

Whitgreave Primary School

Assessment Policy

INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of the document is to outline how assessment can be used in schools to improve learning for all pupils and raise standards of achievement. In addition this revised document provides a useful framework for review and self-evaluation and is intended to be a working document for individual teachers, key stage co-ordinators and subject leaders.

Readers will note that in some sections of the document, text is repeated. This is deliberate because the leaflet is designed to support the review and evaluation of the whole process of assessment or an individual aspect.

PRINCIPLES

- The prime objective of assessment is to support learning.
- Assessment should embrace and reflect the academic, social, emotional and moral development of pupils.
- Pupils should be fully involved in assessment processes so that they understand how to improve and become independent learners.
- Assessment should enable pupils to work towards their long-term as well as their short-term learning goals.
- Assessment should help motivate pupils and enhance self-esteem.
- Teachers should use assessment processes that are appropriate to the learning activities in which pupils are engaged.
- Teachers should employ a range of assessment strategies on a day-to-day basis and base their judgements on a wide range of evidence in order to obtain a holistic view of pupils' achievements.
- As an integral part of their continuing professional development (CPD), teachers should have opportunities to moderate the assessments they make in order to ensure that they apply consistent judgements and thereby establish professional and public confidence in standards.
- The information from assessment should primarily be for the purpose of supporting day-to-day learning and teaching but over time should generate information that contributes to the school's self-evaluation processes.

- All members of staff have a responsibility for assessment and should be involved in the development of practice across the school and the interpretation and use of the information generated.
- Parents and carers should regularly be appraised of pupils' progress and encouraged to be actively involved in the assessment process.

LEADING AND MANAGING ASSESSMENT

In our school we are leading and managing assessment for learning effectively when:

- A high profile is given to assessment for learning in whole school policies and practice, setting a sustained agenda for development;
- The principles of assessment for learning are explored and a common language is developed and understood by all, and when practice reflects this understanding;
- The ethos of the school promotes an enthusiasm for learning amongst staff and pupils and encourages risk taking;
- The ethos of the school encourages pupils to talk about their difficulties and areas for improvement, as well as their strengths, and to regard these as positive opportunities for learning;
- A balance is kept between on-going formative assessment, used continuously to support learning, and summative assessment, used periodically to support the monitoring of long-term progress;
- Leaders and managers:
 - Have drive, enthusiasm and confidence in implementing change and supporting effective practices;
 - Have the courage to make worthwhile changes and the skills to support staff who may feel de-skilled and anxious as a result of change;
 - See changes as a positive opportunity to raise pupils' expectations and attainment, and teachers' expertise and job satisfaction;
 - Motivate staff and provide opportunities for regular discussion about practice, sharing what works when, why and how, in order to improve processes for the benefit of the pupils;
 - Lead by example, are aware of the issues and promote effective practice through targeted professional development;
 - Monitor and evaluate systematically the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment, providing feedback and support where necessary;
 - Ensure that staff seek the views and opinions of learners and enable them to take responsibility for their own learning.
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ONGOING ASSESSMENT

Our ongoing assessment is effective when we:

- Are clear that the prime purpose of assessment is to provide information for teachers and pupils to move learning forward i.e. Assessment for Learning;
- Enable pupils to be clear what their learning objectives and success criteria are and ensure that they can distinguish between what they are learning and what they have to do, i.e. the task, activity or context;
- Involve pupils in the assessment process by teaching them the relevant skills to enable them to make sound judgements about their learning, by providing opportunities for peer-assessment and self-assessment and by valuing the assessments they make of their own work and that of other pupils;
- Ensure our assessments are shared with pupils in a way that helps them understand how well they have done, and what they should do next to improve their learning;
- Use a range of assessment strategies confidently, consistently and as relevant to the work in progress;
- Regularly provide pupils with opportunities to reflect and talk about their learning and progress and to formulate and ask questions;
- Carefully formulate questions that require pupils to think, encouraging them to reflect on their learning, speculate, hypothesise and offer opinions, and thereby stimulating classroom debate and discussion;
- Give feedback to pupils, both written and spoken as appropriate, which relates clearly to the learning objectives, highlighting where success has been achieved and identifying how the work can be improved;
- Make clear to pupils that we expect them to take some action following our feedback and provide sufficient time for them to make the proposed improvement;
- Circulate while pupils are engaged in tasks and use a range of strategies, e.g. observing, questioning, listening to pupils' own commentary on their work, etc, to gain information about how well they are able to apply and consolidate their learning, and intervene as appropriate to move their learning on;
- Use summative teacher assessments and tests where appropriate to provide information about what pupils know, understand and can do and analyse this information to support planning for subsequent teaching and learning;

- Ensure that other adults working with pupils are well briefed about the intended learning and are able to apply Assessment for Learning principles relevant to the support they are giving and communicate significant information to use about pupils' progress;
- Apply standards that are consistent with national expectations and, in all areas of learning, maintain high expectations of each pupil;
- Work together with colleagues within and beyond our school to develop understanding of appropriate expectations and outcomes in terms consistent standards, quality of the learning experience and due emphasis on pupils acquiring the skills required to become lifelong learners;
- Strive to involve parents and carers in the assessment process by explaining assessment strategies to them and by communicating with them regularly about their children's achievements, attainment and expected progress.

