

The National Challenge

Raising standards, supporting schools

Gifted and Talented Pilot Programme

Element 2: Tracking progress of gifted and
talented pupils



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Element 2: Tracking progress of gifted and talented pupils

Rationale

Establishing rigorous monitoring and tracking systems is a critical first step towards ensuring the learning needs of the gifted and talented (G&T) progress group are met. Such systems enable schools to set appropriately ambitious and challenging targets for able G&T pupils. Targets for G&T learners should require a challenging progression trajectory that covers progress from the start of Key Stage 3 through to the end of Key Stage 4.

These numerical targets for the G&T progress group, identified separately in the Raising Attainment Plan (RAP), should in turn lead to curricular targets, which inform learning objectives and learning outcomes. Analysis should identify strengths and weaknesses in the performance of individuals and the group of pupils and then inform planning for teaching, to ensure that these G&T pupils make appropriate progress over time and keep to their challenging progression trajectory.

Monitoring the progress of the pupils on a frequent and regular basis will provide evidence that will enable senior leaders to take early and rapid action to ensure individual pupils' learning needs are met and to support teachers' professional development. Teachers' lesson planning and development of appropriate teaching strategies, as a consequence, should be tightly focused over each of the six-weekly cycles.

Quality standards

The Gifted and Talented Institutional Quality Standards (IQS) are the default tool for school self-evaluation and improvement of gifted and talented education.

To view the IQS, go to www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies and search using the ref: 'IQS'

Stronger Management Systems (SMS) *Element 10: Tracking pupil progress* provides a useful tool for supporting the G&T progress group and the quality standards below are drawn from this element. A senior leadership assessment against these will contribute to the evidence-base for a full whole-school self-evaluation using the IQS. The quality standards for leading and managing G&T education have been mapped against the IQS on page 7-9.

- a. All staff work collaboratively to gather, share and use information about pupils' progress, comparing rates of progress in all subjects to enable early, rapid and accurate identification of pupils' underperformance and reduce in-school variation.
- b. Teaching, intervention and revision programmes are informed by regular tracking of progress and adjusted in the light of pupils' needs.
- c. Pupils' progress in relation to their ambitious targets is monitored and tracked across time and compared across subjects using a range of performance measures including accurate and moderated teacher assessments and test results.
- d. Pupil attainment and rates of progress of individual and groups of pupils is a standing item for discussion on line management, department and year group meeting agendas.
- e. Pupils' attainment is benchmarked against local and national data and there is a shared understanding of what constitutes good progress.

- f. Through the line management chain, information from RAISEonline and other national and local data is used to hold senior leaders, middle leaders and teachers to account for the progress of pupils.
- g. Pupils, parents and carers have regular opportunities to discuss pupils' progress. Teachers actively involve pupils in setting their own targets.

It is recommended first that senior leaders carry out the self-assessment exercise against these quality standards, and that this evidence is fed into the wider self-evaluation exercise that will lead to a challenging but realistic improvement plan derived from the G&T IQS. This plan should include the RAP review cycle as a key action to give focus to existing work, and help to identify and prioritise actions that will ensure the school is systematically improving its G&T provision and its impact.

A self-assessment form to support this initial review can be found later on in this document in the section 'Self-assessment materials'.

Exemplification

Examples identified within SMS Element 10 are applicable to the progress G&T group of pupils. Some are expanded below.

- a. All staff work collaboratively to gather, share and use information about pupils' progress, comparing rates of progress in all subjects to enable early, rapid and accurate identification of pupils' underperformance and reduce in-school variation.

Before staff can collaborate and share information on G&T pupils they may need support in analysing and, more importantly, interpreting the data. The first step for senior leaders is to ensure that staff at all levels involved with the progress group are offered the guidance and support they require to make the best use of the data to inform their teaching and improve outcomes for their pupils.

Using existing whole-school responsibility and accountability for data and tracking, schools may find it helpful to review the calendar to identify what data is currently available and when it is collected and analysed. Through this a timetable to identify key tracking points for the progress group can be established with the staff involved in teaching the group.

