with other statistical sources, none of which will allow your child to be identified. All data is held securely and no information on individual pupils or schools will be published.

## What happens to the information collected?

The statistical reports generated from the survey can be found at [www.gov.scot/ssin](http://www.gov.scot/ssin). The report for this year's numeracy survey will be published in 2016.

The survey results are also used to produce Professional Learning Resources for teachers, to support their learning and teaching practice. These can be found on the Education Scotland website at [www.educationsscotland.gov.uk/ssin](http://www.educationsscotland.gov.uk/ssin)

## How is the survey data protected?

All partner organisations working on the SSLN take the issue of confidentiality very seriously. The collection, transfer, processing and sharing of SSLN data is done in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). We also comply with the National Statistics Code of Practice requirements and other legislation related to safeguarding the confidentiality of data. The Data Protection Act gives you the right to know how we will use your data.

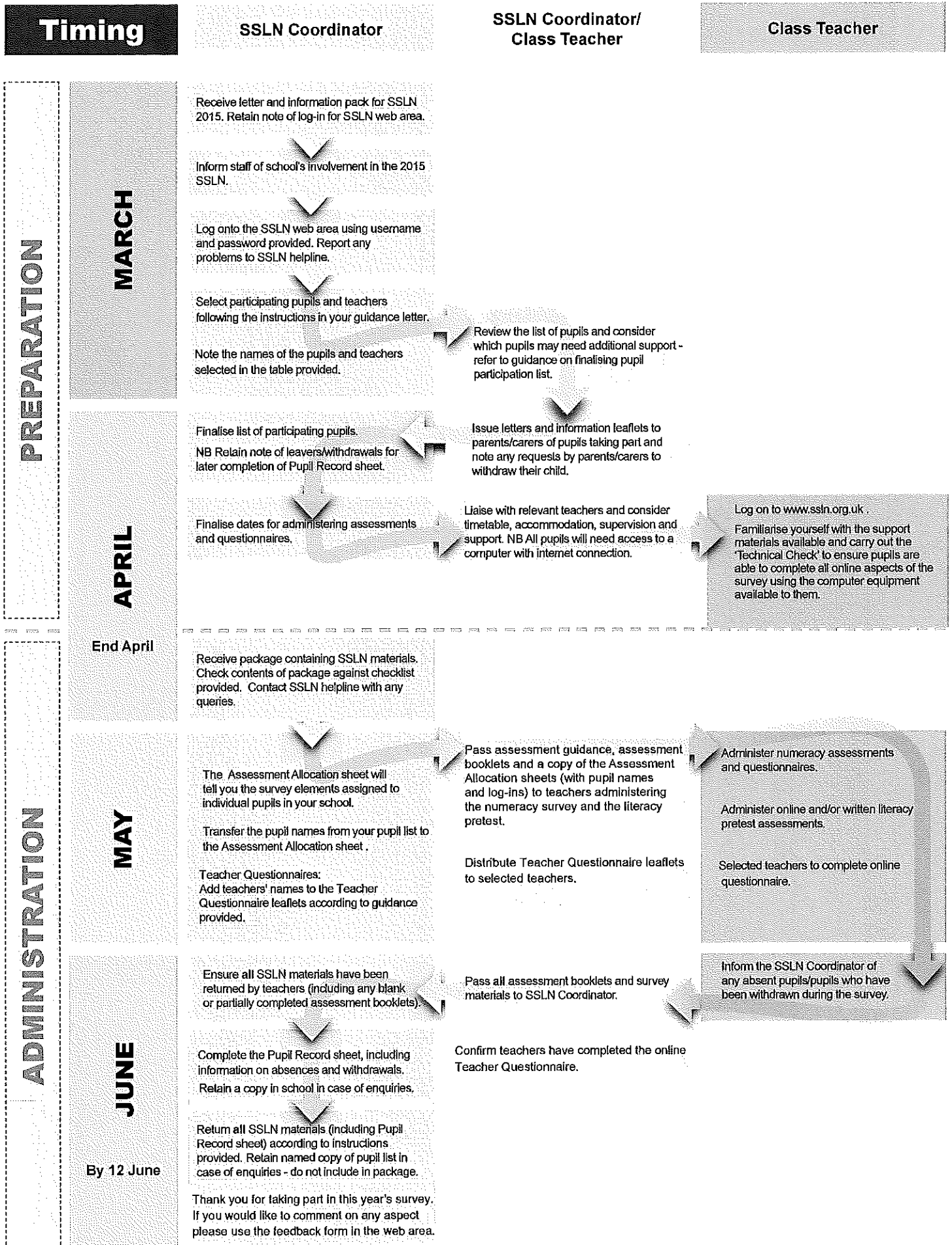
The Scottish Government may make anonymous datasets available for specific pieces of research in order to help us meet our objectives (set out above). In all cases, the data which is shared will be anonymous and will not allow the identification of an individual. Any sharing of data will be done under the strict control of the Scottish Government, which will ensure that no individual data will be made public and that the data will not be used to take any action in respect of an individual. The Scottish Government will retain responsibility for the sharing and use of the data collected through the SSLN and will take all decisions on sharing data based on the need to maintain the anonymity of those taking part in the survey.

