

From: [Redacted – exemption applies]
Sent: 20 September 2018 14:31:01
To: Public Engagement Unit
Subject: FW: P1 assessment

AO [Redacted – exemption applies]

For MACCS please

[Redacted – exemption applies] Assistant Private Secretary (Correspondence) to John Swinney MSP | Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary Education and Skills | Scottish Government | St Andrew's House | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | [Redacted – exemption applies]

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From: [Redacted – exemption applies]
Sent: 19 September 2018 09:26

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot<<mailto:DFMCSE@gov.scot>>>
Subject: FW: P1 assessment

From: [Redacted – exemption applies]
Sent: 18 September 2018 18:19
To: Swinney J (John), MSP
<John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot<<mailto:John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>>>
Subject: P1 assessment

Sent from Mail<<https://go.microsoft.com/fwlink/?LinkId=550986>> for Windows 10

Dear Mr Swinney,

As a former primary school HT I wholeheartedly support assessment of pupils throughout their school years to ascertain their strengths and learning needs. P1 children arrive in school, hopefully following nursery education, as four year olds

and five year olds this presents a wide variety of challenges for them and the staff. Why not consider using the online assessment tool when the individual child reaches a specific age? Perhaps five and a half? Children whose birthdays fall in or near to holiday periods could be assessed as closely to their birthday as possible. This would mean that there would not be a need for assessing a class within a narrow timeframe and would ,I think, therefore be less stressful for all concerned.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted – exemption applies]

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REDACTED - EXEMPTION APPLIES

7th October 2018

Dear Mr Swinney

I have been clearing out my piles of school stuff since I have been retired for some years. I came across this piece of paper and thought it would interest your team.

A new infant head presented us with this piece of paper when she came to us in the early 70s. Did we run to the EIS to complain loudly? Did we inform the newspapers? Did we tell parents about this dreadful imposition? No! The five of us were fully trained, competent teachers. We read the paper and proceeded to gather the bits and pieces. Pictures had to be found from old books or drawn by hand. No computers available.

With our "kit" completed we set to. Yes it was time consuming and by the time we had worked through the list with each of thirty odd pupils, while seeing that the rest of the children were suitably employed, we were somewhat drained. No classroom assistants around then.

When we looked at the results of our findings it became apparent that this kit was a great tool. It did exactly what the two sentences at the top of the paper said. You could have three distinct groups. No time was wasted trying to group the class and rearranging the groups as you went along. The three groups were very clear.

Note that the paper refers to "exercises", I called them "puzzles" and invited the children to come over to my special table to do some "puzzles". Any teacher who has spent 3/4 years in a college should be practised in the art of persuading infants to do something which is fun.

Unfortunately, at the mention of the word "test" there seemed to be instant panic. If you team looks through this paper they will find that everything there is probably in your P1 "tests".

At the first mention of the word 'test' for P1 somebody should have been making it clear to the newspapers and mischief making opposition politicians that of course the children were not being tested.

You test something after you have taught it.

At first my retired teaching friends and I were greatly amused by some of things we read in the press about the "ordeal" experienced by the poor P1s. However, as time went on and the naysayers wouldn't let go we became worried. Who are these teachers who don't recognise a helpful tool when they see it?

Who are the children who have never seen a computer?

Surely they are in nurseries and playgroups by now.

Who "marches" a small child into a room they don't know thereby making him fearful?

