

Chapter 2: Assessment, recording and reporting

This chapter focuses on:

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| 1.1 What form statutory assessment takes; | 1.7 How you might know if children are working at the appropriate level; |
| 1.2 What the key stage 1 and key stage 2 tests consist of; | 1.8 What records to keep; |
| 1.3 What non-statutory tests are available; | 1.9 What records should be available to you; |
| 1.4 What teacher assessment is; | 1.10 When and how to report on children's progress; |
| 1.5 The kinds of assessment you should make; | 1.11 What the difference is between assessment of learning and assessment <i>for</i> learning. |
| 1.6 What methods you might use to assess children's learning; | |

1.1 WHAT FORM DOES STATUTORY ASSESSMENT TAKE?

Baseline assessment

www.dfes.gov.uk/a-z/BASELINE_ASSESSMENT.html

For more information on baseline assessment see 'Getting Started' and 'Filling the Gaps' in this series

A baseline assessment is carried out within seven weeks of a child starting at primary school. Standard tests are used. The information gained gives a benchmark against which children's abilities on entering the compulsory stage of education may be measured. It also helps the teacher to plan appropriate teaching.

National Curriculum tests

www.qca.org.uk/ca/tests

There is a statutory requirement to assess children formally in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 (Year 2) and in English, mathematics and science at the end of key stage 2 (Year 6). NC tests and tasks are provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and undertaken by children in these year groups in May of each year. In addition, teacher assessment takes place.

1.2 WHAT DO THE TESTS CONSIST OF?

Key stage 1

www.dfes.gov.uk/circulars/6_98/summary.htm

The National Curriculum tests for Year 2 include:

- Reading task, levels 1–2;
- Reading comprehension test, level 2;
- Reading comprehension test, level 3;
- Writing task, levels 1–3;
- Spelling test, levels (1) 2–3;
- Mathematics task, level 1;
- Mathematics test, levels 2–3.



Reading

Baseline Assessment of Pupils Starting Primary School, Circular 6/98 (1998); Curriculum and Assessment (QCA)

For the latest information on statutory requirements, read the current version of *Arrangements for Statutory Testing (QCA, annually)*.

The results of these tests are expressed as a National Curriculum level for each child. See page 20 for the expected attainment levels for the majority of children.

Key Stage 2

All children take the same spelling and writing tests, but the teacher decides at which level each child should be tested in reading and mathematics. Children who achieve a very high score in the level 3 tests should also be assessed at level 4 or above through the key stage 2 tests.

The National Curriculum tests for Year 6 include:

- Reading test, levels 3–5;
- Writing test, levels 3–5;
- Spelling and handwriting test, levels 3–5;
- English extension test, level 6;
- Mathematics test A, levels 3–5;
- Mathematics test B, levels 3–5;
- Mental arithmetic, levels 3–5;
- Mathematics extension test, level 6;
- Science test A, levels 3–5;
- Science test B, levels 3–5;
- Science extension test, level 6.

I.3 WHAT OTHER NON-STATUTORY TESTS ARE RECOMMENDED?

www.qca.org.uk/ca/tests/optional/index.asp

QCA publishes non-statutory tests in English and mathematics for Years 3, 4 and 5 and levels 1 and 2 tasks. Most schools use these to track children's progress year by year.

I.4 WHAT IS TEACHER ASSESSMENT?

In addition to national testing in Years 2 and 6, teacher assessment of each child's progress is required. These assessments are made against the level descriptions in the National Curriculum. Teachers should use their knowledge of a child's work to judge which level description best fits a child's performance across different contexts. Up-to-date records must be kept of each child's attainment and it is useful to keep samples of the children's work as evidence of attainment.

I.5 WHAT KIND OF ASSESSMENTS SHOULD I MAKE?

www.qca.org.uk/ca/5-14/afl/definitions.asp

There are three types of assessment that should be made. They correspond to, and provide information that will assist with, short-, medium- and long-term stages of planning. You will need to know the purpose and nature of each of them because, depending on the timing and length of employment in a school, you may be required to carry them all out.

