

Mount Street Infants and Nursery School Assessment for Learning Policy

Introduction

Current thinking about learning acknowledges that children must ultimately be responsible for their learning since no one else can do it for them. Thus assessment for learning must involve children, so as to provide them with information about how well they are doing and guide their subsequent efforts. Much of this information will come as feedback from the teacher. This feedback is often through marking and verbal intervention to children by the teacher. This policy sets out the strategies that teachers at Mount Street Infant and Nursery School will use in the assessment for learning process and incorporates the marking policy.

Principles and Purposes of Assessment

At Mount Street Infant and Nursery School we recognise that there are different forms of assessment:

- assessment **for** learning, sometimes known as formative assessment, based on the day to day assessments of children's attainment;
- summative or assessment **of** learning, which includes assessments made at the end of a unit of work, the end of an academic year or the statutory assessments made at the end of a Key Stage;
- ipsative, which involves a comparison of current and past attainment of a particular child, irrespective of the attainment of others;
- diagnostic, used to provide specific information relating to children's strengths and weaknesses.

We often use assessment for learning when making decisions about children's learning. These assessments are very important as they are used to inform future planning for the class, groups, or individual children. In addition some planned activities will be used to assess children in order to: -

- plan the way forward
- monitor progress
- diagnose or identify particular needs which might include SEN
- involve children in setting targets for learning.

Responsibilities

The governing body is committed to the importance of effective assessment for learning. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher, supported by the assessment co-ordinator to ensure the implementation of this policy and guidance. Teachers are required to:

- Provide feedback (written (when appropriate) and oral) to children to encourage dialogue and develop their self-assessment skills.
- Expectations should be shared with children as learning objectives (often these will be linked to the criteria in the National Curriculum or Primary Strategies and may require translation). These expectations will be reflected in the feedback teachers give.

The Co-ordinator is responsible for the following:-

- Keeping the Headteacher informed of any developments in National Assessment policy and providing the necessary information for monitoring of learning throughout the school.
- Updating the Assessment Policy;
- Planning and organising meetings where all staff can agree common objectives and discuss the development and implementation of the assessment policy;
- Monitoring assessment through looking at teachers planning, records, reports, marking and samples of children's work.;
- To organise meetings to agree criteria for giving feedback and to moderate work;
- Liaison with subject leaders and the Foundation Stage Co-ordinator and working with them as subjects are identified for development to ensure consistency in assessment using the School Portfolio of Agreed Assessed Work;
- Liaison with colleagues in other key stages to ensure continuity and consistency;
- Ensuring that statutory requirements are met including that administration of baseline and end of key stage assessments;
- Maintaining a resource of materials to support assessment
- Keeping up-to-date with local and national developments relating to assessment;
- Analysing statutory and optional tests results to identify strength and weaknesses and plan future work to close the gap between what children know and what they need to know.
- To update the Governing body on any developments and changes in assessment policy and practice.
- Ensuring all staff have the relevant documents, training and information to fulfil legal statutory requirements for assessment at the end of each Key Stage.

Characteristics of Assessment for learning

Recent research shows that effective assessment for learning is a key factor in raising childrens' standards of achievement. At Mount Street Infant and Nursery School we aim to ensure that teachers

- embed this policy in the teaching and learning process;
- share learning intentions with children;
- help children to know and to recognise the success criteria to aim for;

- provide feedback which leads children to identify what they should do next to improve;
- have a commitment that every child can improve;
- involve teachers, parents and children in reviewing and reflecting on children's' performance and progress;
- involve children in being able to assess themselves where appropriate;
- adjust teaching to take account of the results of assessment.

This will be done by:

- observing children – this includes listening to how they describe their work and their reasoning;
- questioning, using open questions, phrased to invite children to explore their ideas and reasoning;
- setting tasks in a way which requires children to use certain skills or apply ideas;
- asking children to communicate their thinking through drawings, artefacts, actions, role play, as well as writing;
- discussing words and how they are being used.

Classroom Practice

At Mount Street Infant and Nursery School, assessment for learning will take place using the following strategies:

1. By sharing the learning intention
2. Developing and sharing the success criteria
3. Using rich questioning
4. Using self assessment and peer assessment when appropriate
5. By providing effective feedback and marking

These strategies will be carried out by following the statements below:

1. Sharing the Learning Objective

The Learning Objective (WALT – We are learning to) is what teachers hope children will know, understand or be able to do by the end of the lesson or set of lessons.

Teachers will:

- Display the Learning Objective (WALT) at the start of every lesson, clarifying into child friendly language where appropriate to create a matched task that will fulfil the learning objective.
- Share the learning objective to enable the child to know the purpose of the activity, thus transferring some of the responsibility for the learning from the teacher to the child.

2. Develop and Share Success Criteria

To encourage children to take responsibility for their learning,

Teachers will:

- explain and generate the success criteria (key learning points or WILF – What I’m Looking For)) for the task in hand
- ensure the children have interpreted the expectations so they can apply them as they are working, thus making their own judgements against the criteria before any teacher assessment takes place.
- Describe what they are looking for in the lesson so that pupils know the standards they are aiming for and have key areas of focus when carrying out the task thus enabling them to begin the process of self-evaluation.

3. Develop Rich Questioning

Teachers will develop rich questioning skills within the children by:

- Providing a high proportion of open questions
- Providing time for pupils to think about and discuss their responses to questions
- Providing supplementary questions to extend understanding
- Providing questions that encourage pupils to reflect on their thinking
- Providing opportunities for pupils to generate questions.

Children will be given the opportunity to explain, clarify and discuss their ideas and to question and support their peers in all areas of the curriculum.