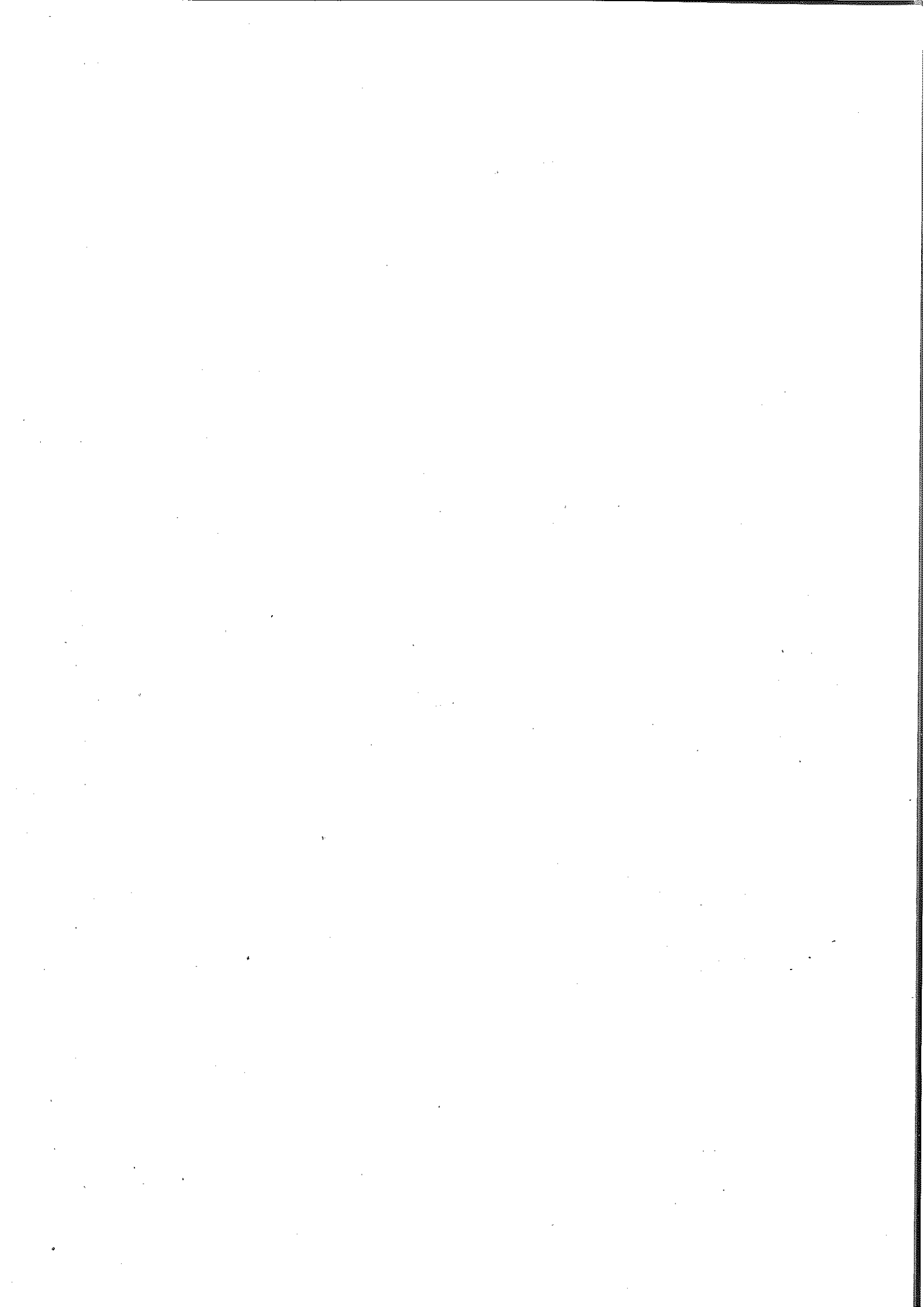
Perhaps inspectors should be sent out immediately to these non copying schools to see where the problems lie.

There are schools out there who have calmly set about working their way through the program. They should have been quoted in the press more fully. A bit of equal reporting would have been helpful.

Yours for Scotland

REDACTED-EXEMPTION APPLIES |

P.S. The paper I have enclosed had its origins in the Tansley books. The name may ring a bell with somebody.



From: [Redacted – exemption applies]
Sent: 26 September 2018 09:55:45
To: Public Engagement Unit
Subject: FW: Message from Scottish Parliament website

AO - [Redacted – exemption applies]

For maccs please.

[Redacted – exemption applies] [Deputy Private Secretary to John Swinney MSP | Deputy First Minister of Scotland and Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills | Scottish Government | St Andrew's House | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | T: [Redacted – exemption applies] | E: DFMCSE@gov.scot

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-----Original Message-----

From: [Redacted – exemption applies]
Sent: 19 September 2018 16:22
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>
Subject: FW: Message from Scottish Parliament website

-----Original Message-----

From: noreply@parliament.scot [mailto:noreply@parliament.scot]
Sent: 19 September 2018 16:11
To: Swinney J (John), MSP <John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Message from Scottish Parliament website

name:

[Redacted – exemption applies]

address:

[Redacted – exemption applies]

postcode:

[Redacted – exemption applies]

email:

[Redacted – exemption applies]

telephone:

[Redacted – exemption applies]

message:

The SNP has lost my confidence, as a teacher of 40 years who DOES listen to what experts say about our youngest learners. I've sent this to James Dornan:

I am watching the current debate on P1 tests. Your comment regarding "tears" of a young child during the test is no big deal because children cry in school all the time (admittedly, I'm paraphrasing, but it is exactly the essence of your message), makes me despair. Your flippant attitude for the well-being of our youngest learners is despicable, and demonstrates the enormity of your ignorance regarding early education. I have always voted SNP, but I will not allow the needs of our youngsters to be run roughshod over for you to score political points. Shame on you and the SNP.

