

Measuring and Recording Progress across key stages in the National Curriculum from September 2014

Introduction

The NAHT Assessment Commission published its report in February 2014. One of the key findings of the Commission was that pupils should be assessed against objective and agreed criteria rather than be ranked against each other. Recommendation 6 of the report stated that;

In respect of the National Curriculum, we believe it is valuable – to aid communication, comparison and benchmarking – for schools to be using consistent criteria for assessment. To this end, we call on the NAHT to develop and promote a set of model assessment criteria based on the new National Curriculum.

The following materials, developed with the help of senior teachers who are responsible for curriculum delivery and assessment in primary schools across England, are in response to this recommendation.

We hope they will help school leaders and teachers to measure and record the progress of individual learners in their schools, without using levels of attainment. They will ensure that the new National Curriculum in mathematics, writing and reading is taught in its entirety and that the progress of pupils can be tracked easily from Year 1 to Year 6. We have also described the process used to define the model and its content so that schools can apply this to other subject areas.

However the model is not cast in stone: schools are encouraged to evaluate its usefulness against their assessment principles and current teaching and assessment practices. Having undertaken such a review, schools can decide whether or not to accept the model as it stands, to modify elements or to use an alternative approach.

The authors of the model are clear that there is no single perfect model to assess pupils' progress against any given curriculum. However, it is hoped that the NAHT model will provide schools with a practical approach to assessment that is flexible and if broadly adopted, provide a common approach to the assessment of pupils' progress.

The NAHT assessment model.

The model is presented in the following documents:

1. A high-level flow chart headed ***National and School Curriculum – Measuring and Recording Progress across Key Stages.***
2. How to use the flow chart.
3. The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Reading, Writing and Mathematics covering Years 1 to 6.
4. Performance Standards (PS) for Reading, Writing and Mathematics covering Years 1 to 6.
5. An example Record of Performance against KPIs in the National Curriculum.
6. An example of Recording and Reporting.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

Working directly from the documentation outlined in the New National Curriculum , the teachers outlined key elements within the programmes of study, that, if mastered, demonstrate a child's

grasp of understanding of that facet of the National Curriculum. These key aspects have been summarised as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

For the first part of this process, teachers discussed the content of the National Curriculum. In the example below, a section from the Year 1 programme of study is presented; Figure 1. In figure 2, elements of the programmes of study deemed to be key elements are presented in bold italics; these are the KPIs for this section of the National Curriculum.

Figure 1. Extract from Year 1 Reading – Word Reading.

Statutory requirements

Pupils should be taught to:

- apply phonic knowledge and skills as the route to decode words
- respond speedily with the correct sound to graphemes (letters or groups of letters) for all 40+ phonemes, including, where applicable, alternative sounds for graphemes
- read accurately by blending sounds in unfamiliar words containing GPCs that have been taught
- read common exception words, noting unusual correspondences between spelling and sound and where these occur in the word
- read words containing taught GPCs and –s, –es, –ing, –ed, –er and –est endings
- read other words of more than one syllable that contain taught GPCs
- read words with contractions [for example, I’m, I’ll, we’ll], and understand that the apostrophe represents the omitted letter(s)
- read aloud accurately books that are consistent with their developing phonic knowledge and that do not require them to use other strategies to work out words
- re-read these books to build up their fluency and confidence in word reading.

Figure 2. Extract from Year 1 Reading – Word Reading with KPIs in bold italics.

Statutory requirements

Pupils should be taught to:

- apply phonic knowledge and skills as the route to decode words
- ***respond speedily with the correct sound to graphemes (letters or groups of letters) for all 40+ phonemes, including, where applicable, alternative sounds for graphemes***
- ***read accurately by blending sounds in unfamiliar words containing GPCs that have been taught***
- ***read common exception words***, noting unusual correspondences between spelling and sound and where these occur in the word
- read words containing taught GPCs and –s, –es, –ing, –ed, –er and –est endings
- read other words of more than one syllable that contain taught GPCs

- read words with contractions [for example, I'm, I'll, we'll], and understand that the apostrophe represents the omitted letter(s)
- ***read aloud accurately books that are consistent with their developing phonic knowledge and that do not require them to use other strategies to work out words***
- re-read these books to build up their fluency and confidence in word reading.

It is important to note this does not mean that other aspects cannot be used to measure progress, nor that other teachers may feel that there are other Key Performance Indicators. If teachers wish to include other KPIs then they are at liberty so to do.

