

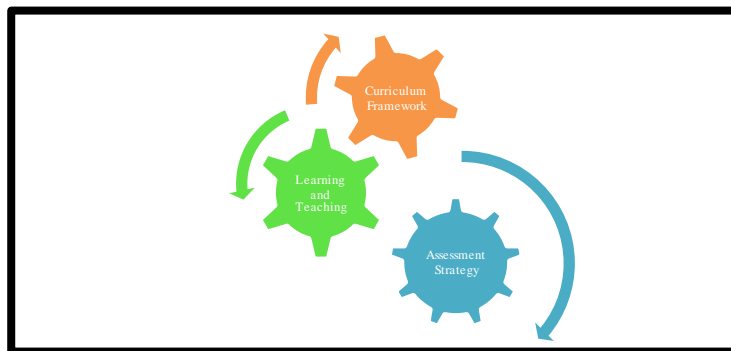
## Principles of Assessment

*'Assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching. It helps to provide a picture of a child's or young person's progress and achievements and to identify next steps in learning. Assessment approaches need to promote learner engagement and ensure appropriate support so that all learners can achieve their aspirational goals and maximise their potential.'*

*'Learners do well when engaging fully in their learning, collaborating in planning and shaping and reviewing their progress. Approaches to assessment that enable learners to say, 'I can show that I can...' will fully involve them. At all stages, learners should understand that assessment will support them in their learning and help them develop ambition to learn in increasing breadth and depth.'*  
(Education Scotland)

There are a number of key inter-related elements which require to be in place:

- A clear Curriculum Framework;
- **A ROBUST ASSESSMENT STRATEGY;**
- Effective learning and teaching.



This has to be underpinned by effective self evaluation which is clearly focused on ensuring that every child makes progression in their learning.

"Children and young people need high quality feedback about their progress and a clear understanding of the support that is in place to help them succeed." (National Improvement Framework)

It is essential that there are rigorous procedures in place to ensure that all children make very good progress in their learning. The aim of this policy is to clearly set out how Mosshead Primary School evaluates children's progress using robust assessment processes fully in line with Curriculum for Excellence.

At Mosshead Primary School our aim is to meet the individual needs of our pupils. Assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process and will:

### For Pupils:

- ✓ Motivate them through success
- ✓ Support their learning
- ✓ Provide pupils with training and opportunities to self & peer assess their work
- ✓ Inform them about their achievements and progress to date
- ✓ Identify areas of strength and development needs
- ✓ Actively involve them in their own learning and the feedback process, helping them set targets for improvement and development
- ✓ Develop motivation and self esteem thus enabling pupils to achieve success more readily

**For Teachers:**

- ✓ Use a variety of both summative and formative assessment strategies
- ✓ Inform pupils of successes and areas for development
- ✓ Should ensure pupils are focused on their Learning Intentions for the task
- ✓ Provide opportunities to keep track of children's progress and teachers' expectations
- ✓ Provide reliable, continuous information as a basis for monitoring & evaluating attainment
- ✓ Enable them to evaluate their own practice
- ✓ Indicate next steps in the learning and teaching programme
- ✓ Identify areas in which the learning and teaching could be improved through a variety of approaches
- ✓ Take account of needs of all pupils
- ✓ Identify appropriate pace of learning
- ✓ Help to monitor the appropriate use of resources
- ✓ Provide information on class/group organisation
- ✓ Actively involve pupils in the feedback process - written and oral

**For Parents:**

- ✓ Inform them of their child's progress and achievements on a regular basis
- ✓ Inform them of areas of strength and development needs
- ✓ Provide evidence of achievements and attainment
- ✓ Actively involve them in the feedback process

The Benchmark statements for each curriculum area are integral to planning and assessment and these are used effectively to assess children's progress within and achievement of a level of Curriculum for Excellence.

