

Reporting to parents/carers – Jubilee Park Primary School

Introduction

As a new and growing school, staff at Jubilee Park Primary constantly reflect upon our mission statement and vision principles to ensure they remain as foundations for our strategic purpose and curriculum development. Together, our vision principles, curriculum design and professional learning and development (PLD) triangulate to help us prepare for the new curriculum. Each element is interdependent and flexible in responding to the needs of our growing community and to information from the reform process. We view assessment as fundamental to our curriculum design. Its purpose within our curriculum is to support each learner to make progress.

Original context

To enable each learner to make progress relies upon teachers who are highly skilled in identifying learners' strengths, the ways in which they learn and their areas for development. At Jubilee Park we believe we have a collective responsibility to ensure learners are at the heart of our assessment processes. We do not want to make 'one-off' judgements based on a set of descriptors or criteria and undertake assessments that are 'done to' learners. We focus on developing processes and practices to ensure that we have a holistic picture of each learner, with learners actively involved.

Transforming

Our curriculum supports learners in developing towards the four purposes, providing appropriate progression for all learners. Teachers plan for and provide effective learning experiences that are appropriate to the age and development of each individual learner. Through dialogue and feedback learners are able to appreciate where they are in their learning, where they need to go and crucially how they will get there. Practitioners support and challenge effectively to ensure learners make progress.

Our focus on the language of learning, or 'learner capacities' as we refer to them in our school, involve and support children in their learning journey. Children are taught skills and dispositions that act as important capacities to them as learners across all areas of learning and experience. The learner capacities support children's metacognitive understanding and enable them to articulate their learning. This enables children to contribute and participate in the learning process including, very importantly, knowing 'what to do, when they don't know what to do'.

To support the development of our learner capacities all learners are involved in feedback and reflection upon their learning. Half-termly pupil learning reviews (PLRs) provide dedicated time outside of the classroom environment for teachers and

learners to work together to discuss progress, identify any barriers and to agree on learning-focused targets. PLRs have impacted greatly upon learners' ability to articulate where they are in their learning journey. They provide teachers with a real insight into learners' learning behaviours and are an opportunity for shared reflection on learning and teaching. The behaviours established and developed within PLR sessions are further enhanced within the classroom environment. Learners' ability to self-reflect, provide feedback to peers and respond to teacher feedback is supported by their developing metacognitive skills. The importance of communication and quality dialogue is evident. Feedback that enables learners to take more control of their learning and supports their development as resilient learners is crucial to their progress. This undoubtedly has impacted positively upon well-being and levels of engagements in learning.

Current reporting

Putting learners at the heart of assessment relies upon clear processes within school. Assessment approaches need to enable staff to regularly discuss progression. PLD sessions are the vehicle for such discussions to ensure consistency in approaches. All staff, teachers and teaching assistants engage in PLD to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to identify where learners are and how they can support them to move on in relation to the four purposes and the areas of learning and experience. In addition, pupil progress meetings (led by the headteacher) do not focus on outcomes or levels as a means of identifying progress but on dialogue – a dialogue led by the teacher, where they identify learners' progress according to:

- the four purposes and the areas of learning and experience
- the learners' barriers to learning
- the support and challenge teachers are providing.

This results in a holistic picture of each learner and ensures that learners are recognised for their achievements rather than meeting set outcome or level descriptors.

Feedback

PLRs provide parents/carers with the opportunity to discuss their child's progress. Discussions focus on well-being, attitudes to learning and behaviours. Parents/carers discuss their child's progress towards the Four Purposes and progress within the areas of learning and experience. Learning conversations from PLRs are also shared with parents/carers, including discussions about any barriers to learning as well as learning targets that the children are focusing on. In Years 5 and 6 children are present at PLRs and participate fully in the learning conversation alongside their parents/carers and teacher. This communication with parents/carers has proved valuable as we move into the period of face to face and remote learning;

parents/carers are more aware of how their children learn and how best to support them.

Progress and partnership, well-being and workload

Our approach to putting learners at the heart of assessment has further supported our transition processes within school. Transition meetings with our local secondary school have focused on children rather than on levels. Teachers have not discussed levels achieved, but have focused on children as learners – identifying how children learn best, the environment for learning they have experienced, their strengths and areas for development, as well as any barriers to learning that they may have. Teachers have commented that this new focus has ensured that the secondary school staff have a greater understanding of each individual learner and have a relevant, valid and more effective understanding of each individual learner's progress and achievement. Learners are more than names and numbers on a list, they are known as children. The same focus for conversations supports transition processes within school too. Prioritising learning unquestionably supports the development of well-being for both our children and staff.

Going forward

As we return to school it is crucial that the role of assessment is seen to support learners, not to test them. We need to provide our learners with strategies and to ensure their readiness for learning. Now more than ever our learners need to be resilient, to be able to react to the changes in education and to engage in a new way of face to face and remote learning. Practitioners need to be supported through high-quality PLD so that they have the knowledge and understanding of progression in learning. We have a real opportunity, as leaders and practitioners, to avoid returning to the old curriculum and assessment arrangements but instead to move forward and put learners at the heart of our assessment processes so that they are able to become increasingly more independent in their learning and develop as resilient learners ready to thrive.