CPD session 1 provides further guidance.

- b. Teaching, intervention and revision programmes are informed by regular tracking of progress and adjusted in the light of pupils' needs.
- c. Pupils' progress in relation to their ambitious targets is monitored and tracked across time and compared across subjects using a range of performance measures including accurate and moderated teacher assessments and test results.

Regular tracking of pupils' progress is an essential element of work with G&T pupils. Their progress over time needs to be monitored against ambitious targets and tracked using a range of performance measures, including ongoing teacher assessment and test results. The setting of challenging targets is a key aspect for the progress group of G&T learners and should include a trajectory that is ambitious.

The progress group of G&T pupils will, over time, demonstrate some variation in performance in particular subjects and the use of a tracking system at regular intervals will highlight this. Where there are examples of these spikes in performance it is critical that discussions take place to identify the cause and the actions that are needed. The discussions should involve the progress leader, the teacher(s) and the pupil so that pupil voice is seen as valued and important. It may be that some one-to-one support will be needed from an academic mentor or there may be external pressures that will need parental support.

There are several packages that schools are using to track pupils' attitudes to their learning and to themselves at school. If one of these is available it can be useful to identify the G&T progress group of pupils as a target group and monitor their attitudinal changes, both for positive improvements over the pilot and as an indicator of potential problems that will need effective mentoring.

Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP) materials will support teachers in this process. They are available for the core subjects, with assessment criteria now available on the National Strategies area of the Standards website for English, mathematics, science and ICT (and all foundation subjects by 2010). They provide a systematic and reliable way of identifying pupils' strengths and weaknesses and will be an important resource for teachers of this group of pupils. The materials may be particularly useful in the early stages of Key Stage 4 to identify underachievement and support accelerated progress for G&T underachievers.

At regular intervals teachers review pupils' work using APP guidelines to build a profile of their attainment. The information gained from the process allows teachers to:

- analyse by assessment focus the relative strengths and weaknesses of each pupil (at levels 3–8)
- assign each pupil an overall National Curriculum level
- use this information to set curricular targets to strengthen pupils' learning and inform their own future teaching by making links to the relevant objectives from the renewed Frameworks.

CPD session 2 provides further guidance on using APP materials and approaches.

Monitoring the progress of all pupils at frequent intervals is an essential element of a RAP. For the progress group of G&T pupils a system of six-week intervals should be appropriate. The importance of such frequent monitoring is that it enables early intervention in the case of pupils who are in danger of falling behind and missing their targets. The strategies that have been effective with those pupils who are identified as in need of catch-up are also applicable to the G&T progress group as this will include pupils who are particularly competent in one aspect in a subject but show major weaknesses that a timed targeted intervention will remediate. This could be within the lesson or at another time, managed by the school with an extra member of staff provided for this short intervention.

One model that many schools have now adopted is a regular cycle of five weeks teaching, with schemes of work designed to match this pattern across all subjects. This is then followed by a week of school-wide assessment, evaluation and revision where the need is identified. The leadership team collates all assessment information and evaluates the school-wide picture while teachers and pupils negotiate new targets ready for the start of the next teaching cycle.

- d. Pupil attainment and rates of progress of individual and groups of pupils is a standing item for discussion on line management, department and year group meeting agendas.
- e. Pupils' attainment is benchmarked against local and national data and there is a shared understanding of what constitutes good progress.
- f. Through the line management chain, information from RAISEonline and other national and local data is used to hold senior leaders, middle leaders and teachers to account for the progress of pupils.

Maintaining the responsibility and accountability chain is achieved through an effective line management structure and regular meetings for key staff involved in the pilot, including the progress leader. The use of performance data in relation to targets is central to the accountability conversation. There is an essential level of knowledge and skill related to data analysis and evaluation and it is likely that some staff will need support or time to explore the training through RAISEonline.

