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APP guidance for senior leaders

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Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP)

New materials, resources and guidance to support pupil progress

Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP)

APP is a structured approach to periodic assessment enabling teachers to:

- **make reliable judgements of attainment** within National Curriculum levels;
- **use diagnostic information** about pupils' strengths and weaknesses to improve planning, teaching and learning;
- **track pupils' progress** over a key stage or longer.

Putting APP at the heart of learning for every pupil is now a key priority at school, local authority (LA) and national level. Indeed, many schools are already engaged in this as part of their Assessment for Learning (AfL) work. To support continued development, the National Strategies, in partnership with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), has produced new APP materials in English, mathematics, science and ICT.

A key element in school improvement

APP helps a school to meet the challenge of increasing rates of progress for all pupils.

APP supports the successful implementation of the new secondary curriculum in order to improve pupils' engagement, motivation and success in learning.

Schools with good rates of progression have effective tracking systems that influence decisions about planning and provision for progression. APP provides a well-researched, trialled and manageable approach.

The links between APP and planning are made explicit in the National Strategies' renewed Frameworks for secondary English, mathematics, science and ICT.

APP reinforces a strategic approach to assessment that has three linked aspects:

Day-to-day assessment – which is an integral part of learning and teaching, focusing on the interactions between learners, and between learners and their teachers which shape immediate next steps (AfL).

Periodic review – which provides a profile of pupils' achievement across a subject (drawing on evidence from day-to-day assessment) to inform planning for progression and targets for improvement, and to help to track pupil progress (APP).

Transitional assessment – which provides a formal recognition of pupils' achievement that can be shared between pupils, parents and teachers (this will include end of key stage assessments and examinations, external tests and tasks).

Leading and managing APP

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) Assessment for Learning Strategy (May 2008), which is a joint project between the DCSF, The National Strategies and QCA, together with the Chartered Institute of Educational Assessors, sets out the financial and professional development support required to secure the development of APP in all schools by 2011.

APP has most impact on teaching, learning, and pupil progress when it is supported and driven forwards by senior leaders. AfL with APP needs to be part of a school improvement programme that enables every teacher to understand the connections between effective planning for progression, good quality teaching, and assessment practice that supports learning.

Most schools are developing AfL as a whole-school priority, and many have implemented APP in English and/or mathematics. To support the continued development of AfL with APP in schools:

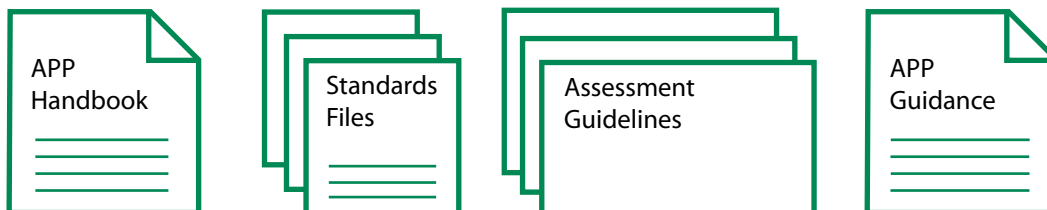
- English and mathematics APP materials have been revised, with particularly significant changes to mathematics APP;
- science and ICT APP materials have been developed;
- foundation subject APP materials will be available in 2010.

Developing AfL with APP requires systematic monitoring and evaluation of its impact. Two self-evaluation 'review tables' are available from the National Strategies:

1. Leadership and management of developing AfL across the whole school
2. Learning and teaching in lessons (with an AfL focus)

APP Resources

A set of these resources is available for each core subject.



- The **APP Handbook** explains the whole-school context for assessment, and introduces APP as a tool for periodic assessment. It provides all the practical guidance that core subject departments will need to develop and embed APP.
- The **Standards Files** are exemplifications of the national standards. These will help departments to reach consistent and reliable judgements about National Curriculum levels and sub-levels for individual pupils.
- The **Assessment Guidelines** set out level-related APP assessment criteria for each assessment focus (AF). They are used to build a profile of pupils' attainment and to record and track their progress.
- Additional **APP Guidance** provides further support for departments in implementing the APP approach, and shows how good classroom AfL approaches can contribute to, and be strengthened by, periodic assessment.

