



NAPE

**National Association for Primary
Education**

**NAPE National Office
Moulton College
Moulton
Northampton NN3 7RR**

tel: 01604 647646

email: nationaloffice@nape.org.uk

website: www.nape.org.uk

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Media Release

Trusting Parents and Teachers

The concerted opposition by parents and teachers to the government's introduction of the baseline assessment of very young children has been successful in securing the decision to abandon the proposal. This association welcomes this sensible reversal of policy.

Parents were particularly upset by the intention to assess what in fact is the quality of their parenting and to categorise the children so early in their education. While playing in a pre-school setting is valuable it should be accepted that the general level of children's maturation, their capacity to understand and their grasp of early basic skills are owed much more to their experiences in the family since birth than to the work of teachers.

The piloting of assessment in 2015 showed that a high proportion of families were not consulted but were merely informed about the assessment of educational potential. Even worse, a substantial number had no idea that the assessment had taken place. Such arbitrary action which could have had such a profound impact on the lives of children and their parents has no place in a modern and democratic system of education.

Having rightfully rejected assessment by checklist the DfE has indicated an intention to enter into discussions with regard to the assessment of children's readiness for later education. We agree that such assessment can be helpful to teaching but insist that **parents who possess such deep knowledge of their children should be fully involved in partnership with teachers.** The early years are a peak time for parental interest in education and it is crucially important that working partnerships are created which will have a major effect on later successful learning. The government must affirm its confidence in the parent-teacher partnership.

John Coe
Information Officer

Email: nape@onetel.com

Tel: 01865 890281