The Venn analysis exemplified in Element 1 provides an important tool for benchmarking the attainment of the G&T progress group of pupils. It is important for schools to name individual pupils on the Venn analysis to raise staff awareness of the potential for high attainment.

In addition schools need to explore thoroughly and be clear about what constitutes good progress for these pupils and to tease out the subtle differences between subjects.

- g. Pupils, parents and carers have regular opportunities to discuss pupils' progress. Teachers actively involve pupils in setting their own targets.

It is essential that G&T pupils (and all pupils) are involved in discussions about their progress and setting targets. This can be planned as part of the six-weekly cycle of lessons using assessment sheets towards the end of the cycle for pupils to identify secure aspects of learning, where they have concerns and how their understanding can be applied in other areas. Through this process of reflection and dialogue pupils are able to develop their own voice, independence and resilience as they understand, articulate and take responsibility for improvements in their own learning. Assessment for Learning (AfL) should also engage parents and carers and provide opportunities to share information with teachers about pupils' development, interests, strengths and needs.

Open evenings and newsletters can encourage parents and carers to be actively informed and involved in their child's progress and developments. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) has published a strategy for involving parents more in their child's education in *Higher Standards, Better Schools For All: More choice for parents and pupils -Summary* (1960-2005-DOC-EN) available at publications.dcsf.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/1960-2005PDF-EN-01.pdf

CPD session 3 explores how to develop engagement of parents and carers of G&T pupils more fully.

Self-assessment materials, Gifted and Talented Pilot Programme: Tracking progress of gifted and talented pupils

This exercise may be completed individually or in groups representing a range of perspectives across the school. Make a judgement and note evidence against each of the quality standards and use the notes to make links between your judgements and available professional development materials.

Links with IQS are detailed on the following pages.

Feed the evidence into your IQS review of whole-school provision and use to inform the development of your G&T improvement plan.

Quality standards for tracking pupil progress	RAG	Evidence of judgements and notes for action
a. All staff work collaboratively to gather, share and use information about pupils' progress, comparing rates of progress in all subjects to enable early, rapid and accurate identification of pupils' underperformance and reduce in-school variation		
b. Teaching, intervention and revision programmes are informed by regular tracking of progress and adjusted in the light of pupils' needs		
c. Pupils' progress in relation to their ambitious targets is monitored and tracked across time and compared across subjects using a range of performance measures including accurate and moderated teacher assessments, informed by the use of Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP) in core subjects, and test results		
d. Pupil attainment and rates of progress of individual and groups of pupils is a standing item for discussion on line management, department and year group meeting agendas		
e. Pupils' attainment is benchmarked against local and national data and there is a shared understanding of what constitutes good progress		
f. Through the line management chain, information from RAISEonline and other national and local data is used to hold senior leaders, middle leaders and teachers to account for the progress of pupils		
g. Pupils, parents and carers have regular opportunities to discuss pupils' progress. Teachers actively involve pupils in setting their own targets		

Quality standards for tracking pupil progress mapped against IQS for G&T	IQS for G&T (extract based on entry level unless otherwise stated)	Personalised education heading
<p>a. All staff work collaboratively to gather, share and use information about pupils' progress, comparing rates of progress in all subjects to enable early, rapid and accurate identification of pupils' underperformance and reduce in-school variation</p>	<p>1. Identification</p> <p>ii. (Developing) The record is used to identify under-achievement and exceptional achievement and to track/review pupil progress</p> <p>ii. (Exemplary) The record is supported by a comprehensive monitoring, progress planning and reporting system which all staff regularly share and contribute to.</p>	<p>A Effective teaching and learning strategies</p>
<p>b. Teaching, intervention and revision programmes are informed by regular tracking of progress and adjusted in the light of pupils' needs</p>	<p>5. Assessment for Learning</p> <p>i. (Developing) Routine progress reviews make effective use of data to plan for progression</p> <p>i. (Exemplary) Assessment data are used by teachers across the school to ensure challenge and sustained progression in individual pupils' learning</p> <p>6. Transition</p> <p>i. (Developing) Transfer information concerning G&T pupils informs targets for pupils to ensure progress. Particular attention is given to including new admissions</p>	<p>C Assessment for Learning</p>
<p>c. Pupils' progress in relation to their ambitious targets is monitored and tracked across time and compared across subjects using a range of performance measures including accurate and moderated teacher assessments, informed by the use of APP in core subjects, and test results</p>	<p>1. Identification</p> <p>iii. (Exemplary) ID processes are regularly refreshed in the light of pupil performance and value-added data.</p> <p>2. Effective Provision in the Classroom</p> <p>i. Teaching and learning strategies are diverse and flexible, meeting the needs of distinct pupil groups within the G&T population (e.g. underachievers, exceptionally able)</p> <p>5. Assessment for Learning</p> <p>i. Processes of data analysis and pupil assessment are employed throughout the school to plan learning for G&T</p>	<p>A Effective teaching and learning strategies</p> <p>C Assessment for Learning</p>