## What if I have questions or concerns?

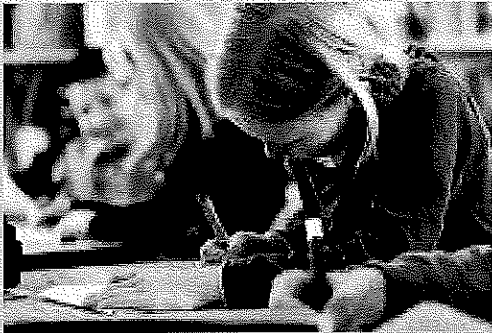
If you or your child have any questions about your child's participation in the SSLN or you wish to withdraw your child from the survey, please contact your child's school.

For any other questions, please contact the SSLN Team by e-mail at [ssin@sqa.org.uk](mailto:ssin@sqa.org.uk) or by telephone on 0345 213 6964. Further information is also available from the SSLN web area at [www.ssln.org.uk](http://www.ssln.org.uk)

# SSLN 2015 – Planning flowchart (Independent schools)







## What is the SSLN?

The SSLN is an annual, sample-based survey which monitors national performance in literacy and numeracy at P4, P7 and S2. The survey focuses on literacy and numeracy in alternate years. Information from the survey is used to develop resources for teachers to inform improvements in learning and teaching. In 2015, the main focus of the survey is numeracy. To find out more about the survey go to [www.ssln.org.uk](http://www.ssln.org.uk).

## How many pupils will be involved?

At each stage in primary schools, two pupils will participate in the numeracy survey. A pupil will be selected from either P4 or P7 to take part in the literacy pretest.

In secondary schools, twelve pupils will participate in the numeracy survey and two pupils will take part in the literacy pretest.

## What will teachers have to do?

A sample of teachers who teach pupils at the survey stages (P4, P7 and S2) will be invited to complete an online questionnaire about their numeracy teaching experiences and opinions.

If you teach at one of the survey stages your SSLN coordinator may ask you to be involved in administering the assessments.

## When will the survey take place?

The SSLN will take place in all schools between 5 May and 5 June 2015. In this school the SSLN will be administered on –

## The SSLN coordinator

A member of staff in each school has been nominated to coordinate the administration of the SSLN. The SSLN coordinator in this school is –

Go to [www.ssln.org.uk](http://www.ssln.org.uk) for:

- more information about the SSLN
- sample assessment materials
- a link to the results of previous surveys
- a link to the Professional Learning Resources.

## Questions?

Contact the SSLN Helpline at [sslh@sqa.org.uk](mailto:sslh@sqa.org.uk) or speak to one of our team on 0345 213 6964 (from 08.30 to 16.30, Mon - Fri).

Thank you for taking part.

