

The professional development meetings (PDMs) in schools

PDM: Assessment for learning 1

Day-to-day assessment strategies

The purpose of the Intensifying Support Programme (ISP) booklets

These booklets are designed to support schools in setting up a school improvement programme that draws together the strands of raising standards and improving teaching and learning.

Context

These materials have been produced as part of the ISP. This programme aims to work in partnership with schools and LEAs and to coordinate support.

The four key themes running through the ISP and providing the focus for the work are:

- raising standards and accelerating progress;
- improving the quality of teaching and learning;
- improving the conditions for learning;
- developing the school as a professional learning community.

The ISP booklets have been produced separately for all schools so that they can be part of their school improvement materials. The booklets provide suggestions for a sequence of professional development meetings (PDMs).

All the materials referred to are available on the Primary Strategy website (www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary).

**Non-negotiables
and write RAP**

**Review RAP 1
and write RAP 2**

**Review RAP 2
and write RAP 3**

Review RAP 3

TERM 1

TERM 2

TERM 3

**PDM
1**

**PDM
2**

**PDM
3**

**PDM
4**








**PDM
5**

**PDM
6**

SUPPLEMENTARY PDM

Assessment for learning 1: Day-to-day assessment strategies

The seven original booklets cover the key areas of the programme and are designed for use by schools to support the school improvement cycle of audit, plan action and review.

 Introducing the Intensifying Support Programme (ISP)	 PDM 3 Questioning
 PDM 1 Introducing the ISP in school and setting curricular targets for the first half-term	 PDM 4 Modelling and demonstrating
 PDM 2 Sharing objectives	 PDM 5 Problem solving and investigating
	 PDM 6 Taking stock and evaluating progress

In addition, there are supplementary PDMs, of which this is one. The supplementary PDMs can also be used as part of the programme, depending upon the identified needs and priorities of the school. They currently include:

- **Assessment for learning 1: Day-to-day assessment strategies**
- **Assessment for learning 2: Feedback on learning**
- **Speaking, listening and learning**

The PDMs

The PDMs are timetabled half-termly staff meetings that introduce the focus for the half-term and review previous work.

In the pilot the PDMs were an effective mechanism for improving teaching and raising standards because:

- their regularity kept the programme as high profile and attendance was expected from all staff;
- the priority for each meeting was linked to the half-termly priorities on the raising attainment plan (RAP), which also identified the linked monitoring and support;
- they followed the same agenda each time:
 - introducing the half-term literacy and mathematics curricular targets;
 - introducing the teaching and learning focuses for the meeting and linking them to the key themes;
- the emphasis on professional discussion and the use of individual development plans (IDPs) supported staff to reflect on progress since the last meeting and current practice, to set individual short-term targets and to extend opportunities for professional dialogue among all staff.

Notes to the presenter

- The prompts in this booklet are intended as possible examples of topics for the PDM. You will want to make decisions about the focus and content of the session and adapt it according to the development of individual schools.
- The booklet is written to be used with a school staff but the PDM should be led either by a consultant or by a member of the SMT.
- As you present the session, keep the key messages in mind so that participants leave the training with a clear understanding of where they need to focus their development over the coming half-term.
- Record relevant contributions on a flipchart as you work through the session so that participants can use these prompts when they complete their IDP towards the end of the meeting. You may wish to divide the flipchart into three sections to cover Teaching strategies, Conditions for learning, the Professional learning community.
- The PDMs are written so that they include input, activities and discussion. It is worth including practical examples or video sequences in the training.
- As you take participants through the session, note staff who are confident in this area and could share their expertise by, for example, supporting colleagues in school. Also note staff who are less confident and who may need more focused support over the half-term.
- For each PDM prepare sheets of layered curricular targets for literacy and for mathematics, with one target for each year group. Decide whether you or the staff will add a 'child-friendly' version of the targets to the sheets. See the Resources list for details of the Primary National Strategy literacy and mathematics targets.
- You will need to prepare activities and identify video extracts for use in the section focusing on teaching strategies.

SUPPLEMENTARY PDM

Assessment for learning 1:

Day-to-day assessment strategies

Agenda for PDM: Assessment for learning 1: Day-to-day assessment strategies

- 1** Review and reflect on progress since the last meeting. **10 mins**
- 2** Set class curricular targets for the half-term. **20 mins**
- 3** Focus on the key themes: improving the quality of teaching and learning, improving the conditions for learning and developing the school as a professional learning community. **20 mins**
Input on improving the quality of teaching and learning:
Assessment for learning
- 4** Identify targets and complete the IDP. **10 mins**

Note: The agenda and materials are written to be used in one meeting but in the ISP pilot many schools had two meetings each half-term because they found this more effective, and, particularly at first, they needed extra time to separate sections 2 and 3.