Quality standards for tracking pupil progress mapped against IQS for G&T	IQS for G&T (extract based on entry level unless otherwise stated)	Personalised education heading
<p>d. Pupil attainment and rates of progress of individual and groups of pupils is a standing item for discussion on line management, department and year group meeting agendas</p>	<p>7. Leadership</p> <p>i. (Developing) Responsibility for G&T provision is distributed and evaluation of its impact shared at all levels. Staff subscribe to policy at all levels.</p>	<p>D School organisation</p>
<p>e. Pupils' attainment is benchmarked against local and national data and there is a shared understanding of what constitutes good progress</p>	<p>3. Standards</p> <p>i. Levels of attainment and achievement for G&T pupils are comparatively high in relation to the rest of the school and are in line with those in similar schools</p>	<p>A Effective teaching and learning strategies</p>
<p>f. Through the line management chain, information from RAISEonline and other national and local data is used to hold senior leaders, middle leaders and teachers to account for the progress of pupils</p>	<p>3. Standards</p> <p>i. Levels of attainment and achievement for G&T pupils are comparatively high in relation to the rest of the school and are in line with those in similar schools</p> <p>5. Assessment for Learning</p> <p>i. Processes of data analysis and pupil assessment are employed throughout the school to plan learning for G&T pupils</p> <p>7. Leadership</p> <p>i. (Developing) Responsibility for G&T provision is distributed and evaluation of its impact shared at all levels. Staff subscribe to policy at all levels</p>	<p>A Effective teaching and learning strategies</p> <p>C Assessment for Learning</p> <p>D School organisation</p>
<p>g. Pupils, parents and carers have regular opportunities to discuss pupils' progress. Teachers actively involve pupils in setting their own targets</p>	<p>5. Assessment for Learning</p> <p>ii. Dialogue with pupils provides focused feedback which is used to plan future learning</p> <p>iii. Self- and peer-assessment based on clear understanding of criteria, is used to increase pupils' responsibility for learning</p> <p>13. Engaging with communities, the family, and beyond</p> <p>i. Parents/carers are aware of the school's policy on G&T provision, and are kept informed of developments in G&T provision</p>	<p>C Assessment for Learning</p> <p>E Strong partnerships beyond the school</p>

Professional development

CPD session 1 – Tracking pupils' progress in relation to targets (60 minutes)

Participants

This session should involve the senior line manager for G&T, the leading teaching/progress leader and all staff involved in teaching the G&T progress group.

Objectives

- To ensure that staff involved in the pilot know what data is to be collected and the time line for preparation and analysis
- To agree the basis of assessments
- To share approaches to curricular target setting

Resources

- Resource sheet 1.1: Curricular targets summary – page 15
- A calendar of what data is to be collected based on existing patterns for data collection
- A data analysis sheet for the progress group of G&T pupils – including transfer information and projected grades from, for example, Fischer Family Trust (FFT) analysis.

Senior leaders should prepare these for participants before the CPD session.

