

Figures show SNP's 'shameful' performance on education

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New figures released today have shown that reading and writing standards among pupils in Scotland have fallen to 'shameful' levels.

The latest Scottish Survey for Literacy and Numeracy (SSLN) showed a rise in the percentage of pupils who are functionally illiterate from 7% to 16% in the last four years.

Fewer than half of S2 pupils in Scotland were performing well in writing, down from 64% in 2012.

The figures also showed that Scotland's attainment gap continues to exist, with pupils from the least deprived areas outperforming those from the most deprived areas at all stages – with the gap similar to that seen in 2012.

Despite the findings in the SSLN, the SNP Government are still planning to cancel all future reports.

Scottish Conservative shadow education secretary Liz Smith MSP said:

"These are shameful results which show that over its ten years in office this SNP government has failed a generation.

"Performance in writing still seems to be the biggest problem, including the fact that there appears to be a disparity between pupils' views of how they are performing in writing and listening and how they are actually performing.

"Given this evidence, it is abundantly clear that the Scottish Government is not doing enough to address the problems in basic literacy that this data highlights.

"It also shows that a very persistent gap between pupils from the most deprived areas and the least deprived areas continues, and that needs to be tackled.

"The SSLN evidence is a central piece of evidence, produced by the Scottish Government, which gives us important information as to how children are performing.

"These figures also show why it is so essential that there is a strong data

base, particularly since the Scottish Government has decided to discontinue the SSLN and has removed Scotland from TIMSS and PIRLS.”

Some of the statistics included in the SSLN include:

- At P4 level, since 2012 the percentage of children being able to read well or very well has fallen by 5 per cent, and for writing, it has fallen by 2 per cent.
- At P7 level, since 2012 the percentage of children being able to read well or very well has fallen by 2 per cent, and for writing, it has fallen by 7 per cent.
- At S2 level, there was a slight increase of 2 per cent from 2014, but no improvement on 2012 figures. Worryingly S2 pupils who can write well or very well has dramatically fallen from 65 per cent in 2012 to 49 per cent in 2016.

The percentage of children in S2 who are not at the required level in writing has more doubled in 4 years from 7 per cent in 2012 to 16 per cent in 2016.