**SNSA Update**

**Some general messages:**

* There are plans to introduce some fourth level questions into the S3 SNSAs, but no plans to do the equivalent at other levels.
* The questions and assessment descriptors are written to *align* with benchmarks. The reason they align rather than match exactly is to avoid staff relying entirely on the SNSAs to provide evidence of achievement of a level.
* It was suggested that pupils should **not** be encouraged to guess questions – in order to get the most truthful results it is better for pupils to skip questions if they are unsure. It may be best to make this decision as a school or even a cluster, to ensure consistency.
* Every year a third of questions will be refreshed.
* Following feedback, tests will be reordered so that the more straightforward questions are asked at the start of each cluster. Questions which require pupils to scroll have also been changed to make this easier.

**Introduction to the SNSA long scales:**

From the 2018/19 session, instead of “low”, “medium” and “high”, pupils will be assigned a band from a 12 point scale, 12 being the highest. They receive different bands for numeracy, reading and writing.

There are six possible bands per stage:

* P1: Bands 1 to 6
* P4: Bands 4 to 9
* P7: Bands 6 to 11
* S3: Bands 7 to 12

Pupils who do extremely well in their assessment will receive a band of “x or above”, eg. “6 or above”; a pupil who performs badly will receive a band of “x or below”.

Though these bands overlap, we can’t assume that a pupil who does extremely well in their assessment is working at the stage above since the skills being tested aren’t the same. Pupils can be described as working at the “same capacity” as pupils at a different stage.