



Primary Assessment Policy

Policy Owner: Deborah Caws

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Introduction

Assessment is an integral vehicle in defining and providing curricula appropriate to all learners. All teachers have a statutory responsibility for assessment which is linked to teaching standards (two and six): they must be accountable for pupils' progress, outcomes and attainment. Further, it is through appropriate assessment systems that strategic planning, target setting and performance management cycles are set on an annual basis. Essentially, the professional activity of assessment will identify the schools' strengths and weaknesses, driving the performance and progress each school makes while ensuring relevant teaching standards are upheld.

Scope

This policy applies to all directors, governors, staff, pupils of the Drapers' Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). It also applies to parents and carers of pupils at schools within the MAT, who formally confirm that they will abide by our policies when their children join our schools.

Each school within the MAT must ensure that the contents of this policy are communicated to all staff. This communication must be evidenced in writing and refreshed on an annual basis. All parents must formally accept this policy when their children join a MAT school and this acceptance must be evidenced in writing through the Home-School Agreement. The contents of this policy must be drawn to the attention of all visitors to the school when they are admitted.

Each school within the MAT must publish this policy on its website.

Definitions

Child	Anyone under the age of 18
COO	Chief Operating Officer
LGB	Local Governing Body, with delegated powers of governance from the board of the MAT.
MAT	Drapers' Multi-Academy Trust.
Parent Carers).	Those having parental responsibility for the care of a Child (including Carers).
Pupil	Anyone enrolled at a MAT school (including students in Years 12 and 13).
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
MLT	Middle Leadership Team
Staff	Anyone employed by the MAT
DM	Development Matters – Early Years' curriculum and assessment tool
SAS	Symphony Assessment System – agreed assessment tool for Primary phases
SIMs	School data base provided by CAPITA to each MAT school
AfL	Assessment for Learning
SENDS	Special educational needs and disabilities
NC	National Curriculum

Policy

Assessment Aims and Purposes

There are three main purposes of assessment we use in primary schools;

- Assessment for learning (**formative**)
- Assessment of learning (**Summative**)
- Assessment for diagnosing strengths and weaknesses (**diagnostic**)

Formative Approach

Assessment for learning is viewed as a continuous process involving the seeking and interpreting of evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go next and which is the best way to get there. The evidence will come from a range of sources including teacher knowledge, observations of what learners do and discussions with pupils about their learning as well as scrutiny of class work against curriculum foci.

Teachers will set next steps for pupils either verbally or through marking, following the agreed marking policy. It will be sensitive and constructive, taking into account the learning styles and needs of each individual. Pupils will have clear learning intentions and success criteria explained to them through contexts appropriate to their age, the subject and their experiences which enable them to self-assess and reflect on their own progress

Assessment for Learning AfL – *in action*

This policy fosters the ethos that the term ‘assessment’ is based on the Black and William definition in that it “...refers to all those activities undertaken by teachers and their students in assessing themselves, which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged,” (Black and William, 1998).

Pupils must be at the heart of all assessments carried out: they must know ‘where they are’, and ‘what they must do next’ in order to make good progress across the curriculum and teachers in each school will promote this ethos in the following way;

- AfL will feature as part of curriculum planning.
- Teachers will focus on *how* pupils learn when planning.
- AfL will be recognised as central to classroom practice.
- AfL will be regarded as a key professional skill for teachers.
- It should be sensitive and constructive; teachers will be aware that any assessment has a potential emotional impact.
- Teachers will take account of the importance of learners’ motivation.
- Teachers will promote commitment to learning goals and a shared understanding between teachers and pupils of the criteria by which pupils are assessed.

Teachers will recognise that “...*the most powerful educational tool for raising achievement and preparing children to be lifelong learners, in any context, is formative assessment...*” (Clarke, 2014). Key classroom strategies will be seen in each class as follows;

- Learning intentions and success criteria are made explicit in planning and lesson delivery.
- Learning intentions (skills or knowledge) and tasks (contexts) are separated and clearly understood by pupils.
- Systems of next-step marking are in place which enable pupils’ self- and peer-assess against learning intentions and success criteria as well as respond to teacher feedback appropriately.
- Systems of layered curricular and on-going target setting and assessment are in place in which children have group targets for the core subjects, but have individual, on-going targets set throughout the year.
- High-quality, effective questioning features as every-day teaching in each classroom.