SUPPLEMENTARY PDM

Assessment for learning 1: Day-to-day assessment strategies

1 Review and reflect on progress since the last meeting

Participants review the IDP targets they set at the last PDM. They discuss with colleagues successes and areas which still need addressing. They record their needs for future development and support, noting whether these are individual needs or part of a wider issue. Participants review the progress of their class against the curricular targets.

2 Set curricular targets

The curricular targets are the key focus for raising standards and accelerating progress and for assessing progress.

Key messages: Raising standards and accelerating progress

This section covers identification of curricular targets for the whole class and the targeted group for the half-term.

Make the following points.

- Remind colleagues that the school has identified key curricular literacy and mathematics targets on which to focus. These will be broken down into small targets for each half-term for each class.
- Share the focus areas for targets for this half-term.
- Share with each year group their half-term targets for reading, writing and mathematics for the class. There should not be more than three targets in all.
- Lead a discussion on what children will need to know to achieve each target. Link the points raised to input from the literacy and mathematics coordinator.
- Lead a year group discussion on teaching the targets (when to teach each target, in which subjects, etc.).
- Remind staff that they will need to plan to teach the targets over the half-term and assess class progress towards the targets so that they can share information about progress at the next meeting.
- Remind staff that the expectation is that the majority of children will achieve these targets and will be working at age-related levels (with some differentiation). Targets will need to be made explicit in the classroom (see Improving the conditions for learning).
- Remind staff that in the Foundation Stage children will be involved in making choices about the next steps in their learning, linked to their needs and interests.

Setting targets for this half-term

Resources

Link targets for this half-term to NLS target statements and NNS key objectives (for the Foundation Stage link to the QCA guidance *Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage*).

For further details see www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary and the CD-ROM and PDM 1 booklet.



3 Improving the quality of teaching and learning: Assessment for learning 1 – Day-to-day assessment strategies

Training sequence

This section is for guidance only and it is expected that schools will choose from what is suggested and adapt it for their own needs. The materials are written to be appropriate for the whole school, although for the Foundation Stage it is important to think of activities rather than lessons.

The materials are taken from Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years (DfES 0519-2004 G). It is suggested that schools may want to focus on one aspect of assessment for learning that has been identified as a priority.

Aims of PDM

- To establish the purpose of assessment in the teaching of literacy and mathematics with a focus on curricular targets.
- To support teachers and practitioners in developing a range of day-to-day assessment strategies.
- To support teachers and practitioners in planning for the use of day-to-day assessment strategies.

Introduction, purpose and key messages

Introduce this professional development session by explaining that it is the first of two PDMs that focus on assessment for learning.

PDM 1 focuses on day-to-day assessment strategies linked to curricular targets/objectives. PDM 2 focuses on feedback on learning – see *Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years*, Assessment for learning Part 4, pages 44–45.

Recap on assessment practice in the school. Clarify the relationship between summative assessment linked to National Curriculum levels to track progress and formative assessment to give feedback on progress towards targets and to inform teaching and learning. See *Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years*, Assessment for learning Part 7, page 75.

Remind participants of the three basic principles of assessment.

- Assessment is an integral part of teaching.
- Good assessment skills help children to learn effectively.
- Children need to be involved in their assessment and to understand the progress they are making.

Possible activity

In pairs, participants discuss:

- How well do they feel that they incorporate effective assessment into teaching at present?
- How do they plan for assessment?

Then participants discuss a recent literacy or numeracy plan and annotate it to show assessment opportunities against curricular targets.

See *Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years*, Assessment for learning Part 4, Day-to-day assessment CPD activity, page 50.

SUPPLEMENTARY PDM

Assessment for learning 1: Day-to-day assessment strategies

Linking teaching strategies to literacy and mathematics

The curricular targets indicate what the class is going to achieve. Day-to-day assessment is the means of finding out what children have or are learning and then planning action to ensure that children meet the targets. Day-to-day assessment is not additional to teaching but part of it.

Elements of day-to-day assessment

Good day-to-day assessment includes:

- using questions and sharing comments with children;
- making observations of children during teaching and while they work;
- holding discussions with children;
- analysing work, reporting to children and guiding their improvements;
- checking children's understanding;
- engaging children in reviewing progress.

Introduce 'Effective strategies for day-to-day assessment' – *Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years*, Assessment for learning Part 4, pages 44–45.