Activity 1 Data analysis

(15 minutes)

Issue copies of the data analysis for the pupils selected for the progress group. Ask staff to discuss the analysis in pairs, listing anomalies that they note, such as a pupil who is exceptionally able in languages but has a projected GCSE result for mathematics of a D grade.

Pull together the issues and discuss strategies that the staff, as a team, need to adopt to:

- meet the outcomes identified in the RAP
- develop a progression trajectory for individuals based on their Key Stage 3 outcomes.

Give out copies of the calendar identifying what data is to be recorded when for the pilot group. As a group agree the expectations for staff – who collects what and when; when and how findings will be shared; how the data is to be used to influence practice.

Activity 2 Securing robust assessment

(15 minutes)

The purpose of this activity is to agree the basis of assessment. Begin by asking staff to work in pairs to list what they will base their assessments on.

A common response will be teacher assessment based on criteria such as that provided by the GCSE awarding bodies. Where appropriate, consider the core subject use of assessment criteria identified within APP and linked with new online Frameworks to provide learning objectives. These include the Year 11 extension for some aspects of the subjects and are likely to be well suited to able pupils in the pilot.

Summarise the approaches before moving on to Activity 3, noting particular subjects where extra support or professional development may be needed.

Activity 3 Curricular target setting

(20 minutes)

This activity enables staff to share approaches to curricular target setting across subjects. Curricular target setting is the process through which staff use grade/level targets, day-to-day and periodic assessments to identify and agree the next steps in learning for a pupil to secure their expected progress.

In triads, ask staff to describe the approach to curricular target setting for their subject and to identify common methods. Key areas for discussion are:

- the use of day-to-day and periodic teacher assessment
- when, where and how curricular targets are negotiated and reviewed
- who records targets and where they are recorded
- subject guidance to ensure quality and consistency
- school guidance and quality assurance to ensure subjects use complementary approaches and the role of pastoral/learning or year tutors
- how curricular targets inform planning of subsequent learning
- the extent to which the subject/school engages and informs parents and carers about curricular target setting.

In plenary, pull together the common methods identified. As necessary, summarise that curricular target setting is the first step towards improvement for the progress group, noting the following points taken from the National Strategies' *Assessment for Learning materials* (0043-2004 G), Unit 6. The unit shows how to get beyond numerical targets to specific targets for learning. A curricular target expresses in words, not numbers, a specific aspect of the curriculum as a focus for improvement. It can be for a whole class, a group or individual pupil and can relate to the long-term (for example a term or a year), medium-term (for example a few weeks) or short-term (for example a few lessons). Key points are listed in Resource sheet 1.1, the curricular targets summary handout.

Plenary

(10 minutes)

Structure this discussion session to agree:

- the time line for tracking of the G&T progress group
- the approaches to be used
- the role of the progress leader
- further development or support needs for those involved
- wider implications for subject teams and the wider school community.

Where appropriate, steps to action a first round of curricular target setting could form the basis of a six-week improvement cycle. Pupils will be able to show that they have clear, high-quality curricular targets, with evidence of teacher planning and pupil action to support improvement.

CPD session 2 – Using APP and AfL approaches to support tracking (40 minutes)

Participants

This session should involve the senior line manager for G&T, the leading teacher/progress leader and all staff involved in teaching the G&T progress group. Schools may also wish to involve a G&T pupil enquiry group drawn from the G&T progress group.

Objectives

- To use the IQS to identify the current stages of development with regard to assessment and tracking for the progress group of pupils
- To demonstrate the CQS and identify CPD uses
- To explore and identify the potential of the APP materials and clarify particular CPD needs

Resources

Resource sheet 2.1 and resource sheets 2.2a, 2.2b and 2.2c (APP) are required for this session and are included on pages 16 to 19.

Activity 1

(15 minutes)

The purpose of this session is to alert staff to the materials available and identify where they should look for further professional development, particularly with respect to tracking and target setting.

Hand out resource sheet 2.1, explaining that it has been drawn from IQS and that the descriptions for entry, developing and exemplary have been developed to help staff identify where they are and next steps in development.

