



Buick Memorial Primary School

Assessment Policy

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At Buick Memorial Primary School our children have a wide range of abilities, preferred learning styles, experiences, personalities and interests.

Through a broad and balanced curriculum our pupils participate in a progression of learning experiences that are carefully structured to suit their needs. Assessment is an integral part of this learning and teaching process. Continuous monitoring of each child's progress gives a clear picture of each child's needs, achievements and abilities – enabling planning and delivery to be more effective, thereby raising attainment for every child. The outcomes of assessments will help children to become involved in raising their own expectations, celebrating their own achievements and increasing their self motivation.

The aim of this policy is to give a clear outline of assessment including all the important dimensions within it (recording, target setting, pupil progress, tracking and reporting techniques) that are used in Buick Memorial Primary School and to ensure that assessment as a whole is used as a tool to inform planning, to track pupil progress and to raise standards.

Aims of Assessment

Good assessment practice in our school aims to:

- guide and support the teacher as planner, provider and evaluator
- draw upon as wide a range of evidence as possible using a variety of assessment activities
- evaluate children's levels of understanding, confirm judgements and help to identify strengths and weaknesses for individual children
- enable the teacher to adjust teaching, to take account of assessment information and to focus on how pupils learn
- provide each child, the teacher and parents with an indication of achievement and progress in relation to ability
- provide information which can be used by parents or carers to understand their pupils' strengths, areas for focus or improvement and progress
- provide information on which to base future curriculum planning and resource decisions

- raise standards of attainment and behaviour, and improve pupil attitudes and responses
- enable the active involvement of pupils in their own learning by providing effective feedback which closes the gap between present performance and future standards required
- promote pupil self-esteem through a shared understanding of the learning processes and the routes to improvement
- track pupil performance and in particular identify those pupils at risk of underachievement and/or with special educational needs at both ends of the ability spectrum
- provide information which can be used by teachers, the Principal and SENCO as they plan for individual pupils and cohorts
- provide information which can be used to evaluate Buick Memorial Primary School's performance against its own previous attainment over time and against Northern Ireland standards
- provide information which can be used by other interested parties
- fulfil statutory requirements relating to assessment

Purposes

Diagnostic

To identify strengths and areas for improvement and to inform next steps.

Formative

To use assessment information to make specific improvements in learning.

Summative

To acknowledge, record and report pupil's overall performance and achievement at a point in time.

Evaluative

To inform curricular planning and provide information for monitoring and accountability.

Principles

Assessment should:

1. Be complementary to and supportive of, the key aims of the NI Curriculum
2. Be fit for purpose
3. Be manageable
4. Be supported by teacher professional judgements that are consistent and reliable
5. Be appropriate for all levels of system wide accountability

Two distinct types of assessment are identified and used in our school. These are: *Assessment for Learning and Assessment of Learning.*

Assessment for Learning (AfL)

Assessment for learning helps to identify the next steps needed to make progress. It takes account of pupils' strengths as well as weaknesses. Assessment for learning essentially promotes future 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.”
(Primary Framework, 2007)

In Buick Memorial Primary School, assessment for learning strategies are employed on a daily basis in every classroom to enhance learning for the pupils.

Assessment for Learning

- Often called formative assessment
- Takes place *during* the learning
- Makes pupils active participants in their learning and focuses on *next steps* in learning
- Feeds forward to manage improvements
- Fosters responsibility for & ownership of learning
- Establishes where they *are*, where they need to *go* and *how* to get there

Purposes

Assessment for learning will:

- Provide insight into pupils' learning for both pupils and teachers
- Promote success for all
- Support the target-setting process
- Enable continuous reflection on what pupils know now and what they need to know next
- Measure what is valued
- Promote immediate intervention and link judgements to learning intentions
- Raise standards by taking pupils to the edges of their capability

Within the Classroom

Implications for teaching

The teacher will:

- Explain to pupils what they are about to learn and why; (Sharing Learning intentions for new learning)
- Explain how to be successful at attaining the new learning; (Share success criteria & teacher feedback) The teacher will provide continuous oral and written feedback which identifies strengths and the next step for improvement
- Teach pupils how to understand quality criteria and use them to self-assess
- Promote pupil involvement in self assessment and peer assessment
- Act on insights gained to inform curricular targets
- Plan against what children know/can do/understand
- Make standards and objectives explicit to pupils
- Promote inclusion by attending to all pupils' learning needs, particularly for pupils who are at risk of underachievement
- Demonstrate to pupils how to ask, as well as answer, better questions to deepen their own learning. Use of questioning skills by teacher and pupils and allow 'wait' time (time to think)
- Build in time for focused observation of teacher-directed and child-initiated activity
- Be more focused on pupils' learning
- Be more concerned with the learning than activity or performance
- Be more reflective about own practice
- Pass more control to pupils

