

DOVE HOUSE SCHOOL ACADEMY TRUST

Assessment, Principles and Practice Policy

Policy issued July 2016
Approved by Tom Pegler, Headteacher, Annie Benton, Chair of Governors
Signed:Annie Benton a& Tom Pegler.....
Approved at Governing Body on 30 th June 2016 Next Review to be July 2017

Policy Statement

The following Assessment, Principles and Practice Policy should be read and used to assist in identifying and reviewing specific arrangements and responsibilities for Assessment, Principles and Practice at Dove House School and adapted as necessary.

Introduction

This policy considers the role of assessment in relation to inclusive education, focusing on the assessment of pupils diagnosed with special educational needs (SEN).

Many methods of teaching and learning rely on an understanding of language and social behaviour, leaving pupils with learning difficulties at a significant disadvantage due to an uneven profile of strengths and weaknesses.

In order to provide pupils with the opportunity to succeed in school in a fair and equitable way pupils require a tailored approach to assessment which provides them with opportunities to express their views in ways suitable to their individual learning style, mode of communication and level of ability.

The school has moved forward from initial focus on diagnostic assessment in the core subjects of English and mathematics to assessment for learning (AfL) across the whole school.

This policy identifies the school approach to assessment in relation to the inclusion of pupils with moderate learning difficulties.

Principles

It is widely recognised that sustained, consistent and well understood principles and practice of assessment can only be achieved through strong direction from senior leaders to set clear expectations for teaching and learning.

Assessment for Learning (AfL) has provided the guiding principles for the school's practice in teaching and assessment. Structured, systematic daily assessment:

- a) forms part of effective planning.
- b) focuses on how a pupil learns.
- c) is central to classroom practice.
- d) is sensitive and constructive.
- e) fosters motivation.
- f) promotes understanding of goals and criteria.
- g) helps pupils know how to improve.
- h) develops the capacity for peer and self-assessment.
- i) recognises all educational achievement.
- j) reflects high expectations.

The four key areas which have had the greatest impact on successful implementation of assessment have been:

- Prioritisation of assessment for learning within the School Improvement Plan.
- Review and revision of teaching, learning and assessment policies.
- Promotion of assessment by the Head Teacher and senior leadership team.
- Assessment forming a key component of staff training programmes.

Processes

In order to develop effective assessment for learning, raise standards, improve pupil's achievement and ensure all pupils diagnosed as having special educational needs have equal access to the curriculum the following policy and practice is adopted:

- a) Senior leaders are driven and committed to improve pupil outcomes, track individual pupil and group progress and ensure AfL is central to curriculum planning.

- b) Senior leaders expectation of teaching and assessment is explicit, regularly reinforced and ambitious.
- c) The Leadership Team and Faculty Heads all observe teaching. Each teacher is formally observed for their Performance Management Review. The Headteacher visits each classroom on a drop in basis at least twice a week.
- d) Moderation systems in place sample and benchmark pupil's performance, monitoring breadth, relevance of evidence and the process of assessment.
- e) Parents/ carers/ authorities are kept informed within reviews how assessment supports a pupil's progress and achievement and how criteria is used in reporting progress
- f) Teachers are given 'protected time' (PPA) to identify, sample, evaluate and report on pupil's progress and achievement.
- g) Teachers and Learning Support Assistants attend training to develop and extend their understanding and skills in why assessment for learning improves pupil's achievement (formative use of summative assessment, objective led lessons, purposeful marking, pupils peer and self-assessment, effective questioning etc.).
- h) Teachers routinely explain clearly to pupils what they are to learn, by what criteria they will be assessed and how they will know when they have been successful.
- i) Pupils are involved in identifying their learning outcomes.
- j) Teachers employ a range of innovative strategies to assess pupils progress in lessons from a wide base of evidence and use the information gained to give feedback to pupils and plan further work.
- k) Teachers have high expectations and actively encourage pupils to become confident and independent learners.
- l) Teachers precisely use information from assessment to match learning objectives and activities to the needs of the individual pupil/group.
- m) Consistent teaching methods and careful planning ensures that higher attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged and personalised learning strategies ensure lower achieving pupils are effectively supported.
- n) Teachers draw attention to learning objectives, challenging pupils understanding at key moments in the lesson, to encourage pupils to show what they have learnt.
- o) Peer and self assessment are used to engage pupils in monitoring their own progress and build on their understanding.
- p) Teachers keep a close check on pupil progress and know how to develop the next stage/s in learning.
- q) Assessment is used effectively to support pupils to improve their work and to reflect and respond.

4.0 Outcomes

Effective practice in assessment for learning has derived from a very strong direction from senior leaders, whose continued drive has filtered through to other key leaders in school, to set out clear expectations for teaching and learning and consistent classroom practice.

All teaching staff undergo a training plan which is designed to make each teacher an outstanding teacher. Each teacher must undertake specialist training in the teaching of children with autism.

Effective assessment for learning has contributed to pupil's outstanding achievement and transformed their learning.