



Rt Hon Nicky Morgan MP
Secretary of State

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The reforms we have introduced to the primary curriculum and assessment are designed to ensure that all children leave primary school having mastered the basics in reading, writing and mathematics.

As you know, in 2016 we have raised the expected standard at the end of Key Stage 2 and introduced new national curriculum tests in reading and mathematics alongside an interim teacher assessment framework for key stage 2 writing.

While the expected standard is higher and the forms of statutory assessment are new, I am writing today to reiterate that this does not mean significantly more schools below the floor standard in 2016 than in previous years.

The floor standard has two parts - attainment and progress. Measuring both attainment and progress is important because we want to recognise attainment as well as the achievements of schools with the most challenging intakes that are supporting the progress of their pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.

To be above the floor standard in 2016 a primary school needs to have either:

- 65% or more pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics or
- progress scores that are sufficient in all of reading, and writing and mathematics.

A school that meets the progress part of the floor standard will be above the floor standard overall – even if they have fewer than 65% of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

As this is the first year of new assessments and accountability measures, we will announce what progress score a school needs in each subject to meet the progress part of the floor standard after we have the results of the new assessments. I have brought forward the production of this provisional progress data, which will now be shared with schools earlier than planned, in early September. This means that by the start of term the vast majority of schools will have clear reassurance that they are unlikely to be below the floor in 2016.

Furthermore, in my speech to the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) conference on 30 April, I made a clear commitment that the proportion of schools below the floor this year will be similar to last year. In 2015, 5% of primary schools were below the floor. In 2016, no more than 6% of primary schools will be below the floor. This does not mean that the proportion of schools below the floor will necessarily increase, merely that if there is an increase it will be no more than 1 percentage point.

I hope that this helps you understand the position and that you will pass it on to your members.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nicky M', with a stylized flourish at the end.

RT HON NICKY MORGAN MP