Impact on learning and the learner

The pupil will:

- Know what to do to improve
- Know what standards are required
- Know what has been achieved against known success criteria and what to do next
- Gain confidence, perseverance, motivation, independence and self-esteem as a learner
- Increase their awareness and understanding of their own learning style(s) and of how they learn best
- Improve their own self-evaluation skills
- Improve in progress and attainment

Assessment for Learning - Practices

Sharing Learning Intentions (LI)

This provides the focus for feedback from teachers or practitioners and other children, and for children's self-evaluation. There are two elements to sharing learning objectives:

- Sharing all the learning intentions across a unit of work as a way of keeping connections clear as the unit progresses. This may include discussing what the children already know at the beginning of a topic, creating mind maps or concept maps, providing a visual display which is referred to throughout the unit, presenting the unit as a list of questions to be explored. Children should be involved in planning the work ahead.
- Sharing learning intentions verbally and success criteria for individual lessons. This enables the teacher or practitioner to focus on the learning rather than the activity. The context for the learning will be separated from the intentions. Learning intentions and the success criteria for meeting those objectives are displayed in the classroom on working walls as a point of reference for self/peer assessment.

Effective Questioning

Rowe (1974) found that teachers leave a very short time before answering an unanswered question. A range of strategies can be used here such as no hands up, talking partners. It is important that questions asked are of a good quality to encourage deep thinking. Teachers need to frame questions properly and also encourage children to come up with their own questions, both closed and open ended.

Self and Peer Evaluation, Feedback and Marking

Learning intentions and the success criteria for meeting those objectives are displayed in the classroom as a point of reference for self/peer assessment. Children will also be given pieces of work written by other children to help them discuss and compare quality. Use of traffic lights or a similar process will also help self evaluation.

The feedback children receive about their learning from their teacher has a significant impact upon their progress. Being too general or giving broad targets is not helpful. Giving specific feedback helps children to understand how they can improve. Marking should always be meaningful, informative and positive, providing an indication of a child's achievement for both pupil and parent. Teachers' professional judgements of children's abilities, based on informal observations and on formal methods will be an important source of evidence in the monitoring process.

Assessment of Learning (AoL)

Assessment of learning is more associated with judgements based on scores or levels for statutory or summative purposes. Assessment of learning describes and labels past learning.

- Often called summative assessment
- Takes place *after* the learning
- Focuses on pupils' achievements
- Is used to provide feedback to parents based on performance evidence

Purposes

Assessment of learning will:

- Provide a summary judgement about what has been learned at a specific point in time
- Establish benchmarks about what children can do and about school performance
- Show what pupils can do without support
- Inform the target setting process
- Promote subsequent intervention(s)

Implications for teaching

The teacher will in progress meetings:

- Provide a periodic summary through teacher assessment and tests
- Identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding
- Identify weaknesses in the taught curriculum and in specific areas of learning through analysis of performance which guide future planning
- Implement strategies to accelerate progress to meet expectations (narrowing the gap)
- Mark and measure against scores and levels

Impact on learning and the learner

The pupil will:

- Be able to gauge own performance in comparison to others and against previous performance
- Be able to measure own performance against externally agreed criteria and standards
- Have a measure of performance at specific milestones in life
- Know what standards and expectations are required

Assessment of Learning - Summative Assessment Arrangements

Summative assessments are also used to help us to decide what a child can do at a particular time. These assessments are given periodically during the school year. Results of summative assessments should be used to assist teachers with setting criteria and target setting and thereby engage the children in the learning process creating clear expectations. Analysis of standardised tests should also be used as an essential part of pupil progress tracking – to inform future planning for classes, group and individuals. It can also provide essential information for identification of Special Educational Needs.

This is done through:

- school based assessment for specific tasks – at the end of a topic or after teaching a specific skill or concept
- termly assessments for curricular records
- end of key stage results
- standardised tests
- annual report to parents – Summer term

In the use of formative and summative assessments, teachers must ensure a balance so that a clear picture of each pupil's abilities and needs can be established. This information will be used to inform planning and individual / group / class target settings. The information should also be used to engage the pupils in the learning process and move their learning forward.

In Buick Memorial Primary School a wide range of Assessment of Learning Strategies are employed and are outlined in the appendix.

Using Assessment Outcomes to Inform Next Steps in Planning

At Classroom Level:

1. What level are my pupils now?
2. Where do they need to be next (With appropriate level of challenge)?
3. What are the best strategies to help pupils reach the next steps in their learning?

At Coordinator Level:

1. How is my area of responsibility performing compared with recent 3 year trends?
2. How is my area of responsibility performing compared with other curriculum areas?
3. What are the priorities for improving provision within my area of responsibility?

