

# more than a score

## Too much, too young Don't test four-year-olds

The government is spending more than £10 million to bring back its failed baseline assessment scheme. If it goes ahead, almost every four-year-old in England will be tested when they enter school.

This is pointless and damaging.

**Pointless.** Baseline assessment means testing every child one-to-one for 20 minutes in their first few weeks at school and taking the result as a true picture of what they can do. It's not going to give valid results.

**Damaging** because children will be labelled, and schools will teach to the test. Early years education will become narrower and more formal. This is not good for children. In a system based on testing many will lose out – especially children with special needs, those who are summer-born, or those who are brought up in disadvantage

**'If you are testing a four year-old, you cannot get a very reliable test.'**

Harvey Goldstein,  
Professor of Social Statistics,  
Bristol University.

### **BASELINE LAST TIME – 2016**

**'I did have children that were crying and I just couldn't get anything out of them at all because they were too upset to do anything, even when I left it later on ... but it had to be done whether they were ready or not. And obviously then it is not accurate because they weren't at a stage when they wanted to say things.'**

Early Years Teacher

## Deal with the real problems

Child poverty levels are rising. Funding for schools and nurseries is too low. The Pre-School Learning Alliance warns that 'more and more nurseries, pre-schools and child-minders are going to be forced out of business'. A government that really wanted to improve the quality of education would opt for investment, not more testing.

## Campaign

The government plans to impose Baseline Assessment in 2020. Before then, there will be trials and pilots. MORE THAN A SCORE is an alliance of parents, teachers and other education experts. It aims to make sure that at every step of the way the Baseline plans will be scrutinised and criticised – and ultimately rejected.

You can become a supporter of More Than a Score at <https://morethanascore.co.uk/>

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**'I find the awarding of a point score to four and five-year-olds unhelpful and fail to see how it can be an accurate predictor of future performance. I worry it will lead to sample tests being produced which will encourage parents to drill children. I see it as another assault on a play based curriculum.'**

Early Years Teacher

5x5x5=creativity  
PROMOTING CHILDREN PROMOTING THE WORLD



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BRITISH EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

better  
without  
baseline



Cambridge Primary Review Trust  
partners in learning



Reclaiming schools



Save Childhood Movement

Sightlines Initiative

SLOW  
Education

TACTYC  
Association for Professional  
Development in Early Years

UKLA  
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