**Support notes: assessment of literacy**

The following guidance is to support schools in their understanding of statutory requirements for literacy assessment and to enable them to make decisions about the types of assessment they will use in the intervening periods.

**The context of assessment**

All decisions around assessment should be made within the context of the key messages of assessment from Education Scotland, namely:

Assessment should be an integral part of the planning, learning and assessment cycle. Careful thought about the nature of assessments should be built into the planning process from the start and class assessments should form part of the collaborative moderation process.

Any decision about the level a pupil has reached should be made after evaluating a range of evidence from that pupil against the relevant Benchmarks, i.e. writing, reading or talking / listening.

Any summative type assessment, including the SNSAs, should only form 1 part of that range of evidence. No individual assessment can determine whether a pupil has achieved a level.

All assessments should feed into the next steps for the learner.

**Principles regarding assessment**

The SNSAs are the government’s national assessments. Information to support decisions about when and how to use them can be found at <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/ab/sali/> where you should click on the assessment and moderation tab.

In the years of the SNSA, the national guidance is that no other assessment needs to be used. In the intervening years, it is the schools’ own decision whether or not to use a commercially available assessment. Currently, all schools have access to the York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (YARC) which offers both a comprehension assessment and a single word / letter-sound analysis. It provides diagnostic information to support the learner as they progress. It is not compulsory to use this although it may help to support teacher judgement. There are also commercially available products available such as the NGRT from GL. However, the authority is not committed to supporting schools in the purchase of these.

Commercially available assessments may be used:

* By a whole class / stage to support planning of learning
* By individual pupils to identify need / measure impact of an intervention

Individual schools may choose to use an alternative assessment according to context. In choosing an assessment it is important to consider the extent to which the results can be used diagnostically to support further learning. Fundamental to any decision should be the teacher’s professional judgement about whether it feeds into the learning of that pupil.

**Summary: assessment should be focussed the needs of the child and should be diagnostic in nature.**

**Tracking / Monitoring**

While individual schools may have their own tracking and monitoring systems in place, schools should use SEEMis to track pupil progress three times over the course of the session. This tracking should be completed by key dates to enable the authority to have an overview of progress across all schools. These dates will be during:

* October
* February
* June

Schools may enter data at any point in the lead up to these key monitoring periods.

**Early primary tracking**

During P1 and the early stages of primary, schools should use the literacy trackers from ELC settings in conjunction with the Developmental Milestones Progress Tracker to consider where there are gaps in the foundation skills of their class, as stated within Argyll and Bute’s Early Acquisition of Literacy in P1 document. Practitioners may wish to continue to track the development of these foundation skills for selected pupils using the ELC literacy tracker during the early stages of P1 and beyond.

The Northern Alliance emerging literacy resources contain developmental continuums and tracking tools for the following areas:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| AREA | DEVELOPMENTAL CONTINUUM | TRACKING TOOL |
| Concepts of Print |  |  |
| Oral Language: expressive language |  |  |
| Oral language: understanding language |  |  |
| Phonological Awareness |  |  |
| Pre-Handwriting |  |  |

These resources can be found at ABLE2 from August 2018:

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/able/>

They can be found under The early acquisition of literacy / Foundation skills

The following table may help to support understanding of assessment and tracking:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Documents** | **Stage** | **Literacy assessment (completed at a time of the school’s own choosing)** | **Tracking** | **Notes on procedure** |
| Learning and Development Framework, 0-5 years  The early acquisition of Literacy in P1  Northern Alliance emerging literacy resources | ELC | Ongoing, based on observation and discussion. | * Developmental Milestones Progress Tracker * Literacy Tracker | ELC passes information to receiving primary.  Staged intervention in response to need. |
| Primary 1 | Emerging Literacy Phonological Awareness screening tool may be used on entry for all and repeated for selected pupils through the year.  SNSA | * ELC Literacy tracker as appropriate for individual pupils according to need. * Emerging literacy schools monitor and track against NA developmental continuums. * Non emerging literacy schools may choose to monitor and track against NA developmental continuums. * Tracking & monitoring of sound acquisition should take place throughout the year * SEEMis report on progress x3 | P1 teacher uses information from ELC to note gaps in foundation skills and identify individuals who may need further tracking in this area.  Staged intervention in response to need |
|  | Primary 2 | Schools may choose to use a commercially available assessment | * SEEMis report on progress x 3 * Schools may choose to use their own internal tracking procedures | Results from assessments are used diagnostically to inform ongoing planning and learning.  Next steps for individual pupils are shared with next teacher.  Staged intervention in response to need. |
| Primary 3 |
| Primary 4 | SNSA |
| Primary 5 | Schools may choose to use a commercially available assessment |
| Primary 6 |
| Primary 7 | SNSA |