At Whole School Level:

1. How is our school performing, compared with recent 3 year trends?
2. How is our school performing compared with other schools in similar circumstances?
3. What are our whole school priorities for improving pupil outcomes, especially in Literacy and Numeracy?

Assessment Procedures

The following strategies will be used to monitor the Model pupils:

Primaries 1 & 2 complete MIST assessments. Teacher observation; Standardised Tests; Weekly Spelling and Tables Tests (P3 to P7); Statutory assessment in Year 3 and Year 7; Daily marking of children's work; Teacher feedback through 2 Stars and a Wish; Use of self and peer assessment opportunities where appropriate; teacher meetings with subject co-ordinators to discuss any areas of concern and view a selection of pupils' books; and other general strategies/methods employed by the teacher to assist planning and lesson making.

The class teacher and the Special Needs Co-ordinator will identify/assess pupils with Special educational needs and make the necessary provisions. This may take place as early as Year 1.

Teachers

Assessment is the responsibility of each member of staff. Teachers use it to identify what children can do, to identify different needs and to identify those children with learning difficulties so that their learning needs can be met.

Aims of teacher assessment:

- to identify individual pupil needs;
- to plan lessons appropriately;
- to identify areas of the curriculum are developing effectively and those which need to be improved;
- to plan teaching;
- to pass information about children's progress to parents;
- to pass information about children's progress to the next teacher.

Teachers assess each pupil throughout the year to assist him or her in planning and catering for the needs of children. Lessons are created and taught so that we may cater for the differing needs of pupils. Differentiation is an important element of the teaching.

There will be continuous monitoring of pupil progress. This will involve teachers in providing regular opportunities for the assessment of pupils in a variety of contexts, complementing teaching and learning activities.

From this assessment information, teachers will be able to determine the progress made by each pupil in relation to every subject on a daily basis.

Pupils' books are viewed by co-ordinators at least once a year to ensure that continuity and progress is maintained; and that the standards of presentation and handwriting are upheld.

Other staff

Other staff members may be required to assist teachers in assessing the pupils in their care. Learning Support Assistants may be asked to help individual pupils and this may entail guiding the pupil through tests. In such cases the LSA will be provided with a way to record what the pupil has done and map progress made. Such assistance will follow the usual guidelines and procedures. All staff are required to heed the rules of confidentiality in all cases.

Record keeping and recording

In accordance with statutory requirements this school will:

- keep a records of each pupils' academic achievements and their educational progress (a 'formative record of progress and achievement');
- update that record once a year on SIMs;
- disclose the contents, on request, to the pupil or his/her parents (as appropriate); transfer a summary of the information to a secondary school by 30th June when a pupil transfers at the end of KS2;
- if requested to do so, transfer the whole record to the receiving school; when a child transfers to another school at any other time, the formal record of progress and achievement must be transferred to the receiving school.

Recording

An important part of our assessment process will be the recording the achievement and progress of our children for the following purposes:

- to give teachers information about children's academic achievement;
- to give teachers information about children's progress in school;
- to provide a baseline to compare future achievements;
- to give parents access to information about their children's academic achievements and progress in school.

Assessment for Learning

In classrooms where assessment for learning is in place, students are encouraged to be more active in their learning and associated assessment. The ultimate purpose of assessment for learning is to create self-regulated learners who can leave school able and confident to continue learning throughout their lives. Assessment for learning can provide several opportunities to develop these skills.

Aims:

- to give pupils clear strategies on how they can improve their learning;
- to encourage dialogue between children and adults regarding progress, success and areas for improvement;
- to give pupils recognition and appropriate praise for the successes in their work;
- to develop pupils self-esteem and value of their learning; to have consistency across all year groups, making feedback accessible to pupils;
- to help the teacher to evaluate teaching and inform future planning.

Purposes of feedback

For pupils:

- to raise attainment and help each individual reach their full potential;
- to provide a personal response;
- to acknowledge achievements
- to encourage pupils to reflect on their own learning and strive
- to improve to allow pupils to interact with adults giving feedback;
- to teach pupils that feedback is a positive step in learning new skills and is an opportunity for them to correct / improve their learning.

For teachers:

- to demonstrate pupil's knowledge and attainments;
- to indicate where revision or repetition is needed;
- to indicate the next step for learning;
- to reflect the outcomes based on the learning intention;
- to help determine the groups for learning; to provide a sense of achievement for the pupils;
- to inform future planning.

For parents/ guardians:

Pupil's books will be sent home for parents to see on a termly basis. Parents/ guardians are able then to see how their child is performing in class and are asked to record responses on a given sheet.

