



PDM 6

Day-to-day assessment

Aim

- To explore the use of day-to-day assessment strategies to support teaching and learning of advanced bilingual learners with a particular focus on:
 - general principles
 - collecting evidence through observation, oral language samples, questioning and dialogue
 - using assessment evidence to provide oral feedback and inform next steps for learning and teaching

Sharing learning objectives (curricular and language) and success criteria and the use of observation for assessment are key elements of ongoing assessment. For CPD on these aspects see *Excellence and Enjoyment: Learning and teaching in the primary years: assessment for learning* (DfES 0521-2004G) and Unit 1 of these materials.

Overview of a suggested professional development programme

Learning and teaching: assessment for learning			
PDM 1 Establishing layered curriculum targets as a context for language development		PDM 6 Day-to-day assessment	
Learning and teaching: language development and curriculum access			
PDM 2 EAL principles, pedagogy and practice: first language as a tool for learning	PDM 3 Integrated planning for language development and curriculum content	PDM 4 Supportive contexts: scaffolding language and learning	PDM 5 Speaking and listening: guided sessions for language development
Conditions for learning			
PDM 7 Culture and identity: ethos, environment and curriculum			
Partnerships beyond the classroom			
PDM 8 Developing learning partnerships with parents, carers, families and communities			



Key messages

Note: This PDM is closely linked to other Primary National Strategy work on day-to-day assessment and supplements work on curricular targets as a context for language development.

- It is important to have a safe environment in which the child's identity is affirmed and the child feels able to take risks.
- Assessment tasks need to be embedded in supportive contexts which will enable learners to show what they can do.
- Practitioners need understanding and knowledge of socio-cultural factors when using observation and discussion as strategies for day-to-day assessment.
- All teaching staff need to be clear about what is being assessed: linguistic development or academic progress.
- Additional language will not be acquired in a predictable linear progression and cannot be assessed with a simple checklist.
- When children use their full language repertoire (first and additional language), they will be able to show what they understand and can do.
- Adults who share children's first language should use the skill sensitively and in an informed way to assess understanding.
- A distinction must be made between the use of first language for assessment and assessment of first language. This PDM relates to the former.

Note: For all scales of the Foundation Stage Profile, except for points 4–8 of the Communication, language and literacy scale, children's learning can be assessed in the home language.

Oral language sampling

Practitioners need to understand how samples of oral language:

- capture how children cope with the different social demands placed on them in school – in the classroom, playground, dining area;
 - provide evidence of language use in teacher–pupil as well as pupil–pupil interactions;
 - show what individual learners know and can do in English across different curricular contexts;
 - provide information for planning and teaching, e.g. planning for specific language use, pupil groupings for particular activities;
 - provide evidence of impact of teaching.
- Discuss the importance of accurate, annotated language samples as a key method of assessing language use, noting the year, term, context and relevance of responses, time taken to respond, whether language form is appropriate for purpose, complexity of sentences, use of subject-specific as well as rich vocabulary, etc.
 - Discuss the benefits and limitations of oral language sampling.
 - Compare oral and written language samples from the same child to identify differences or aspects of academic and cognitive language which need developing.
 - Discuss strategies for collecting and using oral language samples. See Unit 1, page 34, and the CD-ROM for examples of oral language samples.



Use of questions and dialogue

- Discuss how questions can be used to assess learning in a variety of ways:
 - prompting questions with supporting comments that assess the extent children are able to engage in the work being taught and the tasks being set;
 - probing questions with follow-up comments that assess children’s understanding during and following the teaching and the tasks;
 - promoting questions with guiding comments that assess the extent to which children can go on to use and apply what they have learned.
- Discuss the ways in which questions can be used to model language required in response and extend children’s contributions.
- Discuss the importance of providing thinking time and time to mentally formulate and rehearse responses with partners before articulating the thinking and learning.
- Share ways in which questions can be used to probe and check understanding.
- Use a unit plan for literacy or mathematics and discuss or formulate key questions which would support assessment of learning.
Discuss the follow-up questions, focusing on the language of questions, which may be asked to check understanding.
- Discuss the use of open and closed questions in scaffolding and extending learning, and plan a series of questions for a guided reading session focusing on inference and deduction.

Oral feedback

- Focused oral feedback supports learning because:
 - it provides personalised, specific praise as well as advice on oral, written and practical work;
 - it provides feedback on curricular and language learning as well as skills for learning;
 - it models the use of metalanguage;
 - the language used is tailored to meet the needs of the child.
- Discuss the importance of:
 - feedback being culturally sensitive and constructive, enabling children to learn from challenges and mistakes;
 - oral feedback linked to learning objectives and success criteria to encourage children to stay focused on the task;
 - feedback and advice for improvement which takes account of the need to learn language as well as curriculum and skills;
 - ensuring that the language used is tailored to meet the needs of the child: use of verbal as well as non-verbal communication, use of first language to extend children’s understanding and engagement;
 - ensuring that children are not demoralised by feedback.
- Discuss existing links between feedback on completed work and success criteria, and how this can be further developed.



Notes

Specific

- This is a vast area so the PDM focus should be planned carefully to focus on specific aspects which are identified as key priorities. Schools may wish to allocate several sessions to this area.
- Refer to *Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years*, Planning and assessment for learning, book and video material (DfES 0521-2004 G) and Unit 1, section 2 of these materials to support all aspects of this module.
- The importance of conditions for learning and involvement of parents, carers and the community in assessment for learning is explored in other PDMs but should be referred to in discussions on assessment.

General

- Arrangements should be made to facilitate participation by part-time staff, EMAG-funded staff and teaching assistants.
- Ensure that key messages are secure and that participants leave with a clear understanding of where they need to focus over the coming half-term.
- Staff who are confident in this area should support other colleagues.
- The activities above are intended as examples. Choose from, and adapt, the suggested activities to fit in with the current priorities for the school as identified in the half-termly whole-school curriculum targets.

Resources

- *Aiming High: Guidance on the assessment of pupils learning English as an additional language*, DfES, 2005 (1469-2005DOC-EN)
- *Excellence and Enjoyment: learning and teaching in the primary years*, Planning and assessment for learning, book and video material (DfES 0521-2004 G)
- *Focus on Language Sampling: a key issue in EAL assessment*, Occasional Paper 15, NALDIC, 2002
- Section 2 of Unit 1 of these materials
- Clarke, L. (2001) 'Managing language sampling in the literacy hour', in *NALDIC News*, 24 (November)
- *A language in common: assessing English as an additional language*, QCA, 2000 (QCA/00/584)
- *Marking progress: training materials for assessing English as an additional language* (DfES 0196-2005)