PLANNING

Our long-term planning is effective when it:

- Maps progression throughout the school with reference to the National Curriculum programmes of study/level descriptions and Strategy targets/objectives as appropriate and recognizes cross-curricular links;
- Is informed by the evaluation of pupils' progress and achievements, using assessment evidence from on-going learning and teaching, and from statutory assessments and examinations;
- Reflects the school's targets, set with reference to individual pupil targets, and the analysis of whole school data;
- Provides a framework to support medium-term planning in a way that ensures long-term progression for all pupils;
- Involves all staff (whole school/key stage) in its development and review.

Our medium-term planning (termly or half-termly) is effective when it:

- Identifies curriculum targets/objectives, the achievement of which will ensure that pupils make the necessary progress towards their end-of-year and end-of-key stage targets;
- Provides a framework to support short-term planning;

- Is informed by and adjusted in the light of assessment evidence from on-going learning and teaching.

Our short-term planning (daily or weekly) is effective when it:

- Identifies learning objectives for a lesson or series of lessons developed from the curriculum targets in the medium-term plans;
- Is informed by assessment evidence from on-going learning and teaching and is adjusted in the light of this evidence;
- Is differentiated to reflect the needs and prior learning of all learners;
- Expresses the learning objectives in ways that can be shared with and understood by pupils, allowing success criteria to be developed with them;
- Outlines assessment methods appropriate to the learning objectives and planned activities;
- Includes a range of teaching techniques appropriate to pupils' differing learning styles.

FEEDBACK ON LEARNING

Our feedback to pupils, including our marking, is effective when:

- It is specific and helps all children make progress, develop self-esteem and strive for achievement;
- It is selective and based on clear and shared learning objectives and/or success criteria so that pupils are enabled to see errors as part of the learning process;
- Where possible, it is provided immediately and is used to inform learning and teaching;
- Oral feedback is used to support marking and pupils are actively involved in the process;
- Pupils understand the advice and support provided to move their learning forward;
- It recognises each child's progress towards learning objectives and successes are celebrated by making explicit what has been done well and why;
- Pupils are encouraged to evaluate and improve their own work during a lesson/activity;

- Aspects of work that need individual improvement, attention or further development are identified and time is planned
- For children to apply improvement suggestions in either another piece of work in a new context or to the work marked;
- Teachers monitor the impact of their comments on pupil outcomes;
- Regular monitoring of marking and feedback practice reflects consistent use of the assessment policy throughout the school.

USING DATA AND OTHER INFORMATION TO PROMOTE LEARNING

Pupil progress is supported effectively when we:

- Recognise and use the full range of information, including pupil's work, informal notes, prior and current attainment and value added data from national, local and school sources;
- Use the curriculum objectives in medium-term planning to track and monitor pupils' progress in the short to medium-term, using national curriculum levels, sub-levels and points derived from these to track progress in the longer-term;
- Use information from previous teachers to inform planning;
- Limit the quantity of information and evidence and concentrate on quality;
- Engage pupils in reviewing and recording their own progress, using evidence from their learning to help them recognise their achievements and identify their next steps;
- Use assessment information with all staff within a school/department/key stage so that all have an understanding of the school's data and use it to evaluate learning and teaching and to support target setting;
- Use information and evidence to share and develop our understanding of levels of attainment;
- Pass on data and information which are clear and which other people find useful.

REPORTING TO PARENTS AND CARERS

Our reports to parents and carers is effective when they:

- Provide clear information, which parents/carers can understand, about their children's progress, outlining strengths and the areas they need to develop;
- Set learning targets which parents/carers can understand and are realistic, monitored and reviewed;
- Promote parent/carer involvement in their child's learning and provide scope for dialogue involving the school, the parent/carer and the child;
- Support discussion with parents at times which allow appropriate action to take place.

TRANSFER AND TRANSITION

Transfer and transition is effective when senior teams and teachers:

- Have clear understanding of and trust in the judgements of their colleagues from within and across settings and phases;
- Share information about pupils' progress as they move from one class to the next or to a new school, in order to support continuity of learning for all pupils;
- Establish manageable and straightforward systems and procedures that will ensure the timely transfer information;
- Make good use of the information received to influence and guide actions at whole school subject and cohort level and help determine the provision for groups and individuals.

Review Due: September 2013