Ask staff to consider the three sections:

- attainment and assessment data
- the use of formative assessment and individual target setting
- pupils reflecting on their own progress.

Ask them:

- to agree the likely starting points for the G&T progress group against this grid
- to highlight particular CPD needs that the grid identifies for individual teachers or for all involved with the G&T Pilot Programme.

Use a data projector to demonstrate the CQS Layer 2, feature 4, prompt 3: *Understanding learners' needs: How well is learners' progress assessed, monitored and evaluated in order to raise achievement?* Show the generic and subject specific tabs and consider the potential of this as a professional development tool. This is available as a DVD-ROM or at www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies Search using the ref 'Gifted and Talented: Classroom Quality Standards (CQS) guided resource'

Activity 2

(15 minutes)

This activity may need adapting for departments in the school where use of APP materials and approaches is well established. If this is the case ask one of the staff involved to prepare a brief presentation on the approaches and benefits. If not, then hand out resource Sheets 2.2a, 2.2b and 2.2c.

Ask staff to read through the notes about APP and discuss in pairs how the G&T progress group would benefit from these approaches. Identify particular benefits and then consider the implications for professional development.

If time is available use the National Strategies website to demonstrate the APP resources available: www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies Select 'Secondary' then 'Assessment', then 'Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP)'.

Plenary

(10 minutes)

Summarise the professional development issues noted regarding CQS and APP and next steps in development.

CPD session 3 – Exploring parental involvement and pupil voice (45 minutes)

Participants

This session should involve the senior line manager for G&T, the leading teacher/progress leader and all staff involved in teaching the G&T progress group and relevant year/pastoral or learning tutors. Schools may also wish to involve a G&T pupil enquiry group drawn from the G&T progress group.

Objectives

- To agree strategies that will effectively involve parents with the pilot
- To establish agreed approaches for development of pupils in taking increased responsibility for their own learning
- To identify particular professional development needs of staff involved with the pilot group of G&T pupils

Resources

Resource sheet 2.1 from CPD session 2

Activity 1

(15 minutes)

Ask staff in threes to reflect on parental involvement and agree on:

- how often should parents and carers discuss their child's progress over a year?
- should the pupil be there, as part of a three-way conversation?
- what would be the agenda for the discussion?
- when would the discussions be scheduled?

Summarise and agree on the way ahead for the G&T progress group.

Activity 2

(15 minutes)

Look at resource sheet 2.1, used in CPD session 2.

Note that the emphasis is on developing pupils' abilities to take responsibility for their own learning and to reflect on their progress against their targets.

Ask staff in threes to identify strategies to achieve this in lessons and the potential barriers that will need to be overcome.

Plenary:

(15 minutes)

In sharing and bringing together ideas, summarise that to achieve effective involvement, teachers need to develop dialogue with their G&T pupils that focuses on their understanding of their learning. Note that a DCSF project built around 'Learning Conversations' has detailed suggestions. Ideas from that work are incorporated into a Key Stage 4 project to improve English and mathematics results – Study Plus. The key aspect in all of this is to involve the pupil with their teacher or another adult 'coach' in a discussion that focuses on learning skills and strategies and attitudes to learning as well as learning outcomes and targets. In mathematics pupils used self-evaluation grids after each six-week piece of work to facilitate the discussion with the 'coach' and to explore aspects of learning as well as skills mastered.

Close the session by selecting and agreeing the key strategies to implement to involve parents with the pilot and identify particular CPD needs.

