Carnegie Primary School

Assessment is for Learning



September 2022

Reviewed September 2023



**WHAT IS ASSESSMENT?**

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There are two kinds of assessment – *formative* and *summative*.

If we think about learning to drive, *formative assessment* happens during every lesson. The instructor says what manoeuvre is going to be taught and how it is done. The learner gives it a go and gets feedback about how it went. Both the learner and the instructor have a say in how things went and what can be done to improve. Afterwards the learner can try again – and keep trying until it is right!

*Summative assessment* is the driving test – no help and support- just to show what you know and prove what you can do.

Good teachers constantly assess learning, sometimes in a summative (*test)* situation and frequently on a day to day basis in the bustle of the busy classroom. They recognise the need to try to tune into learners’ minds, to work out what and how they are thinking and to use this to stimulate progress.

Teachers need to ensure a healthy balance between the *summative* assessment which ‘tests’ progress and the *formative* assessment which ensures that pupils’ learning grows and develops. Summative assessment is necessary but many of the ways in which we applied this testing had a negative impact on pupils’ learning experiences.

**‘ASSESSMENT IS FOR LEARNING’ (AifL)**

A major review of research on formative assessment was undertaken by Paul Black and Dylan Wiliam in the 1990s. Research clearly demonstrated that formative assessment had a major impact on raising attainment. It also highlighted that if learners are fully involved in thinking about their learning, they learn and achieve better.

Class teachers use a variety of AifL strategies to improve the learning of all the children.

##### **AifL IN PRACTICE**

At the heart of good assessment practice is the idea that learners learn best when:

* they understand clearly what they are trying to learn, 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 given advice about how to make improvements
* they are fully involved in deciding what needs to be done next and who can give them help if they need it.

#### STRATEGIES USED IN THE CLASSROOM

(some examples)

### Learning Intentions

* Teachers share, both orally and visually, WHAT pupils are learning.
* This is done at the beginning of a lesson /activity to focus the pupils’ thinking.
* The focus is on WHAT WE ARE LEARNING rather than WHAT WE ARE DOING.
* At the end of the lesson the Learning Intentions are revisited in a plenary session to enable teacher/ pupils to assess how the learning has progressed. This is an important feature in enabling the brain to retain information successfully.

**Success Criteria**

* Teachers and pupils together identify the Success Criteria ie “How will we know if we have achieved the learning intention?” This helps to engage pupils with their own learning helps focus the pupils’ minds on what they have to achieve.
* A pupil’s successes and next steps will be identified by the teacher in relation to the Success Criteria.

**Feedback relating to what has been learned**

Teachers share with pupils WHAT they are learning and HOW they will know that they have been successful in that learning (The Learning Intention and the Success Criteria). Feedback is in relation to these Learning Intentions and Success Criteria.

In peer and self assessment teachers are helping pupils to:

* Evaluate the end product of their learning – the work they have produced.
* Reflect on the learning process – how they felt about the learning process.

The benefits for pupils in this development include:

* gives them the confidence to be wrong and to make mistakes
* actively involves them in their own learning
* develops a sense of responsibility
* increases their self awareness of what they can do and how they learn

**Traffic Lights to Encourage Peer and Self Assessment**

The traffic light colours are used to enable pupils to assess whether they have understood / met the Success Criteria / enjoyed the work being undertaken.

**Mind Maps to Assess Learning**

Mind maps are used to enable pupils to reflect on what they have learned. Mind maps can be developed alone or with a partner/group to help pupils see key areas they have identified or missed and to link related ideas. These might, for example, be developed at the beginning and end of a topic to review what has been learned over a period of a term.

**‘Show Me Thumbs’**

Thumbs is a simple way of checking understanding, assessing a group’s opinion, looking for consensus, or testing how people are feeling. The usual convention is;

* Thumbs up – complete agreement
* Thumbs down – definitely not
* Thumbs wavering or horizontal – not certain

**Thinking Partners/Elbow Buddies.**

Pupils work together with buddies or response partners to peer assess work or think through problems/questions. A response partner is a pupil who offers an honest assessment of how a piece of work meets the Success Criteria and can help identify what needs to be done to improve that work.

**No Hands Up/ Wait Time**

Both of these strategies are used to encourage all children to participate fully in the activity and allows the teacher to assess individual pupils. These strategies also allow pupils to formulate full answers in their head without the pressure of those around them showing they are ready by raising their hands.

A CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE: THE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR 3-18

‘Assessment is for Learning’ principles and strategies underpin ‘Curriculum for Excellence’ and support the aim of all staff and pupils at Carnegie to raise attainment and develop skills for learning, skills for work and skills for life and enable the development of

* Successful learners
* Confident individuals
* Responsible citizens
* Effective contributors

###### A PARTNERSHIP PROCESS

The involvement of parents underpins the whole development of ‘Curriculum for Excellence’ and in particular the ‘Assessment is for Learning’ process.

At Carnegie we aim to ensure that parents and families are aware of how assessment is carried out in our school.

Further information on any aspects of assessment can be obtained from school staff directly and information in our Assessment is for Learning Family Information Leaflet.