

School self-evaluation grid for assessment for learning

What is the self-evaluation grid?

The self-evaluation grid is a management tool for whole-school review and self-evaluation. It provides a basis for identifying further whole-school professional development needs. It is intended for use by the school's leadership team to identify areas of strength and areas for further development, to identify how assessment for learning strategies can be used more effectively to enhance and enrich teaching and learning, and to raise standards. The assessment for learning grid complements the literacy and numeracy coordinators' school self-evaluation grids.

The principle of whole-school self-evaluation, upon which the grid is based, reflects the emphasis on review and self-evaluation that is embedded within, and promoted by, the Ofsted *Handbook for inspecting primary and nursery schools*. This approach to improving management supports the work of the National College for School Leadership and reflects the research evidence related to effective school improvement processes.

It is anticipated that the grid will support the self-evaluation process (S4) which schools undertake to support their Ofsted Section 10 inspection.

Key links to specific S4 questions are listed below:

- Question 4a: How effective are teaching and learning?
- Question 4b: How effective is assessment?
- Question 5a: How well does the curriculum meet children's needs?
- Question 6: How well are children cared for, guided and supported?
- Question 7: How well does the school work in partnership with parents, other schools and the community?

What does the grid focus on?

The grid focuses on seven key areas:

- [conditions for learning;](#)
- [the use of curricular targets;](#)
- [designing opportunities for learning \(planning\);](#)
- [strategies for day-to-day assessment in the classroom;](#)
- [feedback on learning;](#)
- [involving parents and carers;](#)
- [the formative use of summative assessment.](#)

Schools and LEAs may wish to extend the grid or incorporate extra descriptors or prompts as part of their development of assessment for learning, and to reflect specific local priorities.

How does the grid work?

For each of the key areas there are four columns, which represent stages in a continuum of development and effectiveness.

The four columns are: Focusing, Developing, Establishing, Enhancing.

Within each column there are descriptors or prompts which provide moderated illustrations for each stage of development. By highlighting the relevant prompts (or parts of the prompts) within each key area of the grid, leadership teams can identify their school's current strengths and areas for development. Once the leadership team has identified a specific area for development, the team and staff can refer to the Strategy's detailed professional development unit on assessment for learning to identify how they might use the prompts to strengthen this aspect of assessment. The continuing professional development (CPD) materials for each key area include:

- reference to the descriptors used in the assessment for learning school self-evaluation grid that schools might address when action planning;
- an introduction to some key assessment issues;
- video material;
- case-study material from schools;
- discussion prompts and suggestions for staff meeting activities, classroom enquiry, practice and reflection.

How will these assessment for learning materials support the school's cycle for improvement?

The leadership team can use the self-evaluation grid to review how well the seven key areas of assessment for learning are embedded within practice in the school. Once the strengths and areas for further development are clear, the leadership team gathers and uses this evidence to inform and revise its agenda for improvement. The leadership team then maps out an action plan, referring back to the assessment for learning materials to determine how best they might be used to strengthen practices in the school. Having determined what elements of the unit to use and how to engage staff in the process of strengthening practices in the school, the leadership team incorporates this into the school's CPD programme. At each stage, the leadership team consults with staff to share the vision and agenda, and to agree outcomes and success criteria.

The school's leadership team might undertake some or all of the following when undertaking and reviewing its school improvement cycle to strengthen assessment for learning:

- Use the grid to stimulate discussion and support reflection on your school's current stage of development in each of the seven key areas.
- Gather evidence of current practices and the school's effectiveness in using assessment for learning strategies.
- Highlight those prompts (or parts of prompts) which best reflect the perception of where your school is now in each of the seven key areas.
- Use the Establishing and Enhancing columns of the self-evaluation grid to compare the school's current practice with best practice.
- Identify strengths and areas for development.
- Identify priorities and an agenda for improvement. Share these with all staff, and agree intended outcomes.
- Define success criteria for the agreed intended outcomes, referring back to the self-evaluation grid to track outcomes against the descriptors.
- Formulate an action plan.
- Include within the action plan the professional development and support which staff are to receive.
- Review and select materials from the assessment for learning unit.
- Plan the professional development programme for your school to support the assessment for learning focus within the school's cycle for improvement.
- Staff, implement, plan and trial the actions that have been agreed.
- Review and monitor progress in meeting intended outcomes and evaluate the impact on children's learning using the agreed success criteria.