However, the teachers who developed these materials felt that these performance descriptors carried significantly more “weight” than other performance descriptors, hence the use of the term, “Key Performance Indicator.” Using KPIs as a key assessment focus dispenses with the need to focus on and record all of the relatively minor aspects contained within the documentation. The KPIs are listed for each year group in Document 3 and are developmental, although some KPIs are repeated. This is to ensure that key concepts are mastered over time.

Recording could be carried out using a spreadsheet to collect the data. An example is given in Document 5. It would be useful for schools to adopt a consistent approach to the recording of achievement, for example:

- For each KPI a score of 1, denoting that the concept or skill had been taught, but the child had not yet grasped the concept or mastered the skill.
- For each KPI a score of 2, denoting that the concept or skill had been taught and the child had mastered the concept or the skill.
- For each KPI a score of 3, denoting that the concept or skill had been taught and the child had exceeded what could have been expected.

Using this method, schools can track pupils’ progress at key points in the calendar to ensure coverage of the curriculum and any individual pupil’s progress is on track. The data could also be used for performance management.

Performance Standards (PS)

The Performance Standards (PS) reflect what the average child should be able to do in each year group if the KPIs have been mastered. The PS are not intended to be used as assessment criteria; rather, they are intended to be helpful for teachers to plan the next stage of teaching for individual children, since they highlight what an individual can (and by deduction, cannot) do. The PS also help in communicating to parents and carers the range of knowledge, understanding and skills that each child possesses. Schools should develop a reporting system that is consistent with the principles set out in the NAHT documentation. An example of recording and reporting is given in Document 6.

Further, the PS help teachers to diagnose the areas on which individual children need to work, if they have not mastered the KPI. This helps with the planning of teaching for individual children as well as tracking progress over Key Stages One and Two.

Evidence of pupil's performance

The Department for Education (DfE) has made it clear that attainment **and** progress will be used in the new floor targets. Schools will be expected to demonstrate (with evidence) their assessment of pupils' progress to:

- Keep parents informed;
- Enable governors to gauge school effectiveness; and
- Inform Ofsted inspections (plus attainment targets.)

A key feature of the NAHT model is the exemplification of an individual pupil's work to demonstrate and support teachers' assessment judgments. This is described in the model as '**exemplification of performance.**' This work can be gathered electronically or in hard copy and annotated to highlight performance against the KPIs. Exemplification should be kept to a minimum but sufficient to support teacher's judgment.

Using work from a range of pupils, the model includes the development of a '**Standards File**' that can be used as a benchmark of performance. This will provide a standard that can be used as the basis of school moderation or when checking the standard against work produced by other schools. It will also aid parents in understanding the level of performance expected by the school.

Using the Flow Chart for other subjects

The Flow Chart enables school leaders and teachers to develop Key Performance Indicators and Performance Standards in subjects of the new National Curriculum other than mathematics, reading and writing. By following the process, teachers can develop their own materials which will build into a record of each child's progress and development. These materials, developed from children's work, can then be used as a **Standards File** that can be used to **Moderate** materials internally as well as across clusters of schools. The **Standards File** will also help induct new teachers into the school's assessment regime, as well as act as a **Benchmark** to use in future years, enabling the school to develop a consistent approach to its assessment of pupils and maintain a common standard.

A commentary on how to use the flow chart is given in Document 2. *How to use the flow chart.*

Presentation

The materials we have developed can be presented in a variety of formats for ease of use. A single A3 sheet could contain all the KPIs and PS for reading, another for writing and a third for maths. Similarly a single A3 sheet could contain the KPIs and PS for Year 1, another for Year 2, a third for Year 3 and so on. The Flow Chart can be presented as a single A3 document.

The materials can also be presented electronically, allowing end-users to click on the separate steps of the process Flow Chart, as well as the statements relating to the KPIs and PS in each subject or in each year group.

Summary

Although the materials are accurate at present and reflect what is known about the new National Curriculum, this may not be the case in the autumn, when the Department for Education (DfE) is due to announce details of the baseline test and performance descriptors to support at the end of Key Stage assessments. If there are to be changes, then they are likely to affect Performance Standards at Year 1 and Year 6. The process, however, will not change, nor will the Key Performance Indicators.

If schools develop their own internal standardisation and moderation procedures, in line with the structure proposed here, it will help them to work with the moderation procedures that will also be issued by the DfE in the autumn.

Next Steps

The NAHT will evaluate the use of this model in the autumn and produce case studies of its application. The model will also be evaluated against any further DfE announcements affecting assessment of the National Curriculum