

Luncarty Primary School

Assessment Policy

Session 2017
To be reviewed 2021

Assessment

Part A- Rationale

The overall purpose of assessment to support learning is to provide all partners with sufficiently dependable information and feedback to inform judgements, choices and decisions about learning, and to inform planning for improvement.

Assessment is an integral process in learning and teaching to ensure that everyone can improve their capacity to learn through effective teaching and planned opportunities for learning, taking account of what children already know, understand and can do.

Developing and delivering assessment principles and practices is one of the core functions of the school with the key purpose of improving the learning and achievement of each child.

Each of the various partners in education has an important role to play in generating and using dependable assessment information for these purposes.

Staff, children and parents will participate in **internal** assessment, both **formative** (the continuous process of gathering evidence of learning, providing timely feedback about strengths and development needs and planning next steps) and **summative** (arriving at a judgement at a point in time about the extent and quality of learning). Local authorities, HM Inspectors of Education (HMIE) and the Scottish Executive will also gather and use information from **external** assessment to inform judgements about the quality of learning and planning for improvement.

We are committed to:

- Developing both formative and summative assessment principles and practices from pre school to Primary 7 for all pupils.
- Developing A Curriculum for Excellence, clearly linking assessment to teaching and learning outcomes.
- Integrating assessment across curricular areas where appropriate.
- Establishing learning opportunities for self and peer assessment at all stages
- Engaging in partnerships with parents in relation to the assessment of their children.

We recognise that these commitments are inter-related and inter-dependent.

In taking this policy forwards we will:

- Develop work from In-Service training into classroom practice.
- Work to ensure learning opportunities reflect individual needs and circumstances, are flexible, and allow for progression in learning throughout the school and for life.
- Ensure the schools delivery and management of assessment of learning and for learning promotes equality, inclusion and diversity.
- Provide and target support and additional resources where assessment evidence identifies individuals and groups in most need to maximise their learning opportunities.
- Work closely with parents and carers to support them in their role as prime educators of their children.
- Develop clear learning outcomes as an integral part of the assessment process.

Part B Policy Principles

The key Principles

When using the term Assessment, we are including the following:

Summative Assessment.

Testing or making judgements of what success the learner has at the end of a piece of work mainly to judge the level achieved. This is recorded usually as a mark or score and is used to determine a result.

Diagnostic Assessment

Learners carrying through a test or task to identify criteria which has been achieved or areas which still have to be worked upon. This assessment is usually used for a specific purpose and the outcomes are used to plan next steps or specific learning tasks to support progress.

Formative Assessment

Integral to effective teaching and learning. This is real time in the classroom assessing how individuals are understanding what has been taught and learned, adjusting and modifying approaches to maximise the learning taking place. This is carried out by both teacher and learner to assist the learning process as it is happening.

Evaluative Assessment

Used to assess how effective a specific section of learning has been. It is used to mainly alter and modify approaches to promote more effective teaching for learning.

Assessment and the Curriculum

The curriculum describes the total of the planned learning experiences for classes, groups and individuals. The curriculum will be challenging, flexible and appropriate to the learners' needs. Assessment will be integral to developments with A Curriculum for Excellence, which will be inclusive, broad and balanced and will take account of:

- The age and stages of the learners from pre- school to Primary 7.
- The potential of existing and new technologies to enrich teaching and learning and assessment.
- The range of people, both internal and external involved in educating and assessing children.

Research will inform approaches to assessment and the delivery of leaning and teaching which are:

- Meaningful and relevant.
- Motivating.
- Engaging.

And which take place within an environment where:

- There is mutual trust and respect.
- Learners are involved.
- Experiential learning is valued.
- There are clear learning goals and feedback informs next steps in learning.

Teachers will be supported in developing new approaches, innovative thinking and practice within the changing social and cultural context of education.