What is short-term assessment?

You will undertake short-term assessments informally in every lesson. You will use them to give you information that will help you to adjust subsequent lesson plans and to brief adult helpers.

www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/literacy/about/?a=whole_article&art_id=3336

When marking and monitoring children's work, provide constructive oral or written feedback that acknowledges their successes, helps them see what they need to do to improve further and sets them targets to achieve.

Short-term assessment is a continuous process and should be part of your day-to-day work with the class. It also informs your planning ('formative assessment'). It helps you to make judgements about children's progress against targets you have set for (and with) them. Because progress is being assessed over short periods, these targets will be expressed in much smaller steps than NC levels.

A target might be 'to recognise capital letters'. Such targets are vital in Individual Education Plans (IEP) for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

English example



Optional Task

List the practical ways in which you can plan for the assessment of children's progress during your teaching of English. For example, how can you assess children's progress during whole-class activities and guided reading and writing activities with groups of children, and after independent work or work with other adults?

You will find Chapter 4: Sections 3, 4 and 9 useful.

Science example

A target might be 'to name four similarities between humans and other mammals'.



Optional Task

List the ways in which you can assess children's attainment and progress during your teaching of science. For example, during whole-class activities and group work, and after independent work or work with another adult.

You will find Chapter 6: Sections 6, 8 and 10 useful.

Marking children's work is an important part of formative assessment: it should be consistent with the school's policy on marking.

Medium-term assessments should be made to review and record the progress children are making against the key objectives. Doing this approximately every half-term will allow you to judge children's progress over time and against any individual targets, including those in IEPs. It will also help you to plan work for the next half-term.

What is medium-term assessment?

Long-term assessment for children in all year groups is important, but only statutory in Years 2 and 6. These assessments take place at the end of each year. They provide information on how successfully the objectives for the year have been met and how well children are progressing. Assessments help the school to set targets for the NC tests in future years. Schools use a variety of standard tests for this purpose.

What is long-term assessment?

I.6 HOW CAN I ASSESS CHILDREN'S LEARNING IN LESSONS?

You can use a variety of methods to assess children's learning. These include:

- observing children;
- noting children's reactions to work;
- discussing work and asking questions;
- setting assessment activities;
- using tests as part of a lesson or as homework.

I.7 HOW CAN I TELL WHETHER CHILDREN ARE ACHIEVING AS WELL AS THEY SHOULD?

www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/literacy/teaching_resources/?y=0&t=0&f=l&nls=fw

www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/numeracy/teaching_resources/?sec=0

The National Curriculum level descriptions, the National Literacy Strategy *Framework for teaching from Reception to Year 6* and the *Framework for teaching mathematics from Reception to Year 6* objectives for each year group will give you an indication of the level of achievement expected. You should also observe children working. If they are not fully engaged in their tasks, it may be that they are struggling because the work is too difficult, or bored because it is too easy.

I.8 SHOULD I KEEP ANY RECORDS OF THE ASSESSMENTS I MAKE?

The recording of short-term assessments does not need to be extensive. It is helpful to write brief evaluative comments about the class's response at the end of each unit of work. It is also useful to make notes on particular children whose performances are exceptional, either because they exceed or because they fall below your expectations.

Keeping records of medium-term assessments will be helpful when you, or the regular teacher, make end-of-year assessments. A suggested format for record keeping is given on page 35 of the *Framework for teaching mathematics from Reception to Year 6*. This kind of record will be beneficial to your class's next teacher and should be passed on. Long-term assessments should be recorded and used as the basis for writing reports and reporting to parents. Be sure to pass on any assessment records you have made to the class teacher or assessment co-ordinator when you leave the school.

I.9 WHAT RECORDS OF CHILDREN'S ACHIEVEMENT ARE AVAILABLE AND HOW MIGHT THEY BE USEFUL TO ME?