The broad expectations about progression are:

- Early level in early years and Primary 1 or later for some;
- First level to the end of Primary 4, but earlier or later for some;
- Second level to the end of Primary 7, but earlier or later for some;
- Third and fourth levels - S1 to S3 but earlier for some. The fourth level broadly aligns to SCQF level 4. The fourth level experiences and outcomes are intended to provide possibilities for choice and programmes of study will not include all of the fourth level outcomes.

These levels should not be seen as a ceiling on achievement. Teachers should consider the level above and below when planning learning, teaching and assessment.

**Gathering Assessment Information**

Assessment information may be gained through both formative and summative strategies. These different strategies will help indicate the effectiveness of learning and teaching, be used for recording and reporting purposes and help to indicate areas of strength and difficulty which will influence future planning. Assessments will help to identify where interventions are required to help pupils make better progress in their learning.

**Formative Strategies**

The effective use of formative assessment ensures that learners receive focused feedback on their learning. Pupils are made aware of their progress and can identify how they can improve. At Mosshead Primary School we actively support the Assessment is for Learning Policy promoted by the Scottish Executive and East Dunbartonshire Council. Assessment strategies underpin all learning and teaching. All marking and correction, verbal correction and interactions with pupils are

positive and encouraging. Teachers are mindful of the impact negative comments can have on a pupil's confidence.

Staff have, and will continue to develop, knowledge of a wide range of strategies to promote and implement formative assessment into the learning and teaching process.

These strategies include:

- ✓ Planning - it is important to start from an understanding of what the children know already and what the children then need to know.
- ✓ Sharing learning intentions and success criteria - sharing what we want children to learn and how they will know that they have succeeded. Reference to the learning intention and success criteria are key components of oral/written feedback.
- ✓ Effective Questioning - through questioning teachers can clarify what learning has taken place and establish what difficulties are being experienced.
- ✓ Questioning should include: Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), increased wait time, No-Hands up, Think Pair Share.
- ✓ Quality Feedback - feedback is a vital process. It lets the children know what they are doing well in and should provide them with strategies to improve. (e.g. two stars and a wish)
- ✓ Marking - should be positive, clear and appropriate to its purpose - it needs to offer positive benefits to staff and children and the outcomes need to be fed back into planning. Not all errors will be corrected when marking e.g. spelling may not be corrected in story writing if this was not part of the success criteria. If children have attempted to spell words but made errors and these are all corrected then that could have a negative effect of their self confidence and cause less confidence in future writing activities.
- ✓ Looking for reasons for errors rather than simply marking right/wrong.
- ✓ Self and Peer Assessment - if children are allowed to monitor their own progress against goals set they become more aware of how they learn and so become better learners. Children are trained how to reflect on learning intentions. Self/Peer assessment can be oral or written: traffic light stickers or coloured pens can be used. Comments can be written in the jotters by pupils (relating to learning intentions/ success criteria).

### **Summative Assessment**

These provide valuable information to teachers, pupils and parents on what knowledge and skills have been attained.

The strategies adopted may include:

- ✓ Weekly test - this might be used in areas such as spelling where teachers want to check if patterns have been understood or in mental Maths to revise and consolidate mental strategies.
- ✓ Periodic Assessment/ End of unit/topic assessments to assess learning over an extended period of time.
- ✓ End of Term Assessment - Summative assessments will be carried out each term and will assess learning across a variety of benchmarks. This will include aspects of Numeracy & Mathematics, Reading, Spelling and Writing. Results and an example of each assessment will be kept in the assessment folder. Results and pupils actual assessments should be passed on to the next teacher.
- ✓ P1 Baseline Assessments - these are carried out in the first term of children starting school
- ✓ Scottish National Standardised Assessments - these are carried out in Mathematics, Reading and Writing at P1, P4 and P7.

Standardised assessment information has to be seen as one piece of assessment information and must be used with other assessment data to track children's progress and inform the next steps in learning. Teachers should not 'teach to the test' as this will distort the results and not give an accurate picture of a child's attainment.