Through training, development and personal support teachers will be encouraged to:

- Foster the active engagement of learners.
- Enhance the motivation of learners.
- Ensure meaningful context for learning and assessment for learning.
- Make cross curricular links explicit.
- Harness the potential of co-operative and collaborative learning.
- Organise teaching, learning and assessment effectively.
- Work with greater freedom and greater responsibility in meeting the needs of learners.
- Work in an inter-disciplinary way.

Part C –Policy Outcomes

The key outcomes for assessment are based on the following:

Planning

Assessment for learning will be part of effective planning of learning and teaching.

Planning has to

- Provide opportunities for both the learner and teacher to obtain and use information about progress towards learning goals.
- Be flexible to respond to initial and emerging ideas and skills.
- Include strategies to ensure that learners understand the goals they are pursuing and the criteria that will be applied in assessing their work.
- Consider how learners receive their feedback and how they will take part in assessing their learning.

Teaching and Learning

Assessment For learning will be recognised as central to classroom practice. Much of what teachers and learners do can be described as assessment.

That is

- Tasks and effective questioning prompt learners to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills.
- What learners say and do is observed and interpreted, judgements are made about how learning can be improved.
- These assessment processes are an essential part of everyday classroom practice and involve both the teacher and learners in reflection, dialogue and decision making.
- Ensuring learners understand what it is they are trying to achieve by sharing learning intentions and success criteria.

Recording

Recording is an integral part of the assessment process and the information recorded has to be useful and purposeful and linked clearly to progress in learning. The most important characteristic of any record should be its usefulness in informing future learning.

Recording of any assessment information will follow these principles

- Link to clear learning outcomes and success criteria
- Information should pinpoint the learners' strengths and development needs taking account of all educational opportunities and recognising their efforts and achievements.
- Should be formative as learning takes place and summative at appropriate times in the school year.
- Used as a basis for feedback to pupils, parents and other teachers, the Head Teacher and agencies working with the learner.

Teachers should maintain a record of information on each learner's progress. This will include:

- Notes recorded on plans or on pupils' work
- Summative records when evaluating a block of teaching. This record may integrate more than one curricular area.
- Pupil profiles of work to evidence their progress within the curriculum.
- End of year records which will be issued as the written report to parents.

Pupil Profiles

Pupil profiles should contain a range of evidence of progress in both curricular and personal achievements. These profiles should be maintained throughout the school year and pupils themselves should contribute to their evidence of progress.

Profiles should

- Be related to what the children have attained and achieved
- Have a range of evidence for all curricular areas, which can include photographic evidence, photocopied work / comments.
- Include work selected by the learners themselves which enhances self and peer assessment principles.
- Include any National Assessments
- Include any external evidence (e.g. letters from outside agencies , newspapers etc)
- Be accessible to other professionals and the Head Teacher for monitoring purposes.

* P7 transition profiles contain the most recent National Assessment and / or any other relevant information related to the individual. This is subject to change as transition arrangements are updated in the future.

Feedback and Reporting

Communicating assessment feedback to both pupils and parents is an essential part of the assessment process. Learners need feedback and guidance in order to progress. Assessment should be sensitive and constructive as any assessment has an emotional impact.

Feedback can be verbal or written and should

- Be as constructive as possible as any comments, marks, grades can have an impact on learner's confidence and enthusiasm.
- focus on the work rather than the person as this is more constructive for learning and motivation.
- encourage learning and emphasise progress and achievement and focus on next steps in order to improve or progress.
- Use terms that learners can understand, provide examples of how the criteria can be met in practice and engage the learner in self or peer assessment.

Marking Guidelines (Appendix 1)

Self and Peer Assessment

Assessment for learning develops learners' capacity for self assessment so they can become reflective and self engaging.

Self and peer assessment mean pupils giving each other ongoing support and feedback while they are learning, focussing on the process of learning and not just the outcomes.

Children need to learn how to work, learn and live together and teachers will support and train pupils to develop more specific skills involved in self and peer assessment in order to

- Develop independent learners who have the ability to seek out and gain new skills, new knowledge and new understandings.
- Engage in self reflection and identify next steps in their learning.
- Allow pupils to work together skilfully and responsibly, so the quality of support they give each other can be higher.
- Foster the deeper levels of self and peer assessment- where pupils feel able to share their thoughts and feelings about learning with each other- develops self motivation and positive mindset.
(studies from Munns and Woodward 2006)
- Develop confidence and the expectation that they can say what they found difficult or what they don't understand.