Summative Approach

Formal methods of assessment will be used to support teacher judgements when assigning grades for the core subjects. Typically, these will consist of termly tests in the core areas of Reading, Mathematics and Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS). Teachers may use other summative tools such as checklists, weekly multiplication tables or spellings tests for example. It will be part of teacher professional responsibilities to keep records and track pupils' results from any summative tests and use it to inform teacher assessment.

Diagnostic Approach

There are some occasions which require teachers to use a range of summative and formative tools to investigate potential barriers which inhibit individual or small groups of pupils from making progress. For example, teachers may need to find gaps in learning for pupils with SENDs when planning appropriate intervention.

With all approaches to assessment, the use of the information gained will be to inform standards and curriculum planning. Senior and middle leaders will also use assessment outcomes to plan strategically in terms of provision, resources and CPD needs of staff.

Standardisation and Moderation

In light of recent national reforms (2014) requiring schools to devise their own or adopt published assessment systems, this policy refers to the following tracking and monitoring tools;

- Development Matters – used in EYFS
- Symphony Assessment System (SAS) – KS1 and KS2

With both, there is need to ensure teachers and practitioners are aware of and agree to certain standards of attainment relevant to the age and developmental stage of each year group. Development Matters provides teachers with sets of achievement foci linked to chronological development set out in age bands. SAS provides teachers with sets of assessment foci linked to the National Curriculum which ensure coverage, and is a tool designed to provide attainment grades in each NC subject. Teachers will use moderation opportunities to ensure they agree on and are aware of what attainment looks like at each age band (Development Matters) or grade within SAS.

Moderation opportunities will be planned for in order for teachers to meet and ensure their methods of assessment (gathering of evidence towards their assessment judgements) are accurate and use of assessment tools is consistent across and between schools. Good practice will ensure teachers meet within each school, across phases, schools and within the locality throughout the year. Records from moderation opportunities will be kept and used as evidence towards on-going and summative teacher assessment.

Roles and Responsibilities

In each school, the leadership structure will identify an Assessment Leader who will have responsibility to ensure this policy is upheld and school procedures for assessment are transparent, manageable (in terms of workloads) and useful in terms of informing practice. The assessment leader will take responsibility for ensuring appropriate tracking and monitoring systems are in place which facilitates data analysis of each curricular area.

The headteacher, supported by the Assessment Leader and the SLT will oversee and ensure a timetable of termly assessment activities; produce appropriate reports for all stakeholders (e.g. the LGB, external moderators, or OfSTED), and ensure that parents receive regular reports on progress and attainment for their children. In addition, the headteacher has responsibility to ensure national assessment procedures are adhered to (EYFSP, Phonics Check and SATs for example), ensuring assessment and reporting arrangements are reviewed annually.

Teachers have a professional responsibility to ensure they make best use of assessment systems and tools in place to inform curricular and lesson planning, monitor and track the progress of the pupils in their classes, taking into account pupils' emerging needs. They will ensure pupils receive regular feedback on their learning in a variety of ways: orally, through accurate marking and at Pupil Progress Interviews.

Target Setting and Performance Management

Each school will have its own timetable for performance management reviews which will make good use of assessment data analysis in setting challenging performance targets which feed into school improvement planning and are linked to performance management cycles.

Teachers will use assessment evidence and data to set curricular targets for all pupils in the core subject areas, keeping accurate records of progress towards them. Targets will be shared with pupils and parents in a number of ways as set out in the assessment cycle for each school: for example, through Pupil Progress Interviews, in pupils' books and at parents' consultations.

Review

23. The policy owner must keep up to date with relevant legislation and government guidance and update this policy whenever necessary. The board of the MAT must approve the revised version.
24. The policy owner must review the policy at the end of July each year and either submit a revised policy for board approval or confirm in writing to the COO that the current version of this policy is still fit for purpose.
25. The COO must submit a list of all confirmed policies to the board at the first meeting of each new academic year.

The MAT board must formally review and re-approve this policy every five years.