4. Self and Peer Assessment

At Mount Street Infant and Nursery School we recognize the fact that the children are very young and need to be supported in self and peer assessment and that this is the start of the process.

If pupils are to learn they need to:

- understand the criteria or standards that will be used to assess their work (through teachers sharing learning objectives and criteria for success)
- identify the difference between their best work and the actual work,
- work out why these gaps occur
- identify the strategies and implications for future action that they might use to close the gaps.
- Reflect on their own work
- Be supported to admit problems without risk to self-esteem
- Be given time to work out problems

To enable children to do this the interchange between teacher and child is crucial to the child’s understanding of what needs to be done next. However,

peers can often take on this role and by acting as a critical friend to a fellow pupil s/he will almost inevitably enhance their own understanding as well.

5. Effective Feedback and Marking

Feedback is:

- any information that is provided to the performer of any action, about that performance;
- is more effective if it focuses on the task, is given regularly and while still relevant.
- Is most effective when it confirms the pupils are on the right tracks, gives details of why answers are correct or wrong and when it stimulates correction of errors or improvement of a piece of work.
- Effective when suggestions for improvement act as “scaffolding” i.e. pupils should be given as much help as they need to use their knowledge. They should not be given the complete solutions as soon as they get stuck so that they must think things through for themselves.
- Quality dialogue – research indicates that oral feedback is more effective than written feedback.

Marking has the potential to be the most powerful, manageable and useful ongoing diagnostic record of achievement. It should be for children to guide their future learning. However we acknowledge that distance marking is ineffective unless time is given for sharing this with the child. Marking can:

- Track National Curriculum learning objectives on a day-to-day basis with notes made on the short-term plan to feed into further planning;
- Be an effective way of providing feedback to children about their progress.

Therefore written marking has essentially two functions:

- To provide an assessment record
- To provide feedback to the child

Feedback, including marking feedback will be done for groups of children rather than the whole class for every lesson.

- It will be focussed on the learning objective of the lesson.
- It will give evaluative comments/targets/reminders/questions which indicate how to make improvements.
- Oral feedback will be provided during lessons and in plenary sessions, individually or collectively.
- Children will be given opportunities to act on the feedback in written marking to improve their work.

After assessment of learning teachers will review short term planning for the next lesson in light of what the children, know, understand and can do after the initial lesson.

Classroom Guidance

The assessment for learning policy will be put into practice by following the guidance below.

Structuring the lessons

- Focus, then
- Learning Objective (WALT and WILF), then
- Task, then
- Success criteria (WILF) then
- Feedback and marking
- Plenary

Focus

The focus of today's lesson is

It follows on from/ is linked to/ connects to our previous work on

It is important to learn this because

The reason we are doing this is because *(possible link to the school world or wider world)*

Learning objective (WALT) and (WILF)

By the end of today's lesson you will all

- know that.....
- understand that/ how
- Know how to work out
- Know what strategies to use for
- Be able to.....

We are aiming to be able to....

We are aiming to get better at

Task

What you will be doing for your activity/ies today is..... *(describe task)*

By doing that task you will come to know how to/ you will know more facts about...*(use words like know, understand, know how to work out, know what strategies to use).*

Success Criteria (WILF)

The key learning points are....

What I'm looking for is (*refer to learning objective*)

What I will see is....

You will need to know that/learn/think/use..... Skill in order to achieve the learning objective.

Marking children's work

Children's work is marked against the learning objective. It should be carried out during the lesson whenever possible and shared orally with the pupils. They should also be given time at this stage to improve their work or correct any misconceptions.

Two things which are good should be commented on, and one for improvement.

Eg. I like the way you.....

Next time try to



and



may be used to identify areas where learning and areas for improvement have been identified. Special highlighter pens in appropriate colours are used.



Indicates things which are particularly good.



Indicates an area for improvement, or try again.

The areas for improvement may be scaffolded.

When appropriate, children mark their own work using the special pens, identifying the areas where they have met the success criteria and areas where they need to improve.

Because marking in this way takes a long time, it is necessary to focus on one or two groups, rather than the whole class. Not all work will be marked in the same way.

Assessment in the Foundation Stage

Assessments in the Nursery are made against the Stepping Stones. They take the form of anecdotal notes and/or photographs which are made during observations of the children. They may be planned observations or incidental. They are recorded on office labels, dated and then stuck on to the relevant sheet in the class record. The class record takes the form of a lever arch file with 6 sheets for each child, one for each of the learning areas.

Baseline assessments will be made by the end of September.

In Reception, these assessments are then transferred to the e-Profile at the end of each half term. The e-Profile is regularly updated by the Headteacher and data sent to the LEA at 3 points during the year.

At the end of Reception, the scores in the profile are collated by the assessment co-ordinator and entered onto the Integris Assessment Module for analysis.

In addition to the Profile, in June, reading, writing and maths assessments are recorded onto assessment grids for each child's portfolio. These grids are then used to record assessments throughout KS1.

Recording assessments in KS1

Assessments in KS1 are recorded in 4 ways

1. By annotating short term and medium term planning.
2. By the written feedback in children's work.
3. In the teacher's own mark book.
4. On the reading, writing and maths grids for the Portfolios.

Planned assessments in reading, writing and maths are carried out in October, March and June. The results are entered onto the grids and then transferred into the Integris Assessment module so that interim reports can be generated for individuals or groups.

At the end of Key Stage 1 statutory assessments are made using the SAT materials. The results of the tests and tasks are used to assist teachers in making a judgement about the level of attainment for each child in speaking and listening, reading, writing, maths and science. These are reported to parents, and to the LEA.

Date Policy approved by Governors:

Review:

