

Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years

Assessment for learning

The Coalition Government took office on 11 May 2010. This publication was published prior to that date and may not reflect current government policy. You may choose to use these materials, however you should also consult the Department for Education website www.education.gov.uk for updated policy and resources.

Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years

Planning and assessment for learning

Assessment for learning

Professional development materials





My teacher talks to me about what I'm going to learn and then we share success criteria.

I can work with partners to evaluate and improve my work.

I enjoy using ICT and know how it can help my learning.

My teacher talks to me about how I am doing and what I need to do next to improve my work.

My teacher gives me targets to aim for and then helps me check my progress.

I can use all my languages to help me learn.

I know how I learn best and my teacher gives me time to talk about what works for me.

I know how I am being assessed and what I need to do to improve my work.

My parents know about my progress and how to help me.

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Accompanying video

Planning and assessment for learning, 'Assessment for learning'

Conditions for learning

Clip 1 Ferndown School

Using curricular targets: John Gulson School

Clip 2 Interview

Clip 3 Discussions with children

Clip 4 Writing targets in history

Day-to-day assessment strategies

Clip 5 The use of observation in Foundation Stage

Clip 6 Day-to-day assessment strategies in a Year 3 mathematics lesson

Clip 7 Reflecting on day-to-day assessment strategies

Feedback on learning

Clip 8 Oakwood Avenue Primary School: Year 6 literacy lesson

Involving parents and carers

Clip 9 Penn Green Centre for Under Fives and their Families

Clip 10 English Martyrs Primary School

Clip 11 Oakwood Avenue Primary School

Additional materials

Also provided in the pack is the **School self-evaluation grid for AfL**

General introduction

Helping children to develop as confident, enthusiastic and effective learners is a central purpose of primary education. *Excellence and Enjoyment: a strategy for primary schools* affirms a vision for primary education that provides opportunities for all children to fulfil their potential through a commitment to high standards and excellence within an engaging, broad and rich curriculum. Ofsted reports show that the best primary schools and early-years settings achieve this. In these schools and settings children are engaged by learning that develops and challenges them and excites their imagination. The learning and teaching environment in these schools and settings is shaped by an understanding of what children can achieve and by teaching that meets their individual needs as learners.

A note about the units

This collection of continuing professional development (CPD) materials on assessment for learning is one of six units that focus on important aspects of learning and teaching in the primary years. The six units are organised into three themes:

- Planning and assessment for learning
- Creating a learning culture
- Understanding how learning develops

Although the content has been organised under the headings given above, it often overlaps across units. For example, questioning is one of the key teaching strategies explored in the *Conditions for learning* unit but it is also addressed in other units.

Learning and teaching is a broad and complex area of study. It is important to note, therefore, that **these units represent a starting point for whole-school investigation, action and reflection on**

areas for improvement identified within the school development plan or, within an early-years setting, as part of the management plan or quality assurance process. The introductory guides to *Learning and teaching in the primary years* (May 2004) offered advice and suggestions for identifying areas for development through self-evaluation.

Self-evaluation is an essential element of effective school performance management systems. Such systems make clear links between school improvement,





teachers' performance, management objectives and CPD plans and can therefore help to deliver personalised learning for all children. The CPD materials in these units provide opportunities for professional discussions about teachers' work which will support both individual and school development needs.

How to use the units

There is no expectation that schools and settings will use all of the materials in the units. You should use the materials flexibly, to support your school development needs and CPD focus.

You may, for example, decide to combine elements across units as well as within units, or select one or two sections within a unit for attention. In order to facilitate such cross-unit and within-unit usage, a chart itemising the content of each unit is given on the inside back cover of all the units.

Each section of a unit includes materials for staff study, discussion and reflection, along with ideas for how the materials could be used in professional development sessions. Some of the suggested activities are developed fully to provide models for organising staff sessions; other suggestions are briefly outlined.

Schools and settings may go further than indicated in the materials by using some of the many excellent resources that already exist, for example other Primary National Strategy, QCA and DfES materials, subject association resources and readings and so on. Some suggestions for further resources are given in the units. Enquiry groups may also wish to draw on support from local authority colleagues or others and work with other schools and settings who are focusing on the same areas for development.

It is anticipated that a designated member of staff will take the lead in selecting and running CPD sessions based on these materials and that you will adapt and supplement these materials for your particular context.

While many of the materials are written with primary teachers and practitioners in mind, you will want to include teaching assistants, parents, carers and governors when appropriate.



Introduction to assessment for learning

Assessment for Learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there.

(Assessment Reform Group, 2002a)



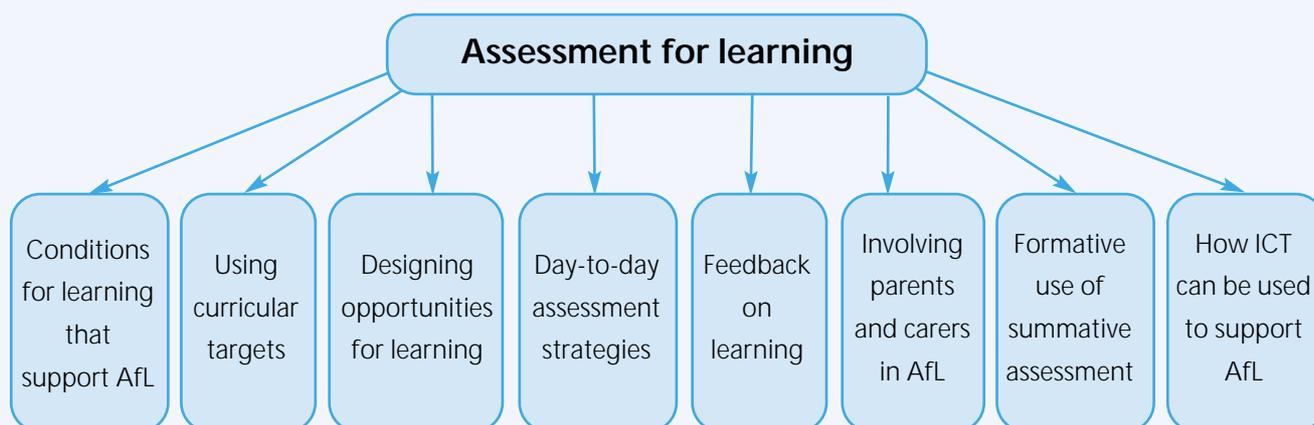


This unit of the *Learning and teaching in the primary years* materials is intended to support those who lead the development of assessment for learning (AfL) in schools and settings.

The purposes of the materials are to:

- clarify the principles of effective AfL practice;
- support schools and settings in evaluating current practice and identifying priorities for further development;
- provide CPD materials to support teachers and practitioners in developing effective AfL practice.

The unit focuses on eight key areas:



Leadership teams are encouraged to start the development process with a self-evaluation exercise which audits current strengths and areas for development in your school or setting. To support this process, an AfL self-evaluation grid, based on the eight key areas above, is provided in the booklet accompanying these materials.

The next stage is to identify one, or possibly two, particular key areas for development and refer to section 2 of these materials, where you will find readings and ideas for continuing professional development activities.

Leadership teams will need to review the materials provided to clarify their own understanding of the issues and then carefully select from the suggested CPD activities, considering how best to engage all staff in the process of improving AfL practice in the context of your school or setting.



Section 1 The role and importance of assessment for learning

The core principles for teaching and learning developed from *Excellence and Enjoyment* are:

- set high expectations and give every learner confidence they can succeed;
- establish what learners already know and build on it;
- structure and pace the learning experience to make it challenging and enjoyable;
- inspire learning through a passion for the subject;
- make individuals active partners in their learning;
- develop learning skills and personal qualities.

Assessment for learning is a key element of these core principles for learning and teaching. It is a powerful means of helping teachers and practitioners to tailor their teaching to get the best improvement for each child. Through AfL, teachers involve each child in order to motivate and help them to take their next steps in learning.

What is assessment *for* learning?

In this publication, the term 'assessment' is based on the Black and William definition:

... the term assessment refers to all those activities undertaken by teachers, and by 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)

There are two main **purposes** of assessment:

- assessment *of* learning (also known as summative assessment);
- assessment *for* learning (also known as formative assessment).



Assessment of learning (summative assessment)

AoL is any assessment which **summarises** where learners are at a given point in time – it provides a snapshot of what has been learned (in terms of both attainment and achievement).

Assessment for learning (formative assessment)

Assessment for Learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there. (Assessment Reform Group, 2002a)

AfL is any assessment activity which **informs** the next steps to learning. The key message is that AfL depends crucially on actually **using** the information gained.

Key characteristics of AfL

The Assessment Reform Group identified seven key characteristics which were evident in schools where AfL was effective in promoting learning and in raising standards of attainment. The chart below illustrates the linkage between these seven characteristics and the key areas of development identified in the CPD materials in this unit.

Key characteristics of AfL	Key areas of development for schools
AfL is embedded in a view of learning and teaching of which it is an essential part.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conditions for learning • Designing opportunities for learning • Day-to-day assessment strategies
AfL involves sharing learning goals with learners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using curricular targets • Designing opportunities for learning • Feedback on learning
AfL aims to help learners to know and to recognise the standards for which they are aiming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using curricular targets • Formative use of summative assessment
AfL involves learners in peer and self-assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback on learning • Day-to-day assessment strategies • Formative use of summative assessment
AfL provides feedback which leads to learners recognising their next steps and how to take them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback on learning • How ICT can be used to support AfL
AfL is underpinned by the confidence that every learner can improve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conditions for learning • Feedback on learning
AfL involves both learner and teacher reviewing and reflecting on assessment data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback on learning • Involving parents and carers • Formative use of summative assessment data • How ICT can be used to support AfL



Reviews of research into classroom assessment (Black and William, 1998) have shown that developing AfL is one of the most powerful ways of improving learning and teaching and raising standards. *Inside the black box* (Black and William, 1998) summarises the main findings from 250 assessment articles (covering nine years of international research). It identifies five key factors that improve learning through assessment:

- providing effective feedback to children;
- actively involving children in their own learning;
- adjusting teaching to take account of the results of assessment;
- recognising the profound influence assessment has on the motivation and self-esteem of children, both of which are crucial to learning;
- considering the need for children to be able to assess themselves and to understand how to improve.

More and more children are benefiting from AfL, but it still remains an area of development for many schools and settings. The materials in this unit seek to support teachers and practitioners in reviewing, evaluating and developing AfL practice; in so doing, they address the findings outlined in the Ofsted report *The national literacy and numeracy strategies and the primary curriculum* (Ofsted, 2003). Although Ofsted observed much good practice in assessment, they point out the following:

Findings from the Ofsted report

- *Assessment is unsatisfactory in one in six lessons in literacy and one in nine in mathematics. Furthermore, the assessment of pupils' progress in English and mathematics **has had little influence on assessment in other subjects.** (page 3)*
- *Although all schools set numerical targets at the end of Key Stage 2, many still do not set effective curricular targets that focus on what pupils still need to learn, which are then followed through into teaching. Even where the targets focus on pupils' weaknesses, teachers' planning seldom refers to what they are going to do to tackle the weaknesses or how they will monitor progress against the targets. (page 4)*

Using the school self-evaluation grid for AfL

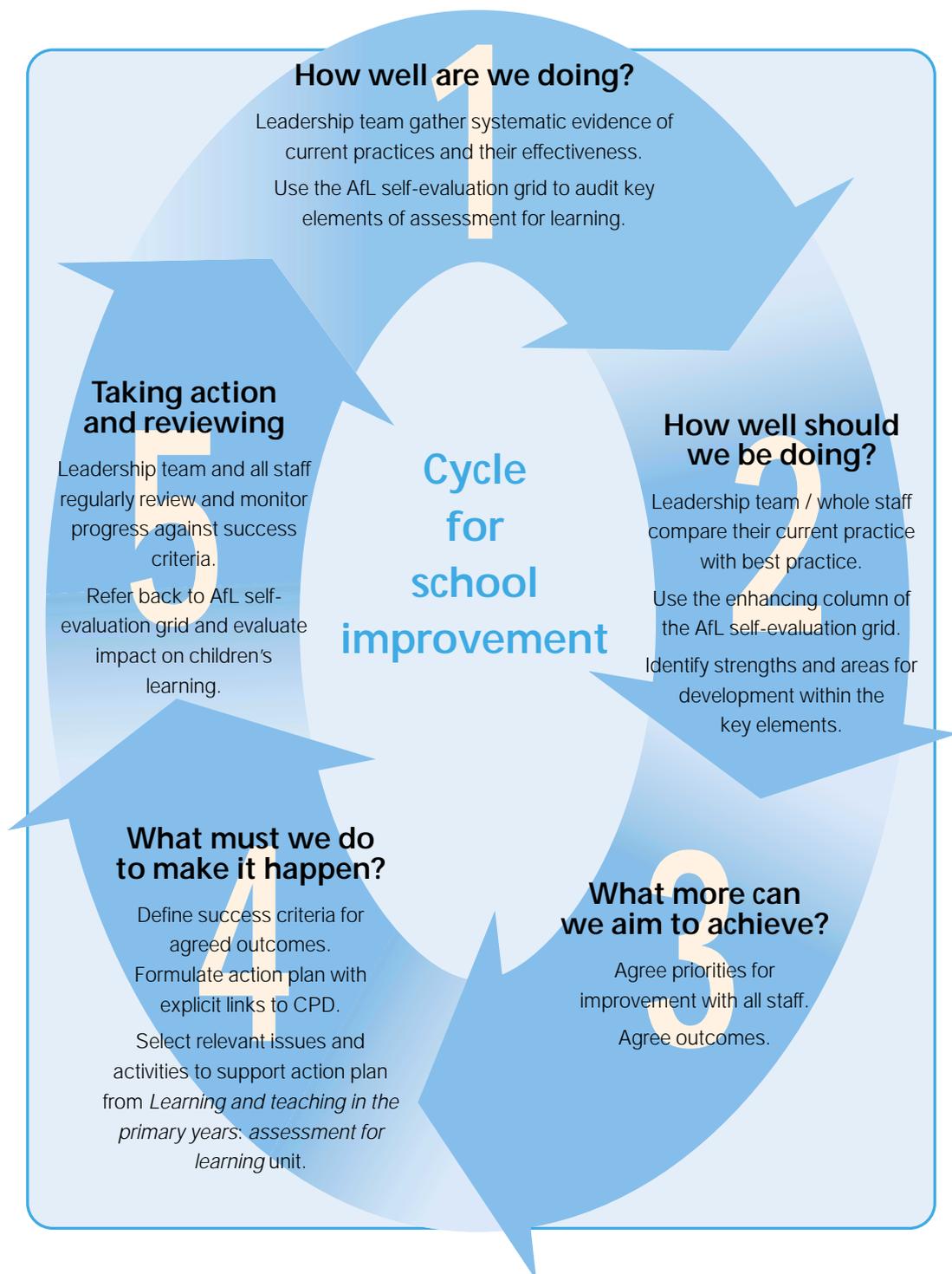
The school self-evaluation grid for AfL is a management tool for whole-school review and self-evaluation. It provides a basis for identifying further whole-school professional development needs. It is intended to be used to identify areas of strength and areas for further development where AfL strategies can be used more effectively to enhance and enrich learning and teaching and to raise standards. This grid is provided in an accompanying booklet. You may also choose to make use of the AfL matrix on the National College for School Leadership website.

To support this process, the well-known five-stage school improvement cycle model has been applied to AfL.



Cycle for school improvement

The model below uses self-evaluation and CPD to address areas for improvement. This should be linked to schools' performance management processes. Effective leadership teams will be constantly self-evaluating and making links between the school's performance management system, the school development plan and CPD.





Section 2 Key areas for development

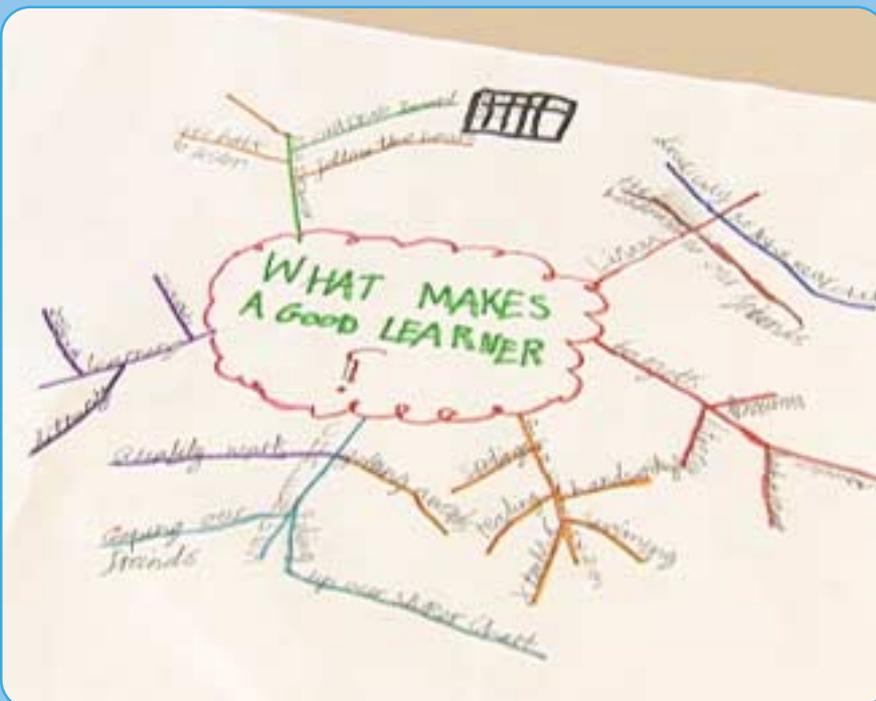
Part 1 Conditions for learning that support AfL

Creating an ethos and environment in which children can enjoy learning, and reflect, improve and grow in confidence, is fundamental to learning and, therefore, to AfL. It is crucial for schools and settings to consider the conditions for learning they create before they focus on any specific aspect of AfL.

Effective AfL depends on schools and settings having established a secure rationale for their ethos and attitudes to learning, for the development of the learning environment and for the establishing of routines and behaviours. All of these underpin good practice in AfL.

The 'Establishing' and 'Enhancing' columns of the school self-evaluation grid for AfL detail a number of descriptors for a school in which conditions for learning are effective and established, and support AfL.

The AfL school self-evaluation grid is to be found in the accompanying booklet. Schools will find it helpful to use the appropriate section of this grid as an introductory CPD activity for this area of development.





The *Conditions for learning* unit will be helpful to schools that wish to undertake an in-depth look at this aspect of their practice. This section of the AfL materials provides a starting point in looking at the aspects of conditions for learning that will support AfL. This includes:

- discussing and identifying shared beliefs about how children learn and the best way to support this;
- examining the learning environment and resources to identify aspects that enhance learning and support AfL.





Cultivating the best conditions for learning in the classroom

Learning *how* to learn is at the heart of AfL. Thinking about how children learn makes it possible to work out how best to teach; when children understand what helps them to learn they can review the effectiveness of the strategies they have used and their attitudes to learning. Teachers and practitioners need to start by reflecting on their assumptions about how children learn, how these affect their own practice and how the ethos and attitudes in the school or setting support the learning process.

CASE STUDY

St Nicholas CE Infants' School and Nursery Class

Starting with values

St Nicholas CE Infants' School and Nursery Class in Wallingford, Oxfordshire, started their work on supporting learning by developing a 'values education' approach. The whole school community works together to understand and cultivate values such as cooperation, caring, tolerance and responsibility. They use assemblies, lessons, posters and newsletters to parents to introduce a monthly focus. Mealtime assistants and members of the school council look out for children (and adults) demonstrating the values around the school.

The school's work on AfL is being developed within this context. The shared values underpin strategies such as sharing learning objectives, peer assessment and regular opportunities for children to reflect on their own abilities and skills.

Children have learned how to use a traffic light system to identify and explain if they have understood a concept: red = hard; amber = a bit hard and a bit easy; green = easy.

Children are more in charge of their own learning, are able to evaluate how well they are doing and can decide where they need to go next with their learning.

The following CPD activities suggest ways to open up discussion and share ideas within the school community. Schools and settings may wish to go on to explore this area in more depth using the material in the unit *The conditions for learning*. The CPD activity on 'Values and the curriculum' to be found in the *Designing opportunities for learning* unit may also be helpful. The DVD *Teaching and learning for children with SEN in the primary years* also provides helpful guidance on developing effective conditions for learning.

CPD ACTIVITY

Focusing on opportunities for children to reflect on and discuss learning

Aims

- To encourage staff to consider:
 - opportunities for children to reflect on their learning;
 - the importance of discussions with children about their learning.

Materials

- AfL video sequence 'Conditions for learning', Clip 1 'Ferndown School'.

Organisation

This activity should be carried out at a staff meeting.

- Watch the AfL video sequence 'Conditions for learning', Clip 1 (this sequence comes from the *Learning and teaching for children with special educational needs in the primary years* DVD). In this sequence, a small group of Year 3 children, the majority of whom have special educational needs, are reflecting on Mind-maps[®] they have prepared about 'What makes a good learner?'
- An alternative video clip showing Year 5 children reflecting on their learning in a history lesson is to be found in the *Conditions for learning* unit, Clip 4.
- While watching the video sequences, consider:
 - how children are being given the opportunities to reflect on their own learning and their learning styles;
 - the importance of discussion;
 - how children are talking about learning as part of their learning;
 - how children are talking about the learning environment and how it supports them;
 - how different behaviours impact on them;
 - the emphasis on shared learning, analysis and discussion.
- Discuss how these opportunities for reflecting on learning can be created.

Next steps

- Trial some discussions with individual children and groups to focus on learning. Try the following questions:
 - What do you think you are good at?
 - What helps you to learn?
 - When do you learn best?
 - Do you like working with other children or on your own?
 - What can make things difficult for you?
 - How do other people help you?

Follow-up discussion

- Feed back findings from discussions with children. What are the implications for whole-school working to improve conditions for learning?
- How might posing questions be different in working with 3-year-olds, 5-year-olds, 7-year-olds and at the end of Key Stage 2?

CPD ACTIVITY

How can the physical environment support AfL?

Aim

- To encourage staff to critically evaluate the physical environments in which children's learning takes place, including their classrooms and outdoors, in order to consider how the environment supports learning.

Materials

- Handout 1 – Learning environment: AfL checklist.

Organisation

This activity should be carried out with another member of staff.

- Ideally, work with another member of staff from a different key stage or year group.
- Visit one another's classrooms and work through the checklist together.
- Pick out one aspect of the classroom environment that supports the learning process.



Learning environment: AfL checklist

Focus area	Desirable elements	Evidence
These prompts relate to all areas of the primary curriculum unless specific reference is made to a particular subject or area of learning.		
Sharing objectives and reviewing learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning objectives displayed and discussed • Language objectives for English as an additional language (EAL) learners displayed and discussed • Key questions displayed and used in lesson starters and plenaries • Key questions and prompts available to support children's talking and thinking about learning • Use of key questions to trigger prior knowledge • Curriculum displays include statements and questions to highlight key learning points 	
Curricular targets ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key literacy and numeracy and learning to learn targets are displayed • Classroom displays, visual prompts and resources support key curricular target focuses 	
Learning process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Layout of classroom, organisation of the outdoor learning environment and provision of resources support inclusive, interactive teaching approaches and collaborative learning • Display reflects the learning process in all areas of learning, e.g. poster of rules for children marking with response partners – see page 64 	
Positive affirmations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive affirmations are displayed in the classroom and referred to regularly • The teacher actively fosters positive attitudes and behaviours • Successes are celebrated 	

¹ Advice on layered targets in the Foundation Stage is available in *Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage*, pages 5–25.

Part 2 Using curricular targets

Curricular targets are based on learning objectives. They are informed and identified by analysis of children's work, discussions with children, teachers' assessment information and test performance. They identify whole-school priorities and areas for improvement. These priorities are included in the school development plan and linked to performance management.

Curricular targets are translated into year-group targets based on age-related expectations; they steer improvements, guide teaching and set the focus for future assessments linked to what has been taught. Curricular targets for year groups also set out targets for classes, groups and individual children, where appropriate. Basing these targets on the children's personal achievements helps them to recognise how well they are doing. Such targets support children's own assessments of what they need to do next to progress.

The process of curricular target setting is already well established and effective in many primary schools and settings. Many schools and settings and LEAs have established mechanisms to analyse National Assessment Agency (NAA/QCA) test data to identify particular areas of strength or weakness in English, mathematics and science, and to translate these into class or school targets. Schools often find it helpful to refer to the analysis of pupil performance contained in the annual report on the national tests: *Implications for teaching and learning* (NAA/QCA). The process that is outlined in this section should complement what schools and settings are already doing.

Most schools and settings that are successfully using curricular targets have embedded their use within literacy and mathematics. Many schools and settings also set targets for aspects of learning that occur across the whole curriculum (e.g. 'I can take turns when working in a group', 'I can back up opinions with evidence'). Some of these schools have then gone on to consider how the *process* of identifying curricular





targets could be used by subject coordinators when they are focusing on areas for improvement within other curricular subjects. It may be helpful for *staff* to consider how 'big picture' targets within subjects, such as improving the understanding and use of maps in geography, could be layered down into specific targets for each year group. It is not, however, sensible or practicable to consider giving children termly targets in all curricular areas. It is better to focus on a small number of targets. Learning to learn targets, literacy targets and numeracy targets can be applied within other curriculum areas.

Foundation Stage

In the Foundation Stage, an understanding of how young children develop and learn is an important factor in developing approaches to layered curriculum targets. 'The principles for early years education' (*Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage*, pages 13–17) provide useful advice, for example:

- early-years experience should build on what children already know and can do;
- well-planned, purposeful activity and appropriate intervention by practitioners will engage children in the learning process;
- practitioners must be able to observe and respond appropriately to children.

Self-evaluation

The 'Establishing' and 'Enhancing' columns of the school self-evaluation grid for AfL detail a number of descriptors for a school in which curricular targets are effective and established. The AfL school self-evaluation grid is to be found in the accompanying booklet. Schools will find it helpful to use the appropriate section of this grid as an introductory CPD activity for this area of development.

The materials in this section will support schools in moving towards developing effective use of curricular targets, focusing on:

- the process of identifying curricular targets, based on national age-related expectations;
- assessing children's progress against curricular targets;
- tracking children's progress against curricular targets;
- illustrating the effective use of curricular targets through a case-study school.

The process of layering curricular targets for writing

1 Set whole-school curricular target in writing from NLS target statements for writing (based on analysis of NAA (QCA) tests, work scrutiny, discussions with children). For example:

- *'Children need to develop their abilities to apply grammatical skills to improve the purpose and organisation of their writing.'*

2 Assign year-group curricular target in writing from NLS target statements for writing. For example, for Year 5:

- *'Interest the reader by writing complex sentences to show a relationship between ideas.'*

3 Differentiate the year-group target into targets for different groups using language accessible for children (based on teacher's specific knowledge of the class and individuals). For example, for Year 5:

- *'I can vary the pace of my writing by using a variety of simple and complex sentences' (above age-related expectations).*
- *'I can use conjunctions found in shared reading to join ideas in writing, e.g. although, since, whenever' (age-related expectations).*
- *'I can use simple linking words to make some complex sentences, e.g. when, because' (below age-related expectations).*

Note: Curricular targets should be personalised for children with diverse needs.

4 Link curricular target to learning and teaching

- Teachers identify subject-specific knowledge related to that target.
- Professional development at staff meetings identifies progression through the school in this aspect of subject-specific knowledge.
- Teachers identify, from their medium-term plans, when they would teach the relevant literacy or mathematics to enable the children to meet their target. They would include opportunities for children to consolidate and apply this knowledge across the curriculum.
- Teachers identify when, in their half-termly plans, they will focus on assessing progress towards the target.
- Targets are shared with children in class.

5 Review progress against targets

- Teachers and children assess and record progress against the targets.
- Teachers and the leadership team review individual progress against targets and record information on the school tracking system.

'I can' statements are most useful when linked to knowledge-based statements.

The process of layering curricular targets for mathematics

1 Set whole-school curricular target in mathematics from NNS key objectives (based on analysis of NAA (QCA) tests, work scrutiny, discussions with children). For example:

'Children need to develop their abilities to: identify and use appropriate number operations and choose efficient ways of calculating when solving problems; organise and interpret numerical evidence so they can express generalised statements in words and symbols; and present their ideas and a clear explanation of their methods and reasoning, orally and in writing.'

2 Assign year-group curricular target in mathematics (based on the objectives in the *Framework for teaching mathematics*). For example, for Year 3:

'Solve one- and two-step word problems that are set in a real-life context and involve the organisation and interpretation of numerical data, and use simple diagrams to support their written explanations.'

3 Differentiate the year-group target into targets for different groups using language accessible for children (based on the teacher's specific knowledge of the class and individuals). For example, for Year 3:

'I can interpret scales on graphs and charts, I can record all my calculations when I solve problems and I can write about my methods' (above age-related Year 3).

'I can read numbers from tables and bar charts, I can write down the number calculation I need to do when I solve a word problem, and I can talk about and write down how I solve a problem' (age-related Year 3).

'I can make lists, tables and draw pictograms and describe them, I know how to solve add and subtract problems and I can talk about how I solve them' (below age-related Year 3).

Note: Curricular targets should be personalised for children with diverse needs.

4 Link curricular target to learning and teaching

- Teachers identify subject-specific knowledge related to that target.
- Input in staff meetings identifies progression through the school in this aspect of subject-specific knowledge.
- Teachers identify when, in their half-termly plans, they will:
 - focus on teaching the target;
 - focus on assessing progress towards the target.

5 Review progress against targets

- Teachers and children assess and record progress against the targets.
- Teachers and the leadership team review individual progress against targets and record information on the school tracking system.

'I can' statements are most useful when linked to knowledge-based statements.

Summary of key actions and tools for developing the use of curricular targets

1 Setting curricular targets

Key tools

NLS target statements and NNS key objectives
Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage
Foundation Stage profile handbook

- Set whole-school curricular target (based on analysis of NAA tests, work scrutiny and discussions with children).
- Assign year-group curricular targets (one or two per term).
- Differentiate the year-group target into targets for different groups or individuals using language accessible for children (based on teacher's specific knowledge of the class and individuals).
- Use the written example (*Foundation Stage profile handbook*) and the visual examples (CD-ROM) of pupil achievement in the Foundation Stage to layer the corresponding National Literacy Strategy (NLS) and National Numeracy Strategy (NNS) targets appropriately in the reception class.

2 Supporting children's learning

- Amend planning and teaching to prioritise curricular targets.
- Provide focused teaching to support children's learning.

3 Assessing children's progress against curricular targets

- Identify the group or individuals whose progress is to be assessed.

- Collect and provide evidence of achievement against the curricular targets from day-to-day assessment.
- Evaluate the impact on learners through work scrutiny, discussions with children and outcomes of children's self-evaluation.
- Leadership team monitors the achievement of targets through observation, work scrutiny and discussions with children.
- Leadership team feeds back key findings from whole-school analysis of progress towards curricular targets and discusses possible refinements to planning and teaching.

4 Tracking children's progress against curricular targets

- Use the data to identify which children are not making expected progress.
- Discuss with class teachers or practitioners the progress of the children in their class.
- Identify where the literacy and mathematics intervention programmes are needed and make sure they are in place.
- Ensure that inclusive principles are addressed so that all children receive appropriate additional support, intervention and opportunities.
- Establish monitoring and evaluation systems to review the impact of intervention programmes on children's progress.



Hull case study

Curricular targets were layered for each year group using the NLS target statements for reading and writing and the NNS key objectives. These give clear, age-related, end-of-year expectations for the agreed focus for each year group. The example below illustrates layered targets for one term for mathematics. Subject knowledge was strengthened through CPD on problem solving. The curricular focuses were also promoted through displays and learning prompts in the classrooms.

Hull case study school: mathematics curricular targets	
Key school targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop strategies and methods for solving problems To improve children's mathematical reasoning in contextual problem solving To help children explain the problem-solving strategies
Supporting year group targets	
YR	Use developing mathematical ideas and methods to solve problems.
Y1	Use mental strategies to solve simple problems using counting, addition, subtraction, doubling and halving, explaining methods and reasoning orally.
Y2	Choose and use appropriate operations and efficient calculation strategies to solve problems, explaining how the problem was solved.
Y3	Choose and use appropriate operations (including multiplication and division) to solve word problems, explaining methods and reasoning.
Y4	Choose and use appropriate number operations and ways of calculating (mental, mental with jottings, pencil and paper) to solve problems.
Y5	Use all four operations to solve simple word problems involving numbers and quantities, including time, and explaining methods and reasoning.
Y6	Identify and use the appropriate operations (including combinations of operations) to solve word problems involving numbers and quantities, and explain methods and reasoning.
Key activities to support targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree process for teaching problem solving throughout the school. Review learning environment – ensure that prompts promote interactive teaching and learning. Link problem solving to thinking skills/process – implement consistently across school. Children to be given opportunity to work individually, in pairs and in groups of no more than four. Use of specific resources developing mental strategies. Teach children a range of problem-solving strategies and help develop their explanations of their solution and thinking. Focus monitoring on effective problem solving highlighted in staff development. Seek further staff development on plenary sessions and implement in everyday lessons – focus of monitoring. Mathematics homework each week should address curricular targets. Children should be assessed each week against class curricular target and record kept. Two additional 15-minute sessions to be identified each week. Targets to be high profile in each classroom and communicated to parents. Certificates to be made to reward progress against curricular targets. Staff to ensure that problem-solving vocabulary is displayed and referred to. Staff development to be delivered by consultants who will also work alongside staff in classes.

Full case studies and further examples can be found in the *Intensifying support programme* booklet (DfES 0037-2004), page 55 onwards.

CPD ACTIVITY

Setting curricular targets

Aim

- To support whole staff to establish layered curricular targets.

Pre-reading activity

- Read the Hull case study (page 26) and the 'Summary of key actions' on page 25.

Leadership team pre-meeting preparation

- Analyse NAA (QCA) tests or work scrutinies and findings from discussions with children to share key areas for development in a curriculum area.
- Set a possible whole-school target.
- Draw up class lists identifying children working at or above, just below and well below age-related expectations.
- Assemble material showing progression in a curriculum subject linked to age-related expectations.

Materials

- Pages 23–26 of this unit.
- NLS target statements and NNS key objectives to provide age-related expectations.
- *Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage* and *Foundation Stage profile handbook*.
- *Planning, teaching and assessing the curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties*.
- Class lists with groups of children identified (significantly below age-related, below age-related, at age-related and above age-related expectations).
- AfL video sequence 'Using curricular targets: John Gulson School', Clip 2 'Interview'.

Organisation

This activity should be carried out as part of a half-day's CPD or at two staff meetings.

- Watch the AfL video sequence 'Using curricular targets: John Gulson School', Clip 2.
- Discuss school targets in the chosen curriculum area and agree one to develop as a school target.
- Share examples of layered targets and case-study material from pages 23–26.
- With the school target in mind, for each year group consider the age-related expectations and match them against the programme of study for the next half-term.
- Select a year-group target and then write child-friendly targets for each group.

Next steps in smaller groups

- Have a discussion on 'What is the subject knowledge teachers need to support children in attaining targets?' Identify any staff development needs.
- Plan to teach the target over the half-term and assess class progress towards the target so that you can share this at the next meeting.
- Begin to plan ways to communicate targets to children and parents.

CPD ACTIVITY

Assessing children's progress against curricular targets

Aim

- To support teachers in planning for ways to regularly involve children in assessing their progress against curricular targets.

Materials

- AfL video sequence 'Using curricular targets: John Gulson School', Clip 3 'Discussions with children', Clip 4 'Writing targets in history'.

Organisation

This activity should be carried out at a staff meeting.

- Discuss in pairs how the curricular targets have been prioritised in planning and teaching.
- Feed back the results of this discussion.
- Consider the improvements you have seen in children's progress against the targets.
- Watch the AfL video sequence 'Using curricular targets: John Gulson School', Clips 3 and 4, which illustrates the way that the senior management team in John Gulson Primary School have regular discussions with children about their learning experiences and progress towards curricular targets as part of whole-school monitoring.
- In small groups, consider what opportunities class teachers and/or the leadership team currently have to assess children's progress against the curricular targets as illustrated in the video.

Next steps

- Allow time for pairs of teachers or the leadership team to plan for future interviews with selected children.
- Possible questions to consider include:
 - Can you tell me some targets you're working on?
 - Who or what helps you achieve the target?
 - How do you help yourself achieve the target?
 - What else might you be able to do to help yourself?
 - How will you know when you have achieved your target?
 - What do you think would help you more?
 - Are there any ways I could help you more?

CPD ACTIVITY

Reviewing outcomes from tracking children's progress against curricular targets

Aims

- To review the pattern of progress of groups of children across the school.
- To enable teachers to see the progress of specific groups across the school.

Pre-meeting preparation

- Complete tracking sheets for your class to track progress against the curricular targets.

Organisation

This activity should be carried out at a staff meeting.

- Make use of the whiteboard in the staff room to document the progress of each ability group in each year group or class against their targets, using a table like the one below.
- In turn report on the progress of each group in each year. Tick if the group has achieved its target and cross if the group has yet to achieve the target.
- This visual display will allow you to look for patterns across the school and to engage in whole-school discussion. For example, if a pattern emerges indicating that all the children across the school in the above age-related expectations groups have not met their targets, what does this suggest about the differentiation and challenge for more able pupils? This whole-school discussion opportunity allows all teachers to see patterns of progress across the school and to discuss possible solutions to barriers.

Year group	SEN	Below age-related expectations	At age-related expectations	Above age-related expectations
Year R				
Year 1				
Year 2				
Year 3				
Year 4				
Year 5				
Year 6				

- Discuss the following questions:
 - Which groups achieved the targets? Share good practice.
 - Which groups did not achieve the targets?
 - Is there a pattern across the school to the groups not achieving the targets?
 - What were the barriers to their learning?
 - What further action needs to take place?



Part 3 **Designing opportunities for learning (planning)**

Schools and settings using this section of the materials may also wish to look at the *Designing opportunities for learning* unit, which looks at the processes of planning across the whole curriculum. This section focuses on the links between planning and AfL.

The 'Designing opportunities for learning (planning)' section of the school self-evaluation grid for AfL highlights at an early stage (focusing stage) the importance of a clear focus on learning objectives. The 'Establishing' and 'Enhancing' columns of the school self-evaluation grid for AfL detail a number of descriptors for a school in which this feature of AfL is effective and established. These descriptors can easily be grouped into three areas of focus:

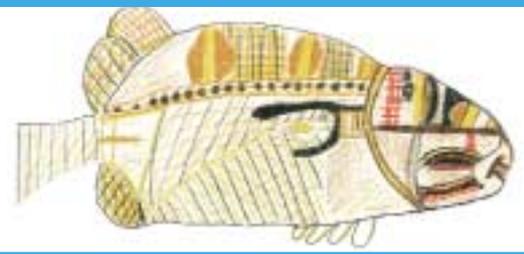
- curricular targets and planning;
- success criteria and planning;
- adaptation of planning based on assessment.

The AfL school self-evaluation grid is to be found in the accompanying booklet. Schools will find it helpful to use the appropriate section of this grid as an introductory CPD activity for this area of development.

Focusing on learning

Although the successful teacher knows that children's learning is the priority, there can be a danger in believing that if all the planned tasks have been carried out, learning has happened. Focusing on learning at the planning stage means:

- being clear about the learning and teaching objectives in planning and sharing them with the children, their parents and carers;
- planning the key focus points for the teaching and the learning (the success criteria) and involving the children by making them aware of, and even part of, the creation of the agreed success criteria;



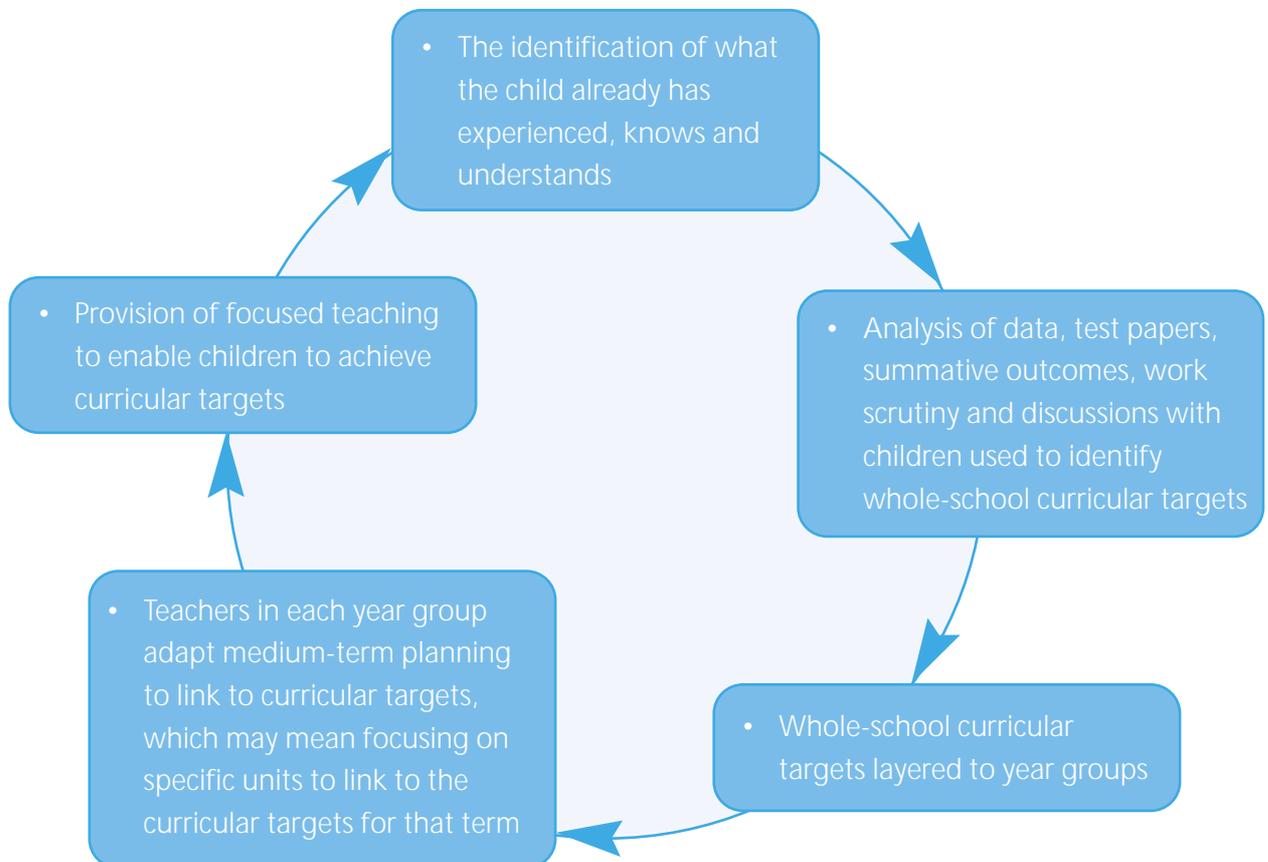
- making sure that the context is designed to enable the learning objective to be fulfilled;
- being confident to adapt the planning and teaching at any time if the learning objective, based on assessment in the lesson, is not being fulfilled.