- to demonstrate the Buick Memorial Primary School's expectations;
- to demonstrate individual development and progress;
- to demonstrate what the school values in pupil's work;
- to demonstrate how the teacher has worked with and acknowledged the efforts of their child.

Assessment for Learning in the Classroom

Teachers follow the Assessment for Learning procedures outlined below:

- Use of Walt board (FD/P3) / Learning Intentions (P4 & KS2)

- use the Walt board for introducing new learning which specifically outlines what is going to be learnt. Not every lesson needs a 'Walt'.

- Try to include TS & PC within learning intentions:

e.g. LI: predict what might happen at the end of the story by writing an ending.

LI: organise information about the planets into different categories using a mind map.

LI: work within a group to make an information poster on dinosaurs.

- Where appropriate provide opportunities for children to come up with Success Criteria.

Formative Feedback

- **Self- Assessment**

1) "Traffic Light" Reflection

Pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on learning at the end of each lesson using a coloured pencil.

- **Green: I got it!**
- **Orange: I'm not sure.**
- **Red: I didn't understand.**

Teachers are free to devise their own system of self-assessment but this should take place on a daily basis to allow children to reflect on their own learning

2) 2 Stars and a Wish – Pupil led

One piece of writing or other suitable work should be Self-Assessed each half term. This should be recorded using the Self-Assessment sheet or similar recording. Children should be aware of the Success Criteria for the lesson (where appropriate) and encouraged to think about what went well and what could be improved.

3) Peer Assessment (P4 – P7)

Collaborative activities – group assessments based on Success Criteria.

E.g. Walt: work together in a small group to create an information poster on a chosen insect.

Success Criteria:

- Use bullet points to organise information Include a diagram with labels
- Only include facts about the insect chosen
- Everyone in the group must take on a 'role'

OTHER EXAMPLES

It is suggested that pupils complete one group or individual peer assessment per term.

Teacher Assessment for Learning: Daily marking

- Teachers to mark to Learning Intentions / Success Criteria where appropriate.
- Pupils should be given a few minutes at the beginning of the next lesson to read comments made and initial to say they have read and understood the comments.
- Teachers to use green pen to mark work. This will provide continuity throughout all year groups so children find it easier to locate feedback on their work.

Teacher Assessment for Learning: 2 Stars and a Wish

- One piece of work per half term selected by teacher.
- Highlight two successes based on Success Criteria
- Identify one area for development / improvement
- These can be in the following format:
 - *Reminder* – remind pupil of Success Criteria
 - *Scaffolding* – ask a question
 - *Example* – provide alternative to show what pupil could have done.
- Pupils should be given time to read and respond if necessary.

Reporting

In accordance with statutory requirements, this school will send a written report to parents/ guardians by 30th June in every school year. This report will include information about:

- pupil's progress in every subject and activity which forms part of his/her curriculum;
- areas for development for the pupil to focus on in the following school year.

Teachers will meet parents in October to discuss the year ahead and how the pupil is settling; and on the child's progress to date. A second date in February will be offered to parents to discuss progress from October to date and what is being planned ahead.

Buick Memorial Primary School adopts an open door policy and parents are always welcome to make an appointment with their child's teacher at any time to discuss any worries or concerns relating to their child's education.

A written report will be sent to parents before the end of each academic year and parents may arrange to discuss the report with the teacher if they wish.

- ❖ All tests to be completed digitally.
- ❖ Teachers will record data for their own class in SIMS.

Class	Test	Sept	Jan/ Apr	May
Primary 1	Reception Baseline Assessment	✓		
	PASS		✓	
Primary 2	MIST			✓
	PASS		✓	
Primary 3	GL Assessment PTE 07			✓
	GL Assessment PTM 0 7			✓
	Cat4 PreA		✓	
	PASS		✓	
Primary 4	GL Assessment PTE 08			✓
	GL Assessment PTM 08			✓
	CAT 4A		✓	
	PASS		✓	
Primary 5	GL Assessment PTE 09			✓
	GL Assessment PTM 09			✓
	CAT 4B (MAY SKIP)		✓	
	PASS		✓	
Primary 6	GL Assessment PTE 10			✓
	GL Assessment PTM 10			✓
	CAT 4C		✓	
	PASS		✓	
Primary 7	NGRT A	✓		
	NGRT B		✓	
	NGRT C			✓
	GL Assessment PTE 11		✓	
	GL Assessment PTM 11		✓	
	Spelling- NGST	A	B	C
	PASS		✓	

- ❖ Data collection in May will be used for whole school analysis in May/June.
- ❖ Primary 7 will perform tests in 2 weeks before Easter break. If Easter break is early then they will perform tests in 2 weeks after Easter.
- ❖ Single Word, Parallel & Hodder – used at teacher's discretion