[redacted]

**From:** [redacted]  
**Sent:** 09 January 2018 18:03  
**To:** [redacted]  
**Subject:** FW: SCIS Wellbeing and Child Protection Guidance 2015  
**Attachments:** SCIS Wellbeing and Child Protection Guidance 2015 Final Draft.pdf

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**From:** [redacted] [mailto:[redacted]@scis.org.uk]  
**Sent:** 11 May 2015 16:12  
**To:** [redacted]  
**Subject:** SCIS Wellbeing and Child Protection Guidance 2015

Dear [redacted],  
Thank you for your letter of 8 May confirming that Ms McLeod would be willing to contribute a foreword to the revised SCIS Guidance on Wellbeing and Child Protection 2015. This is greatly appreciated.  
I attach the revised Guidance – it is still marked as Draft as we have incorporated the most relevant parts of the Statutory Guidance on the GIRFEC provisions of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. As this is still in a period of consultation we will wait until the Statutory Guidance is published before finalising the SCIS Guidance, in case of any changes.  
With many thanks.

↙  
city available

Yours sincerely,  
[redacted]

[redacted]  
**Deputy Director (CPD Co-ordinator)**  
**Scottish Council of Independent Schools**  
4th Floor, 61 Dublin Street  
Edinburgh EH3 6NL  
Tel: 0131 556 [redacted]  
[www.scis.org.uk](http://www.scis.org.uk)

Download the ~~2014-2015~~ SCIS CPD Programme

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[redacted]

**From:** [redacted]  
**Sent:** 20 July 2015 16:42  
**To:** 'John Edward'  
**Subject:** RE: Scottish Government consultation on The Education (Assisted Places) (Scotland) Revocation Regulations 2015

Dear John

Thank you for your response, we have noted your comments and appreciate the effort independent schools have made since the removal of the assisted places scheme to extend the financial assistance offered to families on low incomes to widen access.

Kind regards

[redacted]

[redacted]  
Raising Attainment, Learning Directorate, Scottish Government, Area 2C, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ  
**Tel:** 0131 244[redacted] **Email:** [redacted]@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

**My working pattern is Monday, Wednesday, Thursday.**

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**From:** John Edward [mailto:john.edward@scis.org.uk]  
**Sent:** 19 July 2015 10:52  
**To:** [redacted]  
**Cc:** [redacted]; [redacted]  
**Subject:** Re: Scottish Government consultation on The Education (Assisted Places) (Scotland) Revocation Regulations 2015

Dear [redacted]

Please see the attached.

Kind regards

John

---

**From:** [redacted]@scotland.gsi.gov.uk <[redacted]@scotland.gsi.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 16 July 2015 09:12  
**To:** John Edward  
**Subject:** FW: Scottish Government consultation on The Education (Assisted Places) (Scotland) Revocation Regulations 2015

Dear John

To date we have received no responses to the below consultation. I would appreciate if you could provide comments on behalf of SCIS and member schools by the deadline of Monday 20 July. If you require an extension to this deadline please let me know as soon as possible.

Kind regards

[redacted]

[redacted]

Learning Directorate, Scottish Government, Area 2C, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ  
Tel: 0131 244 [redacted] Email: [redacted]@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

My working pattern is Monday, Wednesday, Thursday.

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**From:** [redacted]  
**Sent:** 18 June 2015 13:52  
**To:** John Edwards  
**Cc:** [redacted]; [redacted]  
**Subject:** Scottish Government consultation on The Education (Assisted Places) (Scotland) Revocation Regulations 2015

Dear John

Please find attached a letter notifying SCIS about a consultation on the planned revocation of The Education (Assisted Places) (Scotland) Regulations 2001. I have separately written to registered independent schools and have attached a copy for your information.

I would appreciate if you could provide any comments by 20 July 2015.

Kind regards

[redacted]

[redacted]

Learning Directorate, Scottish Government, Area 2C, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ  
Tel: 0131 244 [redacted] Email: [redacted]@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

My working pattern is Monday, Wednesday, Thursday.