Resources

Resource sheet 1.1: Curricular targets summary

- A curricular target expresses in words, not numbers, a specific aspect of the curriculum as a focus for improvement. It can be for a whole class, a group or individual pupil and can relate to the long term (for example a term or year), medium term (for example a few weeks) or short term (for example a few lessons). Curricular target setting is the first step towards improvement for the focus group.
- A curricular target should relate to specific classes, groups or individual pupils who need more effective provision, intervention, support or monitoring in order to make better progress.
- Curricular targets provide a focus for teaching. Teaching objectives in medium-term plans or schemes of work need to directly address the curricular targets. These will be further refined in learning objectives for lessons to ensure that the target is being addressed. A target may be revisited several times in a unit, in a year and across the key stage to ensure that there is progression and achievement towards the target.
- Curricular targets are established through an analysis of available information about what has and has not been learned. An appropriate target ensures that pupils' prior attainment and achievements are built on throughout the key stage. It should focus teaching on areas of underperformance and so support improved learning outcomes for pupils.

Resource sheet 2.1: Assessment for Learning

Self-evaluation grid (Gifted and Talented IQS)

Generic elements	Entry	Developing	Exemplary
Assessment for Learning	i. Processes of data analysis and pupil assessment are employed throughout the school/college to plan learning for gifted and talented pupils	i. Routine progress reviews, using both qualitative and quantitative data, make effective use of prior, predictive and value-added attainment data to plan for progression in pupils' learning	i. Assessment data are used by teachers and across the school/college to ensure challenge and sustained progression in individual pupils' learning
	ii. Dialogue with pupils provides focused feedback which is used to plan future learning	ii. Systematic oral and written feedback helps pupils to set challenging curricular targets	ii. Formative assessment and individual target setting combine to maximise and celebrate pupils' achievements
	iii. Self- and peer-assessment, based on clear understanding of criteria, are used to increase pupils' responsibility for learning	iii. Pupils reflect on their own skill development and are involved in the design of their own targets and tasks	iii. Classroom practice regularly requires pupils to reflect on their own progress against targets, and engage in the direction of their own learning

Resource sheet 2.2a: Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP)

Published materials

The **assessment guidelines** are the criteria for each level and the key APP document. These sheets help you to assess pupils' work in relation to national standards and provide a simple recording format for the assessment criteria in each of the assessment focuses in the subject at each level.

APP is well backed up with extensive materials which can be used for reference as and when required.

- The **APP Handbook** is designed to aid teachers in using the materials and implementing the approach.
- The **Standards files** are collections of assessed evidence of pupils' performance, exemplifying attainment at different levels, to give a feel for each level, and show how to aggregate performance in different aspects of a subject.

The Standards files are intended as a reference resource as they represent exemplification of standards in pupils' work which will help you to make judgements on the levels at which your pupils are working. The APP Handbook for secondary is available as a discrete document for each subject; for primary it is available as web pages and supporting download documents.

These resources are currently available to support APP in English (reading and writing) and mathematics at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, and in science and ICT at Key Stage 3 only. Materials are being developed for science at Key Stage 2.

Resource sheet 2.2b: Assessing Pupils' Progress

Using APP to benefit pupils

APP is about pupils – identifying what they're good at and where they need more support. One of the greatest values of APP is the way it can help you to learn more about your pupils' strengths and weaknesses in different aspects of your subject.

Over time, APP judgements also tell you how a pupil is progressing and alert you if they fall off trajectory. This is the basis for intervention planning to help pupils to progress.

For example:

- if your APP assessment guidelines reveal similar gaps in learning for most of your class, APP will help you to adjust your planning to focus on areas of underperformance
- if similar gaps in learning are shared by only a few pupils, you might plan some guided learning sessions to address the particular needs of those pupils
- APP assessment information can also be used to identify pupils who may benefit from other interventions
- APP also supports the setting of meaningful curricular targets based on analysis of pupils' real strengths and areas for improvement.

Key points:

- Curricular targets, informed by APP, can be shared with pupils and parents and carers to support discussions about where pupils are in their learning and what they need to do to progress.
- Once you've identified gaps in pupils' learning, you should use the framework objectives and programmes of study to plan for relevant teaching and learning opportunities.

