



St John Lloyd RC Primary School Professional Learning & Inquiry Case Study - “Effective approaches to assessment that improve pupils progress and attainment”

Context and background to the activity

Over the last decade, staff at St John Lloyd RC Primary have used assessment procedures effectively to both plan for and monitor pupils progress and attainment. Following a review of the school's current practices and the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales, assessment for and of learning was identified as in need of a new approach.

Stage 1 – ‘Baseline’ and review of current assessment structures

Through whole school INSET and working in four age phase groups, staff reviewed the existing assessments procedures. The following three areas were identified as in need of development.

a) Feedback to pupils

Consideration was given to the different stages of pupils' learning and to the value and use of current written and verbal feedback to pupils. The consensus was a concern about “How well do pupils use adult feedback to move learning forward and ultimately, how well do staff use this to inform pupils of the next step in their learning?”

b) Current staff expertise and knowledge of assessment strategies and its application

Most staff are confident in planning for the appropriate stages of learning based on a variety of evidence (i.e. pupils' books, video recordings, online platforms Hwb/Seesaw etc) As a result, staff at all levels currently have a strong understanding of pupil progression. Most use the literacy and numeracy frameworks as a guide point for the expected attainment successfully. Many considered this continuum of learning as being a vital resource when planning for the Curriculum for Wales, ensuring a progressive curriculum. It was acknowledged by many that the use of Success Criteria for differentiation and the developing of self and peer assessment was variable and a ‘relaunch or refresh’ was considered necessary to further develop pupils learning and independence.

c) Tracking systems

The school reviewed existing tracking systems to consider what information it shared on pupils, how useful this information was and how well it was being used in light of the Curriculum for Wales. As a result, the school's tracking system would need to be refined to include the essential information that is required to track pupils' achievements as well as plan future learning to ensure the planned progression of skills.

Stage 2- Training and introducing new assessment methods

Staff training took place as part of the professional learning offer through whole school INSET and in age phase groups.

An enquiry-based approach took place which led to staff focusing on;

- 1. Use of feedback strategies focussing on which strategies were the most effective for different types of learners, at different stages in their learning.***

2. **Assessment Focus group looking at the development of Progression stages. Revised quantifiers for 'Emerging', 'Developing', 'Secure/Emended' stages linked to each Progression stage to identify pupil attainment and progress.**
3. **The effectiveness of success criteria to develop pupil's independence and a progressive curriculum.**
4. **Develop a new pupil tracking procedure.**

Governor training also took place to ensure that they understood the school procedures and the rationale for changes.

Stage 3: Embedding agreed Assessment Practices

a) *Marking and Feedback*

Feedback to pupils would take the form of the following;

- 1) Instant feedback to pupils given in the 'moment' to guide and direct the next steps in their learning
- 2) Strong focus on the quality of questioning to develop both a deeper understanding and recap on previous learning
- 3) When pupils are ready, written feedback in the form of a question to develop a dialogue between staff and pupil.
- 4) Offer the opportunity for pupils to use 'bubbles' to summarise their thematic concepts/learning or the methods they used in mathematics.

b) *Success Criteria*

Success criteria was established as a set of features or tasks that pupils will need to achieve or follow in order to achieve their learning objective and successfully complete the task. It must also give opportunities for pupils to self and peer assess their learning independently (i.e. Sea Creatures in Infant classes)

Success Criteria was agreed by all to be;

- Clear and measurable.
- Easy to understand and written in short simple bullet points
- Be discussed and shared with pupils prior to undertaking the activity. They are 'their' road map
- Modelled and shown to pupils. (VAK learning)
- Differentiated to the needs of the pupils

c) *Tracking and Summative pupil data*

The assessment working party established;

- New pupil tracking procedure aligned to the CfW progression stages. All pupils are 'baselined' on entry to each year group to allow both attainment and progress to be measured against the pupils own individual learning journey. New attainment quantifies established 'Emerging', 'Developing', 'Secure/Emended'.

Senior leaders;

- triangulate information when monitoring the progress pupils make by aligning assessment information (including reading ages and national tests), observations and pupils' work. This informs whole school improvement planning.
- use assessment information to develop provision mapping for Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and 'catch-up' pupils. They identify groups of pupils for support, and set learning targets. The Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCo) meets with all teachers at the beginning of the academic year to

discuss pupils with additional learning needs. During these meetings teachers identify the support required to maximise pupil progress. These are reviewed regularly.

Using data

- Review meetings between Senior leaders and class teachers take place termly to track and monitor the progress pupils make. During these meetings, information shared includes progress and attainment of pupils, scrutiny of pupils' work (taken from reviews) and the impact of feedback. The conversation focuses on the main areas that will help to raise standards and ensure pupil progress. This ensures pupils tracking is ongoing and enables staff to review regularly and evaluate impact of interventions and planning.
- Governors received termly data packs that highlight areas of strength and ways forward. These are discussed in both 'standards' and 'care support and guidance' sub committees. Open days also provide governors with the opportunity to view pupils' work and discuss this with the pupils. This enables governors to view 'real learning' and not solely rely on a set of data

What impact has this work had on provision and pupils' standards?

- Both written and verbal feedback to pupils is effective. There is a clear understanding of what the pupil is achieving in lessons and what they need to do to improve. Planning reflects marking and feedback. There are timely opportunities for pupils to build on prior learning.
- Overall, success criteria is more specific and is used to differentiate tasks and promote pupil independence well.
- Teachers use highly effective assessments to develop a good understanding of individual pupils' progress in lessons and over time. Teachers discuss the outcomes of these assessments and plan accordingly to ensure that nearly all pupils make better than expected progress across all areas of learning.
- Staff work collaboratively in age phase teams to ensure that planned tasks meet the needs of all learners
- Leaders track and monitor, collectively with staff, to establish both progress and attainment for all pupils that is shared with all stakeholders
- Tracking and monitoring of ALN is a strength. Senior leaders regularly evaluate the impact of interventions to ensure that they remain purposeful and meet the needs of learners.