Possible activity

Allow a few moments for participants to read through the material. Then ask them to consider their own practice. Which of the elements described do they use most and how do they use it in relation to whole-class, group or independent tasks and the plenary?

Suggest that this meeting focuses on the first three elements – questioning, observation and discussion:

questioning, e.g. using questioning in a mental oral starter to assess the children's target;

observation, e.g. using observation of paired talk in guided reading to assess children;

discussion, e.g. holding discussions with children during the plenary to diagnose reasons for misunderstandings.

See *Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years*, Assessment for learning Part 4, Day-to-day assessment, pages 48–49.

Linking assessment focuses to interactive whole-class teaching, guided and independent work and the plenary

Possible activity

- Show the video extract of a Year 3 mathematics lesson: *Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years*, 'Assessment for learning' video sequence 6.
- Participants discuss in groups what the teacher is assessing and how she is using questioning, observation and discussion.

Application

Possible activity

- Ask participants to think about how they will use questioning, observation and discussion to assess their curriculum targets over the next half-term;
- Discuss how participants are recording assessments: remind them of existing methods such as recording guided reading, recording key objectives, noting assessment opportunities on planning records, keeping notes of children who have not achieved objectives (as opposed to children who have), using recording grids, using the ISP form to record children who are meeting targets.

Recording assessments

Records only need to be kept of significant achievements or misconceptions. Establish exactly what records should be kept, e.g. records of curricular targets, guided reading, progress against NNS key objectives and the Framework supplement of examples, marking of writing and children's own assessments.

SUPPLEMENTARY PDM

Assessment for learning 1:

Day-to-day assessment strategies

Improving the conditions for learning: key points	<p><i>It is suggested that schools identify one or two key messages from the categories Improving conditions for learning and Developing the school as a professional learning community to link to the teaching strategy and focus on in the PDM.</i></p> <p>The conditions for learning provide the classroom context for effective teaching and learning. Key actions to support effective assessment for learning include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● ensuring that additional adults are aware of and use elements of assessment in different parts of the lessons;● ensuring that additional adults are situated close to those children who need support and assess their learning and misconceptions;● allowing children to work in a variety of groupings and settings to facilitate assessment for learning.
Developing the school as a professional learning community: key points	<p>Developing a professional learning community in the classroom involves the children in their own learning. The following key points support this PDM.</p> <p>Key to assessment for learning is children's involvement in their own learning. For this to take place teachers need to make sure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● the purpose of what is being taught is made clear to children by sharing objectives and involving them in discussion of what they have learned;● children play an active part in assessment for learning by answering questions, contributing points for discussion and explaining to the identified audience.
	<p>Possible activity</p> <p>Ask participants to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● think of opportunities for paired talk and for children to reflect in the plenary on what they have learned in the lesson, linked to the objectives or targets;● plan with a colleague an opportunity to share their assessment strategies on their plans or from observation in the classroom;● invite a colleague from the Foundation Stage to share examples of observational assessment – see <i>Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years</i>, 'Assessment for learning' video sequence 5.
Application	<p>Activity</p> <p>Ask participants, drawing on the small-group discussion, to identify from their own classroom practice two aspects that are well developed and two aspects that require further development.</p>

Resources

Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years, Assessment for learning Parts 4 and 7, video sequences 5 and 6 (DfES 0520-2004 G)

QCA Assessment for Learning publications (www.qca.org.uk/ages3-14)

PDM 3: Questioning – effective questioning, the importance of probing and promoting questioning strategies (www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/wholeschool/isp)

4 Identify targets and complete the IDP

Each participant is to agree an outcome for the four key themes for this half-term and set them as targets on his or her IDP. These IDP targets need to relate to the curricular targets and teaching strategies that are being explored.

Individual Development Plan

Focus of PDM: Assessment for learning 1: Day-to-day assessment strategies

Targets	Literacy	Mathematics
School target(s):		
Class target(s):		

Focus	Outcome(s)	Action(s) and comments
<i>Standards, targets and progress</i> Curricular targets for the whole class and the identified group are set	Children achieve identified targets Children in target groups meet expectations	
<i>Improving the quality of teaching and learning</i> Teaching strategies: assessment for learning 1	Assessment strategies are used to judge children's progress towards meeting the targets	
<i>Improving the conditions for learning</i> The learning environment	Groupings, resources and the use of additional adults support learning Classroom display supports the teaching and learning process and focus	
<i>Developing the school as a professional learning community</i>	Children play an active part in assessing their learning by answering questions, contributing points for discussion and reflecting on their learning Teachers plan opportunities to learn from each other	