

What is Assessment?

Assessment is an important part of learning and teaching. It helps to provide a picture of your child's progress and achievements. It also identifies next steps in learning.

Your child's teacher uses a wide range of assessments to reach an understanding of where your child is in relation to their learning and to national standards. Some of these are known as formative. These tend to be ongoing assessments often of classwork. They will also use summative assessments, for example at the end of particular blocks of learning. Standardised assessments are also used at particular points in your child's school career. By using a wide variety of assessments your child's teacher can develop a really comprehensive picture of your child's strengths and any areas for development. Importantly, this allows the school to put any supports in place quickly to ensure your child continues to make appropriate progress.

We strive to ensure that assessment fully involves learners as we know that learners learn best when:

- ◆ They understand what is to be learned and what is expected of them
- ◆ They are given feedback about the quality of their work and what they can do to make it better
- ◆ They are fully involved in deciding what to do next and who can give them help if they need it.

Formative Assessment Strategies

To ensure that learners are fully involved in their learning and assessment your child's teacher will use a variety of strategies as described below.

Learning Intentions and Success Criteria

In lessons, the teacher will share with the children the learning intentions of the lesson, that is - what they will learn. This ensures the children understand what knowledge or skills they are learning and why these are relevant.

When children understand the learning intentions it is then important that they understand what they are expected to do in order to be successful in the lesson or activity. This is called the success criteria and they are often agreed through discussion between the teacher and learners. The success criteria help children to assess their own work (self-assessment) and work together to look at each others' work (peer assessment).

Feedback

Your child's teacher will feedback to your child about their strengths and areas for development regularly. They will refer back to learning intentions and success criteria when they do so. This helps the teacher and learner to know what they need to do next to improve. Sometimes you might see written feedback on your child's work but often this feedback will form part of a discussion between teacher and learner.

Learners often use particular strategies to show their teacher how well they understand new learning, e.g. traffic lights, fist of five.

How do teachers assess?

Teachers use assessment information from a wide range of sources to monitor children's progress and plan next steps in learning.

Sources of evidence can include:

- ◆ Watching learners carrying out learning activities including practical work, performances, spoken presentations and talking.
- ◆ Records (spoken, written, video clips) created by children which may include self assessment and / or peer assessment or assessed by the teacher.
- ◆ Information from questioning.
- ◆ Written work.
- ◆ Products – such as examples of artwork or models.
- ◆ Reports from other people (parents, other children, other specialist staff) about what learners can do.
- ◆ Specific assessments which can be practical, digital , oral or written.

When do teachers assess?

Teachers are assessing learning all the time. They do this, for example, by watching and listening to learners every day. Teachers consider what learners write, say, make and do.

Teachers also carry out periodic assessments, for example, at the end of particular learning blocks, at points of transition and at particular points in a learner's school career.

All of this assessment information helps to provide a comprehensive picture of each learners' strengths and areas for development. This helps the teacher to plan future learning most effectively.

What are the Scottish National Standardised Assessments (SNSAs)?

Learners in P1, P4, P7 and S3 complete online standardised assessments in literacy and numeracy at a particular point during the school year.

These assessments help to provide diagnostic information which, like other assessment information, help teachers to plan future learning.

These assessments are not more important than the other assessments that take place throughout your child's time at school but they do help provide a comprehensive picture of progress when considered alongside other assessment information.

The assessments are as inclusive as possible to accommodate the needs of children and young people who require additional support.

There is no pass or fail and children and young people do not have to revise or prepare for these assessments.

Teacher Professional Judgement (TPJ)

In Scotland our school curriculum is known as Curriculum for Excellence. Within Curriculum for Excellence pupils progress through various levels in each curricular area. All children progress at different rates with some achieving levels earlier and some later. However the table below gives an indication of when most children would be expected to achieve each level.

Levels	By when?
Early	by the end of P1
First	by the end of P4
Second	by the end of P7
Third and Fourth	by the end of S3

Each year teachers in P1, P4, P7 and S3 submit data relating to the percentage of children at these stages who have achieved the expected level in literacy and numeracy. This is often referred to as Teacher Professional Judgement as it is based on all of the assessment information they have gathered and not any one single assessment.

This data is published nationally and is used to help plan improvements at school, local authority and national level.

If you have any questions about how your child is assessed, please contact your child's head teacher in the first instance.



Assessment at Sunnyside Primary School

A guide for parents and carers

February 2019