Learning Assessment Policy

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Learning Assessment Policy

Rationale

Assessment for learning is the process of identifying what the learner has or has not achieved in order to plan the next steps in the teaching or learning. It involves using assessment in the classroom to raise students' achievement and is based on the idea that students will improve most if they understand the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim and how they can achieve the aim.

Aims

At RIAG we aim to:

- Make a judgement about a child's attainment based on knowledge gained through techniques such as observation, questioning, marking, and testing.

- Help children develop positive attitudes to work.

- Provide an accurate picture of every child's achievement and progress.

- Show children how they are going to make the next steps of improvement and greater attainment.

- Provide assessment information for use with the whole class, groups within the class and individuals.

Principles of Assessment for learning

Effective assessment for learning involves:

- The sharing of learning goals and intentions with students

- Helping students know and recognize the criteria for success.

- Providing feedback and marking that helps students to identify where they need improvement.

- Students learning self-assessment techniques to discover areas they need to improve.

- The use of effective questioning to assess progress.

- Both the teacher and students reviewing and reflecting on students' performance and progress and setting targets for improvement.

- Recognizing that both motivation and self-esteem are crucial for effective learning and progress, can be increased by effective assessment techniques.

Formative and Summative Assessments

At RIAG we recognize that:

- Assessment for learning is formative assessment

- Assessment of learning is summative assessment and involves judging students' performance against age-related expectations

Key characteristics of assessment for learning

1. Sharing Learning Goals/Intentions
2. Clear success criteria-written or verbal
3. Using consistent feedback and marking strategies
4. Student self-assessment and peer self-assessment
5. Using effective questioning
6. Target setting

1. Sharing learning goals/intentions

- Students will be taught to recognize the difference between a task and its learning intention (separating what they must do from what they will learn).

- To involve students fully in understanding learning outcomes teachers may: explain clearly the reasons for the lesson or activity in terms of the learning intentions and share the specific assessment criteria with students - verbally or written.

- Help students to understand what they have done well and what they need to develop.

- Looking at a range of other students' responses to the task set can help students understand how to use the assessment criteria to assess their own learning.

2. Clear success criteria-written or verbal

Success criteria may be evident in:

- Planning
- Written form in a student's book-copied or stuck in
- Visual form on a teacher's whiteboard/working wall
- A verbal explanation to a class/group/individual

Success criteria will link directly to the learning goal, or intention-it is separate from the lesson content or activity, it relates more to the skills, concepts, knowledge of an activity.

3. Feedback and Marking

Students benefit from opportunities for formal feedback through group and plenary sessions.

Giving feedback involves:

- Oral: making time to talk to students and teaching them to be reflective about the learning objectives and about their work and responses.

- Self-marking: students will be encouraged to see for themselves what they need to do to improve and discuss it with the teacher.

- Peer assessment: Focusing on the learning intention of the task.

Feedback enables students to understand the strengths and weaknesses demonstrated in their work. Marking or oral feedback explain what the next steps should be. Students make achievements by building on previous performance.

Characteristics of effective feedback

- Feedback is most effective when it confirms that students are on the right track and when it stimulates correction or improvement of a piece of work.

- Suggestions for improvement should act as 'scaffolding', i.e., students should be given as much help as they need to use their knowledge. They should not be given the complete solutions as soon as they get stuck and should learn to think things through for themselves.

- Students should be helped to find alternative solutions if repeating an explanation leads to failure.

- Feedback on progress over several attempts is more effective than feedback on one attempt treated in isolation.

- The quality of dialogue in feedback is important- oral feedback is as effective as written feedback.

- Teachers and support staff will encourage children to ask for help and the ethos of the school will encourage them to do so.

- Teachers and support staff will mark according to the school Marking Policy.

4. **Self-assessment and evaluation**

Opportunities for self-assessment and evaluation may be evident in planning or may be used during lessons when relevant. Once students understand how to assess their current knowledge and the gaps in it, they will have a clearer idea of how they can help themselves to progress.

Students will be taught what they need to learn and why, and then actively assess their understanding, gaps in their own knowledge and areas they need to work on.

Peer assessment

Peer assessment will be used when relevant. Students will be encouraged to clarify their own ideas and understanding of both the learning intention and the assessment criteria while marking other students' work. Self-assessment is an important tool for teachers.

5. **Using effective questioning**

Teachers may:

- Use questions to find out what students know, understand, and can do.
- Analyze students' responses and their questions in order to find out what they know, understand and can do.
- Use questions to find out what students' specific misconceptions are in order to target teaching more effectively.
- Use students' questions to assess understanding.

Consideration of how a question is phrased will be based on

- The age of student/cohort
- The thought processes student needs to go through.
- The language demands made on student.
- The extent to which students reveal their understanding.
- The number of questions needed to assess students' current understanding.

Types of questions may include.

- How can we be sure that...?

- What is the same and what is different about...?

- Is it ever/always true/false that...?

- How do you...?

- How would you explain...?

- What does that tell us about...?

- What is wrong with...?

- Why is...true?

6. Target Setting

Teachers set targets with students using the National Curriculum in order to help their learning move forward.

Students will be given opportunities to:

- Reflect on their own work.

- Be supported to admit problems without risk to self-esteem.

- Be given time to work problems out.

Students may look at examples of other students' work that does and does not meet the assessment criteria as this can help them to understand what was required from a task and to assess the next steps they might need to take and therefore set new targets. Looking at different responses may be used to help pupils understand the different approaches they could have taken to a task. It is often helpful if the work is from students they do not know.