Evaluation

Both formative and summative assessment will give the teacher clear first-hand information not only about the learners but also about the effectiveness of the teaching and learning opportunities as they are happening whilst making observations, questioning and discussion.

For effective evaluation it is important to

- Take time to observe the learners.
- Make use of learning outcomes information in relation to the class, group or individual success.
- Self reflect and record this as part of the evaluation process.
- Take account of information from evaluations and use this for planning teaching and learning.

Part D – Responsibilities

Teachers will:

- Develop professional knowledge and skill to plan for assessment and use current research on effective assessment strategies.
- Plan to share learning outcomes and success criteria with the learners.
- Ensure learners are as aware of the ‘how’ to learn as they are of the ‘what’.
- Observe learning, analyse and interpret the evidence of learning for planning for effective teaching and learning.
- Give constructive feedback to learners and support learners in self assessment.
- Record assessment information for their own use in planning next steps and for monitoring purposes by the Head Teacher, Service Manager, Authority and HMIe.

The Head Teacher will:

- Develop professional knowledge and promote understanding of current research on assessment strategies and provide opportunities for teachers to progress these skills which will include the key aspects of A.I.F.L.
- Ensure staff are supported in developing skills for assessment through in service and CPD giving guidance on the appropriate range of opportunities.
- Monitor the quality of pupil assessment, its impact on learners and provide feedback to teachers.
- Discuss regularly identified pupils and prioritise support and resources for them to maximise their progress.
- Communicate clearly to parents, assessment policy and practice within the school.
- Give constructive feedback to learners and support learners in self assessment.
- Audit and evaluate whole school progress annually
- Track all pupils’ progress and analyse and interpret information.
- Establish effective transition arrangements at all stages for teachers to transfer assessment information at the end of the school year.

A Curriculum for Excellence

All the assessment arrangements described in this policy will be adjusted in the future as necessary, to reflect changes made as part of review work flowing from *A Curriculum for Excellence*.

Appendix 1: Marking Guidelines

Marking is part of our feedback to children concentrating on what the children can do and help them understand any mistakes they have made. The aim of marking is to provide an opportunity for children to focus on their work and understand why they have made mistakes.

Marking should

- Be done with the children during the lesson however there are aspects of work which take more time and need to be marked away from the children. When this happens children should be given time to look at the marked work and read or discuss with the marker any comments.
- Be formative – help the learners to be clear about what they can do, where they have gone wrong and how they can improve.
- Be focussed and give a clear idea of what has been achieved
- Encourage and give confidence to the learners for tackling new work
- Make clear expectations and acknowledge well presented work
- Homework marking should be incorporated into this marking practice.

Both teachers and pupils should be involved in marking

Marking by the class teacher:

- Concise formative comments relating to the work, including comments on accuracy or presentation.
- Any self marking should be sampled
- Make use of common problems to help with future planning.
- Exercise questions can be ticked and the errors indicated by a dot
- Written work e.g. story writing should have concise comments where needed.

Marking by the pupils

- Should be accurate and honest
- Should offer an opportunity for pupils to evaluate their understanding and acknowledge success in relation to the outcomes should be encouraged.

It is important that when marking and giving feedback staff refer to ‘A practical Guide for primary teachers ‘Making Feedback Count’.

Marking Code

There is a general marking code, which will be used throughout the school. The amount of use of this code will vary from stage to stage and pupils within each stage.

- . indicates errors
- Sp –spelling or underlining particular words.
- C -Capital
- P – Punctuation (specific symbols for ? , ; if required)
- NP- New paragraph or / to indicate where the new paragraph should be
- See me or (T) to indicate the pupil has to see the teacher about work.
- ^ omission
- ? questioning sense or meaning of written work
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