End-of-key-stage and end-of-year assessments will help you to gain an overview of children's levels of achievement and enable you to judge their performance in relation to national expectations. If the class teacher has maintained records of achievement in relation to the key objectives in some or all of the subjects, ask to see them, as they will give you more detailed information about each child.

1.10 WHAT MUST BE RECORDED AND WHAT MUST BE REPORTED AND TO WHOM?

The results of teacher assessments and NC tests in English in Years 2 and 6 must be recorded on the forms supplied by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and then sent to the DfES. These results enable the DfES to monitor national and local trends in children's progress.

A summary of the English, mathematics and science tests and teacher assessment results must be published by each school in its prospectus and governors' annual report, alongside national comparative assessments for the previous year.

Each school is required to set end-of-key-stage attainment targets, expressed as a percentage of children who are expected to achieve different levels of attainment. These are then broken down into curricular targets in each year group. Curricular targets are usually linked to the NLS/NNS *Framework* objectives and act as a signpost towards achieving the school's quantitative targets.

A written comment on attainment, progress and activities covered in English, mathematics and science must be entered on the report on each child, which is sent annually to parents. At the end of Years 2 and 6, each child's level in English, mathematics and science must also be included.

1.11 WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 'ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING' AND 'ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING'?



Reading

Read about assessment for learning on the QCA website: www.qca.org.uk/ca/5-14/afl/

Assessment **for** learning is the process of using classroom assessment to improve learning, whereas assessment **of** learning is the measurement of what children can do.

In assessment **for** learning:

- teachers share learning targets with children;
- children know and recognise the standards to which they should aim;
- there is feedback that leads children to identify what they should do next in order to improve;
- it is assumed that every child can improve;
- children review and reflect on their performance and progress with teachers and they develop skills in self-assessment.

The QCA assessment for learning website is an invaluable resource including useful definitions on terms.



Optional Task

When you have completed the lesson plan in *Chapter 4: Section 4: Planning and organising the Literacy Hour*, add notes as to how you can accommodate assessment for learning in your teaching.

There are different types of assessment, each serves a different and distinct purpose and each has its place.

<p>Formative assessment (TA) Assessment for Learning</p> <p>happens all the time in the classroom. It is rooted in self-referencing; a pupil needs to know where s/he is and understand not only where s/he wants to be but also how to ‘fill the gap’.</p> <p>This involves both the teacher and the pupil in a process of continual reflection and review about progress.</p> <p>When teachers and peers provide quality feedback, pupils are empowered to take appropriate action.</p> <p>Teachers adjust their plans in response to formative assessment.</p>	<p>Summative assessment (TA) Assessment of Learning</p> <p>is carried out at the end of a unit or year or key stage or when a pupil is leaving the school, in order to make judgements about pupils’ performance in relation to national standards. TA is rooted in level descriptions but is often given a numerical value. Teachers find standardisation and moderation meetings important quality assurance opportunities.</p> <p>TA is a valuable part of the data held and used for management purposes.</p>	<p>National Curriculum tests and tasks Assessment of Learning</p> <p>provide a standard ‘snapshot’ of attainment at the end of key stages.</p> <p>A pupil’s performance is described in relation to the national standards – levels.</p> <p>The optional tests for years 3, 4 and 5 also provide summative assessment information for schools to use to monitor their school’s performance.</p>
<p>Teachers often use information about children’s performance in summative tests and their Teacher Assessments formatively.</p>		

TA = Teacher Assessment

Much recent research indicates that effective formative assessment is a key factor in raising pupils’ standards of achievement.

Central to formative assessment, or ‘assessment for learning’ is that it:

- is embedded in the teaching and learning process of which it is an essential part;
- shares learning goals with pupils;
- helps pupils to know and to recognise the standards to aim for;
- provides feedback which leads pupils to identify what they should do next to improve;
- has a commitment that every pupil can improve;
- involves both teacher and pupils reviewing and reflecting on pupils’ performance and progress;
- involves pupils in self-assessment.