Medium-term planning

Medium-term planning for any subject will provide teachers with a planned route for covering key objectives across half a term or a term. For literacy and mathematics, medium-term planning needs to focus on key objectives. Teachers may need to adapt planning to link to the curricular target-setting process.

Schools often follow the sequence below in linking curricular targets to medium-term planning to close the loop between the processes of analysis of children's learning, curricular target setting and subsequent adaptations to planning.





Short-term planning

At the short-term planning level, the focus needs to be both on the learning objectives and on the success criteria. These summarise the key points that children need to understand and which will ultimately help them achieve the learning objective.

Opportunities need to be made to share the learning objective with children and to engage them in the process of devising agreed success criteria with you, when appropriate.

Sharing learning objectives

Teachers or practitioners and children need a shared understanding of what is to be learned (the learning objective) and what the children are expected to be able to do after they have learned it (the learning outcome). To help children we share the learning objectives with them, usually at the start of the lesson, using language they understand. We discuss with the whole class and with groups of children what they can do as a result of their learning, both during and towards the end of the lesson. We provide ongoing feedback on their responses, drawing on our analyses and judgements. Feedback in the lesson refers back to the objectives in order to identify for the children their successes and areas for improvement.

Success criteria

Success criteria are, in many ways, not new. Teachers have always asked children 'So what are the key things you need to remember?' The emphasis now, however, is on summarising the key points that link exclusively to the learning objective. The writing-up or displaying of success criteria can provide a visual prompt for children and teachers during the course of the lesson. In the Foundation Stage, practitioners often use photographs in a similar way. It is important to note here that asking children to reflect back to the teacher or practitioner the success criteria or what they need to understand gives children ownership of the success criteria. Success criteria provide a framework for a dialogue with children. Discussions focus on *how well* the success criteria have been met.

Planning the success criteria in short-term planning is vital to ensure a focus on learning as opposed to activities. The success criteria, based on the objective, shape the teaching and modelling and provide the children's focus while they are working. They are the key focus for the teacher's and children's feedback. The context or activity is then a



matter of personal choice, depending on what will best fulfil the learning objective and bring the children's learning experience to life.

The following examples show the learning objectives, identify the context and then illustrate the related success criteria.

Subject, Year	Learning objective	Context	Success criteria – steps to success
Literacy Y2	To be able to write instructions	Making jelly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use imperatives ('Take jelly out of the packet') • Make sure the instructions are in the correct order ('Pour boiling water on the jelly. Then stir until the jelly melts') • Use bullet points, numbers or first, second, to support layout
Science Y6	To plan and conduct a fair test	Comparing the grip of shoes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a range of items (different shoes) • Identify differences between objects to be tested (size of shoe, material of shoe, etc.) • Decide what and how to measure • Use the same method each time
Mathematics Y3	To measure and compare using standard units to the nearest whole unit or half unit – using a ruler	Measuring a variety of lengths of jelly snakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify where zero starts on the ruler and the size of the intervals • Use intervals on a ruler to line up the object (tail or head of snake) • Read from the scale on the ruler (that is nearest to either head or tail) • Recognise that length does not change however it is measured – the measurement should be the same (from head to tail or tail to head)

Success criteria do not ensure quality. In the fair test example above, quality is discussed through teacher modelling, self and peer assessment of the different examples and how well they meet the success criteria. Simply making a prediction, for instance, does not mean it is a good one.

CASE STUDY

John Gulson Primary School

Success criteria cards

John Gulson Primary School, Coventry, which has a high percentage of EAL learners, developed the use of success criteria cards. These cards provided prompts to children to support their learning towards the learning objective, whilst also addressing language acquisition.

Success criteria

How to achieve your Year 5 writing targets!

I can use conjunctions found in shared reading to join ideas in writing,
e.g. *although, since, whenever.*

Whilst working remember to ...

- Join two ideas in one sentence using one of these conjunctions:
before, after, although, since, whenever, because, whilst, when, so, as, in case
- Try changing a 'but' you have written to *however* or *although*.
Does it make sense when you read it aloud to a friend?
Does it mean the same?
- Use some of the conjunctions we have practised speaking and are displayed on our wall/tables to join two ideas in a complex sentence.
- Separate the clauses in your complex sentence with a comma.
Read it aloud to a friend. Does it 'sound' right?

CASE STUDY

Francis Baily School

Developing success criteria

At Francis Baily School, West Berkshire, some staff were becoming increasingly aware that the focus of their lessons was on activities for children, not on their learning. This situation had simply evolved over time. The senior management team planned to engage the whole school in developing the use of learning intentions and success criteria to try to shift the focus onto shared learning. They decided to start with literacy and held discussions with staff about what it was they wanted children to learn in a specific week. This focus on learning intentions in literacy was then developed across the curriculum.

Having started with learning intentions, they then moved on to developing success criteria.

The teacher leading AfL in the school led staff discussions about using success criteria for meeting the learning objective. Staff identified success criteria for short-term plans and then shared these success criteria with children, using phrases such as:

Our learning intention is to be able to write instructions.

In your work today I will be looking for how you make sure you have written the instructions in the correct order.

Again the school started with literacy and then moved into other subjects, such as design and technology, geography and PE. As teachers gained in confidence about using success criteria, they began involving the children in defining success criteria, very often starting with the more able children. Children were involved in setting their own criteria linked to the learning objective. This process led to children having a much clearer understanding of the learning goal and the success criteria for meeting that goal.

Staff followed a CPD model of staff-meeting discussions, teachers and practitioners trialling



success criteria involving children in their own classes, peer observations, and reviewing the process in smaller discussion groups. This supported teachers in reflecting on how to further involve children. There was a planned series of follow-up classroom observations by senior managers.

Short-term planning models were adapted to record success criteria on the plans. During this process (of staff linking success criteria to short-term planning) staff decided to move to success criteria outlined as prompts for children:

Remember to ...

These prompts were written up in the classroom for ongoing discussions with children to involve them actively in their learning. In developing their use of success criteria still further, teachers are beginning to turn these success criteria prompts into questions children can ask themselves to support self-evaluation.

Looking back over the last eighteen months, teachers at Francis Baily have reflected on the impact of this whole-school focus on success criteria:

Children now readily talk about learning.

There is a real excitement about teaching and learning.

I can really feel us getting somewhere.

CPD ACTIVITY

Focusing on the clarity of learning objectives

Aim

- To support teachers and practitioners in improving the clarity of learning objectives.

Pre-reading

- Read the glossary of terminology on page 41.

Materials

- Short-term planning for a foundation subject.

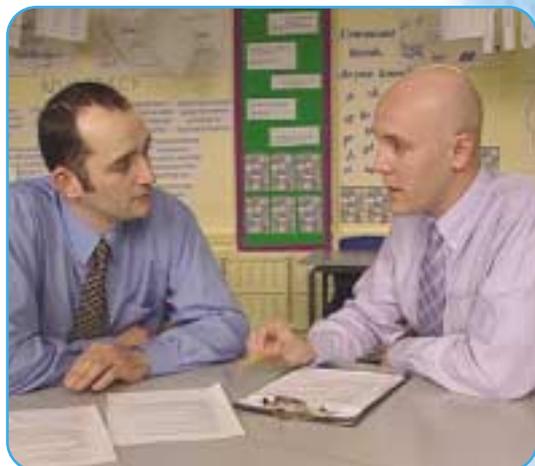
Organisation

This activity should be carried out as part of a series of staff meetings.