Resource sheet 2.2c: Assessing Pupils' Progress

Making it manageable

One of the great advantages of APP is that it uses national criteria that have been rigorously trialled by teachers in pilot schools. Pilot schools trialled APP approaches in addition to their current assessment systems, and applied the method to just a handful of pupils. Now that we are moving towards full adoption, we encourage schools to apply APP to all their pupils to avoid running two assessment systems. This will ease the workload and avoid confusion. Schools have found, in any case, that it is easiest to embrace APP fully and to disengage the old system. APP fits better with new emphases on progression, personalisation and forward planning.

Teachers who use APP say that it looks daunting at first but they are surprised at how quickly they are able to familiarise themselves with the assessment criteria. They also say that the best way to do this is through use – by diving in and having a go. They soon internalise the criteria and the process begins to take less time.

Of course there's an initial workload, as there is with anything new, but this can be significantly reduced by:

- trusting your APP judgements and not trying to do APP in addition to other internal tests or assessment criteria
- diving in and having a go – practice promotes familiarity
- starting with a few pupils or just one class if you wish, but planning to scale up quickly
- making use of the support materials as you need them
- seeing APP as a whole-school approach to teacher assessment.

It's not an easy option. What is? Time and practice help. Support from other teachers who've already had a go also helps. It's worth the effort.

References and web links

Materials to support pupil tracking have been produced by the National Strategies. There is a whole-school guide for senior leaders and subject specific guides:

Tracking for success - the whole-school document:

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies Search using the ref '1545-2005FLR-EN'.

Tracking for success in mathematics:

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies Search using the ref '00007-2007BKT-EN'.

Tracking for success in English:

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies Search using the ref '1699-2005DOC-EN'.

Assessing Pupils Progress (APP) materials are available to download from

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies Select 'Secondary', then 'Assessment', then 'Assessing Pupils' progress'.

The renewed Frameworks are now available online and provide:

- learning objectives for both Key Stages 3 and 4
- direct links to new programmes of study
- increased emphasis on key concepts and processes
- guidance on planning and teaching to ensure effective progression
- an electronic format to support flexible planning.

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies Select 'Secondary', then 'Secondary Frameworks'.

The government has published a strategy for involving parents more in their child's education in *Higher Standards, Better Schools For All: More choice for parents and pupils -Summary* (1960-2005-DOC-EN) publications.dcsf.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/1960-2005PDF-EN-01.pdf

The SMS programme is designed to help schools improve how leaders and managers at all levels play their part in improving standards. It focuses on practical but essential elements of management, providing materials to help schools review, refocus and improve systems and structures. SMS Element 10 is referred to in this booklet: www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies Search using the ref 'Stronger Management Systems (SMS)'.

The IQS are designed to support improving the quality of gifted and talented education in settings, schools and colleges as a whole. The leading teacher handbook and the e-modules provide further guidance and support on using the IQS to support improvements in gifted and talented education. www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies Search using the ref 'Institutional quality standards (IQS) self-evaluation tool'.

The user guide can be found at: www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies Search using the ref 'IQS'

The CQS guided resource has been specifically designed to support core subject leads and leading teachers in their work with teachers and other practitioners to raise the quality of classroom provision and improve outcomes for gifted and talented learners. The CQS will be of particular interest to subject leaders and teachers/practitioners involved in delivery of the core subjects and ICT. Section 4.3 is particularly useful for this booklet:

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies Search using the ref '00556-2008BKT-EN'.

Analysing data has a well-established set of sites available to schools including:

RAISEonline – www.raiseonline.org

Fischer Family Trust – www.fischertrust.org

To support senior leaders and subject leaders with the interpretation of data there is a self-study unit on the National Strategies CPD website:

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies Search using the ref 'RAISEonline for secondary', select 'Evaluating School Performance: RAISEonline for secondary', then 'RAISEonline for secondary'.

Audience: Subject teachers, year leaders, G&T leading teachers and senior managers in secondary schools, G&T leads, National Challenge Advisers, SIPs and school improvement advisers in Local Authorities
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Fax 0845 60 333 60
Textphone 0845 60 555 60
email: dcsf@prolog.uk.com

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