There may be further diagnostic assessment carried out to gain further evidence of specific strengths or specific needs of pupils. A pupil may be assessed if the teacher or parent has a concern about a particular area not progressing as expected. In such cases the Educational Psychologist may also support with analysis of assessment information and help devise a specific plan for that child.

### **Moderation**

In taking forward Curriculum for Excellence, teachers and practitioners need to have a shared understanding of standards and expectations. This shared understanding of the key assessment processes and of the standards which learners are expected to attain promotes consistency in relation to assessment and reporting. Staff have regular opportunities to collaborate in agreeing and shaping standards with reference to well considered samples of learner work.

Moderation takes place at regular intervals throughout the school (and at cluster level), and involves learners, teachers, other practitioners, promoted staff and quality improvement officers.

### **Tracking and Monitoring**

Teaching staff should ensure that assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching and that they regularly review themselves and their approaches with their pupils.

The Senior Management Team have the overall responsibility of monitoring the effectiveness of the practice throughout the school.

This will be done through:

- ✓ Classroom visits, both formal and informal
- ✓ Discussing with pupils what they are doing and why they are doing it
- ✓ Reviewing specific learning and teaching approaches
- ✓ Monitoring and commenting on plans submitted on a termly basis
- ✓ Professional discussion meetings with individual teachers to discuss planning, assessments and pupil progress, strengths and difficulties
- ✓ Pupil tracking of achievement and attainment
- ✓ Consultation meetings with the Educational Psychologist or other relevant professionals

All methods of assessment are used to get a rounded picture of the child's strengths and areas for development. Tracking groups and individuals is a key role for the SMT to ensure every pupil is making the best possible progress. Tracking data is used to inform school developments and to report to the local authority and Scottish Government about attainment in Mosshead Primary.

### **Recording**

Recording provides the platform from which teachers can base their reporting to others and is a mechanism for evaluating learning and teaching.

Recording should be selective and should focus on key learning aims. It should be carefully managed and appropriate to the activity.

Recording strategies may include:

- ✓ Comments on children's written work
- ✓ Helping children showcase their latest and best work for Learning Profiles
- ✓ Notes in daily/ weekly/ termly plans as appropriate
- ✓ Records of summative assessments

### **Reporting**

The purpose of reporting is to provide clear, positive and constructive feedback on learning and progress and an agreed agenda for discussion to support the next steps in learning. Its aim is to help support parents' engagement in their child's learning.

Reporting includes a range of activities and not just a written end of session report. These can include children presenting learning to parents, consultation meetings with parents and on-going oral discussions. The increased involvement of learners in assessment and reporting makes the process more manageable for teachers, as well as more meaningful for learners and their parents.

Feedback to pupils should:

- ✓ Include a variety of approaches: discussion, written, comments by other pupils
- ✓ Be informative
- ✓ Be positive
- ✓ Support the pupil in improving

Parents/Pupils receive information in a variety of ways and on a regular basis.

- ✓ Family Learning Grids go home termly with suggestions for pupils and their families to engage in learning at home related to learning in class for the term.
- ✓ Learning profiles go home termly and provide examples of latest and best work, targets and achievements.
- ✓ Sharing the Learning Events are held annually by each stage to showcase learning and parents are invited to classrooms following these to participate in activities with their child and see the learning they have been engaging in.
- ✓ Class Dojo Stories are used by teachers to share learning and communicate information to parents.
- ✓ Twitter is used to share learning and school activities with parents and the wider community.
- ✓ In September parents are invited to classrooms to meet the teacher and see their child's work in class at the start of the school year (Meet The Teacher).
- ✓ In November an oral report is given at Parent/Pupil/Teacher meetings as part of the discussion.
- ✓ In March/April a full written summative report is provided
- ✓ In May there is a further Parent/ Pupil/ Teacher meeting to discuss the written report and identify the way forward.

Parents are, of course, encouraged to contact the headteacher or depute headteachers if they have any concerns or questions regarding their child's learning.