- In pairs, review the current short-term planning for a foundation subject and check the clarity of focus on learning objectives by posing the following questions:
 - Is the emphasis in the planning on the learning or on the activity the children will engage in?
 - Are the learning objectives clear?
 - Can you define from the plan what the children will be learning?
 - Can the learning objectives be shared effectively with children?
- During feedback, clarify the importance of focusing planning on learning as opposed to activities.

Next steps

- Discuss different ways teachers and practitioners share learning objectives with children.
- Plan for the next steps in amending planning to focus on learning. Agree a programme of paired monitoring of planning and observing teaching that focuses on the clarity of learning objectives.
- Trial ways of sharing learning objectives with children.



CPD ACTIVITY

Developing the use of success criteria

Aim

- To support teachers and practitioners in developing the use of success criteria.

Materials

- Handout 2 – Success criteria.
- Case study: Francis Baily School (page 35).
- Chart (page 33).
- Success criteria card (page 34).
- Short-term planning with one lesson identified.

Organisation

This activity should be carried out as part of a series of staff meetings.

- Review points from background reading about success criteria and the example success criteria card.
- Run through the case study of Francis Baily School to contextualise how one school developed success criteria.
- Use handout 2 – Success criteria, in pairs or groups, to create success criteria. Remember that the success criteria are the key things children need to understand that will help them achieve the learning objectives.
- Use the chart on page 33 when taking feedback on developing success criteria.
- In pairs, take last week's short-term plan, select one lesson and create success criteria. Pairs should then join together and discuss and amend the success criteria. Finally, you should come together with findings and share some examples.

Next steps

- Plan to conduct trials in which you share the teacher-defined success criteria from the planning with children.
- Plan for paired observations and coordinator monitoring of future short-term planning with success criteria incorporated.
- Plan for small-group discussions to refine success criteria and to plan for trialling success criteria that are jointly defined by children and teachers.
- Plan for a feedback session to evaluate the use of success criteria.

Success criteria

Learning objective	Context	Success criteria
Mathematics Y3 To measure and compare using standard units to the nearest whole unit or half unit – using a ruler	Measuring a variety of lengths of jelly snakes	
Literacy Y2 To be able to write instructions	Making jelly	
Science Y6 To plan and conduct a fair test	Comparing the grip of shoes	

Linking curricular targets and planning

Aim

- To support teachers and practitioners in developing links between curricular targets and planning.

Materials

- AfL video sequences, Clip 2, Clip 3 and Clip 4.
- Whole-school, year-group and class-group curricular targets.
- Medium- and short-term planning for literacy and mathematics.

Organisation

This activity should be carried out as part of a series of staff meetings.

Schools and settings who have yet to start on establishing curricular targets should complete the CPD activities for using curricular targets before embarking on activities to support linking curricular targets to planning. In schools and settings where curricular targets have been set for the whole school, year group and differentiated groups, the following activities would support closer linking between curricular targets and planning.

- Watch the AfL video sequence 'Using curricular targets: John Gulson School', Clips 2–4.
- Use two of the following prompts in pairs or small groups when watching the video:
 - How did the school go about establishing curricular targets in a manageable way?
 - How did the school identify the general area for whole-school improvement in writing?
 - What materials did the school use to support target setting?
 - How did the school identify groups of children?
 - What impact have the targets had on planning?
 - What were the issues for the school about monitoring curricular targets and planning?
- Review current planning to check what links there are to the curricular targets and consider the following questions:
 - What changes need to be made to your planning to link effectively with curricular targets?
 - Do group targets inform short-term planning? Are they used to focus group or guided work?
 - Does planning highlight opportunities to focus on curricular targets at specific times during a lesson, e.g. during whole-class sessions or plenaries?

Next steps

- As a whole school, agree next steps for improving links between curricular targets and planning.
- Plan for the leadership team to monitor planning and observe learning and teaching in order to evaluate improved links between curricular target setting and planning.

CPD ACTIVITY

Amending planning linked to assessment

Aim

- To support teachers and practitioners in amending planning based on ongoing assessment.

Materials

- Curricular targets for each class and grouping.
- Medium-term planning.
- *Foundation Stage profile handbook*.
- Sticky notes or highlighter pens.
- *Planning, teaching and assessing the curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties*.

Organisation

This activity should be carried out as part of a series of staff meetings.

- Work in pairs within key-stage groupings.
- Begin the meeting by reviewing curricular targets for each year group for the next term or half-term. Each member of staff should have a copy of each year group's targets.
- In pairs, review current medium-term plans for a focus on curricular targets.
- Using sticky notes or highlighter pens, amend planning to link to curricular targets.
- Discuss overall changes needed to medium-term planning to ensure a focus on curricular targets.

Next steps

- Hold a year-group or key-stage meeting mid-week and review short-term or weekly planning, with the focus of the discussion being on how short-term planning should be adapted in response to assessments made during the early part of the week.
- Discuss the issues of differentiation for groups who have made either more progress than expected or less progress than expected.
- Discuss how short-term planning can be amended effectively and efficiently.
- In pairs, make decisions about adapting current short-term planning and plan to meet briefly at the end of the week to evaluate the impact of adaptations to planning so that you can feed back this information to a full staff or key-stage meeting.



Glossary

There is a wide range of different language used in planning in primary schools and settings (e.g. teaching objectives, learning objectives, learning intentions, learning outcomes, success criteria). What matters is that teachers have a clear understanding of the learning and teaching objectives and learning outcomes (whatever they are currently called) and are able to communicate these to children. For the purposes of these materials, the following terms will be used.

Teaching objectives are the objectives the teacher is teaching to – for literacy and mathematics these will be drawn from the NLS and NNS Frameworks of objectives and in the Foundation Stage they will be drawn from the *Curriculum guidance*.

Learning objectives are what the teacher intends the child to learn based on the teaching objective.

(In practice, especially in medium-term planning, ‘teaching objectives’ and ‘learning objectives’ often refer to the same thing and can be used interchangeably.)

Success criteria summarise the key points that children need to understand as steps to success in achieving the learning objective. Ideally, children are involved in creating the success criteria with their teachers. Success criteria **provide a framework** for a **dialogue** with children. Discussion then focuses on how well the success criteria have been met. Teacher modelling, self and peer assessment and feedback should all revolve around how well the success criteria have been met.

Outcomes may be both ‘product’ and learning outcomes. For example, a child who has produced a successful advert (‘product’ outcome) will have learned how to write persuasively (learning outcome).

Curricular targets include those targets that relate to a specific element of a subject (e.g. ‘I can write a complex sentence’) and to targets for aspects of learning that occur across the whole curriculum (e.g. ‘I can take turns when working in a group’, ‘I can back up opinions with evidence’). Curricular targets for literacy are often based on NLS target statements and those for mathematics on the NNS key objectives. Curricular targets in the Foundation Stage will initially be informed by the practitioner’s understanding of what a child knows and can do, and the developmental appropriateness of the targets. They will be supported by NLS target statements and NNS key objectives.

Language acquisition targets or objectives are specifically set for children who are learning English as an additional language. These may be drawn from NLS target statements (e.g. for Year 5 writing ‘Use well-chosen phrases and vocabulary to engage the reader’, one language target might be to develop accurate verb–noun agreement when using well-chosen phrases – ‘I can make sure that verb endings agree with the subject when I am writing interesting phrases’).

Context is how the teacher situates the learning (see page 33).