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From: [Redacted – exemption applies]
Sent: 18 September 2018 10:20:27
To: Public Engagement Unit
Subject: FW: P1 Tests

AO [Redacted – exemption applies]

MACCS case please for OR

[Redacted – exemption applies]

Office of the First Minister

Scottish Government

5TH floor/St Andrews House/Regent Road

Edinburgh EH1 3DG

[Redacted – exemption applies]

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[Redacted – exemption applies]

Office of the First Minister

Scottish Government

5TH floor/St Andrews House/Regent Road

Edinburgh EH1 3DG

Tel [Redacted – exemption applies]

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From: [Redacted – exemption applies] [Redacted – exemption applies]
Sent: 16 September 2018 18:17
To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot<mailto:firstminister@gov.scot>>
Subject: P1 Tests

Dear Ms Sturgeon

As a teacher who had 20 years experience I think you should stand firm about the P1 tests.

I am disappointed that the other parties will vote against you.

If some of the children were crying it may have been because some tension in the teacher was transmitted to the child.

Perhaps, if it was presented as a game and called an assessment there would not be so much hostility.

Other countries realise that education is the key to future prosperity for its citizens.

As far as I can see the test is pretty minimal and it is important to see how the child is progressing.

From my experience in teaching, a lot of children lose the way in the first few years and it just gets compounded as they progress through school. It is sad to see their eagerness in the early years being replaced by apathy and withdrawal.

Surely if it was explained, that the test is to enable schools to focus resources on those children in the Early Years that just need a bit more input, parents would not be so antagonistic and so easily whipped up by newspapers.

All the best,

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted – exemption applies]

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From: [Redacted – exemption applies]
Sent: 20 September 2018 13:48:49
To: Public Engagement Unit
Subject: FW: John Swinney MSP Contact Us Submission

AO ? [Redacted – exemption applies]

For MACCS please

[Redacted – exemption applies] | Assistant Private Secretary (Correspondence) to John Swinney MSP | Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary Education and Skills | Scottish Government | St Andrew's House | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | [Redacted – exemption applies]

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From: [Redacted – exemption applies] [Redacted – exemption applies]
Sent: 18 September 2018 11:06
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot<<mailto:DFMCSE@gov.scot>>>
Subject: FW: John Swinney MSP Contact Us Submission

From: John Swinney MSP Office [<mailto:no-reply@johnswinney.scot>]
Sent: 18 September 2018 10:45
To: [Redacted – exemption applies] Cc: [Redacted – exemption applies]
Subject: John Swinney MSP Contact Us Submission
Here is a copy of the Contact Us form submitted on :

www.johnswinney.scot<<http://www.johnswinney.scot>>

Name: [Redacted – exemption applies]
Email: [Redacted – exemption applies]
Phone: [Redacted – exemption applies]
Address: [Redacted – exemption applies]

Subject: P1 testing

Message: Dear Mr Swinney I was unsure how to contact you but I felt I needed to Congratulate you for standing up for P1 testing. I was training to be a classroom assistant and was seconded to a primary school one day a week. World reading day had come around, I was left to assist children. One quiet little boy asked for my help with words, I soon realised he couldn't recognise basic words like and, the. He asked if he could read his own book, I said, yes. Which he read impeccably, I realised he was memory reading, when I went on a few pages he was lost. This wee child looked at me and said "Oh miss, isn't reading hard" I always remember that wee boy. The thing is Mr Swinney his teacher was deputy head, if she couldn't pick up on this wee kids difficulties, he would have been lost. So stand up for the wee 5/6year olds who could slip through the net. If this wee kid had been tested they could have picked up on his problems early. Good luck. And remember the kids

GDPR Consent: Yes

We will get back to you as soon as we can.

Regards,

John Swinney MSP

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