\*\*\*\*\*  
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Buidheann-Stiùiridh an Ionnsachaidh  
Learning Directorate

F/T: 0131-244 [redacted]  
E: [redacted]@scotland.gsi.gov.uk



Mr John Edward  
Director  
SCIS  
61 Dublin Street  
Edinburgh  
EH3 6NL



Sent by email: [john@scis.org.uk](mailto:john@scis.org.uk)

18 June 2015

Dear Mr Edward

### **The Education (Assisted Places) (Scotland) Revocation Regulations 2015**

I write to invite your views on the proposed revocation of The Education (Assisted Places) (Scotland) Regulations 2001 as part of a statutory consultation process. As there are no longer any pupils receiving assistance through the assisted places scheme, the Scottish Ministers have agreed to the revocation of the regulations under section 75A(9) and (10) of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

The phasing out of the assisted places scheme was introduced by section 5 of the Education (Schools) Act 1997, which amended section 75A of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, with the effect that the assisted places scheme could only be operated in relation to pupils admitted to a place before the 1997-1998 school year until those pupils completed their education.

The Education (Assisted Places) (Scotland) Revocation Regulations 2015 are in the process of being prepared and are expected to be made and laid in August 2015 and to come into force in September 2015. Section 75A(11) of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 requires the Scottish Government to consult any bodies who appear to be appropriate and representative of participating schools when making regulations under section 75A(9).

I therefore invite the Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS) to consider the planned revocation of the regulations on behalf of participating member schools and provide any comments to [\[redacted\]@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:[redacted]@scotland.gsi.gov.uk) by 20 July 2015.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

[redacted]

Cidhe Bhictòria, Dùn Èideann, EH6 6QQ  
Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ  
[www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)



Buidheann-Stiùiridh an Ionnsachaidh  
Learning Directorate

F/T: 0131-244 [redacted]  
E: [redacted]@scotland.gsi.gov.uk



Headteacher  
Independent Schools



18 June 2015

Dear Headteacher

### **The Education (Assisted Places) (Scotland) Revocation Regulations 2015**

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I have contacted the Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS) to invite them to contribute in a consultation on behalf of participating member schools, however as it has not been possible to determine which schools participated in the scheme, this letter has also been issued to all current schools on the register. Please accept my apologies if your school is not affected. I am happy to receive replies on the planned revocation directly from schools, please send any comments to [\[redacted\]@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:[redacted]@scotland.gsi.gov.uk) by 20 July 2015.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

Cidhe Bhictòria, Dùn Èideann, EH6 6QQ  
Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ  
[www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)





[redacted]

Learning Directorate, Scottish Government

[redacted]@scotland.gsi.gov.uk



## **The Education (Assisted Places) (Scotland) Revocation Regulations 2015**

Dear [redacted]

Thank you for your letter of 18 June seeking the views of the Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS), and the schools in membership, on the planned revocation of The Education (Assisted Places) (Scotland) Regulations 2001.

SCIS recognises that the removal of the Assisted Places Scheme was a specific policy of a previous UK administration, and that the revocation is primarily a “tidying-up” exercise as relates to the remaining legislation. There is, however, still substantial interest in the principle that lay behind the scheme, that independent education provides an element of choice and diversity for parents and families within the education system, and modest Government support could help widen access to that education. Independent additional support needs schools are still recognised in this way, and are funded to meet specific pupil needs. Indeed, a similar principle is also being employed in the Higher Education sector. Scotland, and the United Kingdom, are among the very few countries where independent education does not receive some form of collaborative funding support from central government.

SCIS records show that over 3000 pupils benefited from the Assisted Places scheme in 1995, before the scheme was suspended. Since that time, independent schools have moved to provide fee assistance themselves, primarily through bursaries as well as more traditional scholarships. It is worth noting that in 2014-15, 20% of pupils in mainstream received some form of financial assistance - means and non-means tested - covering over 6000 pupils. Schools will disburse over £45.5 million in assistance this year. As such, parental fee income and other school fund-raising have more than matched the contribution previously made by central government to widening access to the sector.

In seeking to revoke the remaining Assisted Places legislation, SCIS would hope that the Scottish Government place on formal record the efforts that schools and families have made in this area.

### **Bursary provision in the independent sector**

Those pupils in receipt of means-tested fee assistance are not in a position to pay full fees. The charity test looks specifically at the range of bursary provision right up to 100%, to ensure that those least able to pay have as much opportunity of access as those able to make some contribution, as well as at how that provision is publicised and allocated. Based on figures compiled by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and SCIS, in excess of 600 pupils, at both day and boarding rates, currently receive maximum 100% means-tested financial assistance alone - the equivalent of a fully-funded medium-sized