Specific next steps will need to be tailored to each school's level of APP development and its school improvement structures, systems and processes. However, there are common action points associated with the time line for national implementation.

Stage One	Stage Two	Stage Three
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss the information and guidance in this leaflet with senior and middle leaders to share and challenge current practice and generate new thinking ● Ensure senior and middle leaders are familiar with the further information and appropriate resources referenced on the back of this leaflet ● Ensure core subject leaders attend spring term 2009 Subject Leader Development Meetings (SLDMs) ● Use self-evaluation materials to review progress in developing AfL and APP and identify support needed ● Develop a medium-term continuing professional development (CPD) plan to ensure whole-school development of AfL with APP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement the CPD plan to ensure whole-school development of AfL with APP ● Support core subject leaders' continued attendance at termly SLDMs ● Disseminate key messages and materials from SLDMs as part of departmental and whole-school planning ● Identify a senior leader and expert core subject teachers who will access LA support and training and lead in-school developments ● Access additional LA or other external AfL and APP training and support as appropriate ● Continue to use self-evaluation materials to ensure systematic review of progress in developing AfL and APP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a CPD plan through to 2011 to secure full-scale implementation of APP in all subjects as part of the whole-school development of AfL with APP

Benefits

For schools and senior leaders, APP:

- secures appropriately high expectations against national standards;
- increases the consistency and reliability of teacher assessment and helps identify in-school variation of standards and progress;
- provides reliable National Curriculum sub-levels for each pupil that can be reviewed periodically, enabling detailed and informative tracking of progress towards targets;
- strengthens continuity and progression across phases and year groups;
- contributes to the professional development of all teachers and, by helping secure improved understanding of progression and standards, supports the whole-school development of AFL.

For departments and middle leaders, APP:

- supports collaborative long- and medium-term planning for progression;
- enables detailed and informative tracking of progress towards departmental targets and helps focus personalised intervention;
- helps to identify and prioritise areas of the curriculum where teaching and learning need to be strengthened.

For teachers, APP:

- helps to secure understanding of progression in the subject they are teaching;
- provides a detailed profile of attainment to inform:
 - a) feedback and discussions with pupils (including progress towards curricular targets);
 - b) planning for next steps in pupils' learning;
 - c) reporting progress to parents and carers and discussing how they can help;
 - d) tracking individual pupil progress.

For pupils, APP:

- helps to secure understanding of progression in the subject they are learning;
- helps them to judge the quality of their work and identify how they can improve it;
- helps them to discuss progress towards their curricular targets.

For parents and carers, APP:

- helps to provide specific and timely information about the progress their child is making, their learning needs and the support they are receiving;
- helps them to discuss with teachers how they can help their child at home.

'Whole-school improvement has been very much based on high expectations in all areas of the curriculum. APP has played a central role.'

Headteacher

'Using the APP assessment criteria in mathematics has really helped us all to think of assessment in the same way. It has been a real support for my inexperienced teachers too – we now feel that we have a clearer view of what we need to do to help pupils progress.'

Mathematics subject leader

'Teachers give you small steps, like a ladder, you only have to do little things but know you will get there if you do ...'

Year 9 pupil

Further information and additional resources

The Assessment for Learning Strategy publication is available on the DCSF TeacherNet website:

www.publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00341-2008

Further information on AfL and Personalisation is available on the DCSF Standards Site:

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/personalisedlearning

Further information on APP is available on the QCA website:

www.qca.org.uk/assessment

Further guidance and support for whole-school approaches to AfL with APP, including the review tables to support self-evaluation, is available on the National Strategies website at:

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

The renewed Frameworks for secondary English, mathematics, science and ICT are available at:

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Subject Leader Development Materials to support planning for progression are available at:

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

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Copies of this publication may be available from:
www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications

You can download this publication and obtain further information at: **www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk**

Copies of this publication may be available from:

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