



Barthol Chapel School

Learning, Teaching & Assessment Policy

Rationale

The purpose of our Learning, Teaching & Assessment Policy is to promote a common understanding of what constitutes effective practice which will embed our school vision, values and aims and support the children of Barthol Chapel School reaching their goals.

Our challenge is:

- to raise attainment and achievement
- to equip children with the skills and knowledge to be confident individuals, responsible citizens, effective contributors and effective learners for learning life and work ready to grasp opportunities and reach their dreams.

We know that the quality of learning teaching and the relationship between adults and learner is critical in ensuring the effectiveness of the learning experience and we aim to champion an aspirational approach for our children at Barthol Chapel School.

At Barthol Chapel School, we endorse the Aberdeenshire Council 3-18 Learning and Teaching Policy (2014) and our policy should be read in conjunction with authority policies and national publications in order to ensure that we meet the needs of all pupils. The aims of our Learning and Teaching & Assessment Policy reflect the Quality Indicators from How Good Is Our School 4.

<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/14033/3-18-curriculum-policy.pdf>

Fig. 7: The quality indicators

What is our capacity for improvement?		
Leadership and management	Learning provision	Successes and achievements
How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?	How good is the quality of the care and education we offer?	How good are we at ensuring the best possible outcomes for all our learners?
1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement 1.2 Leadership of learning 1.3 Leadership of change 1.4 Leadership and management of staff 1.5 Management of resources to promote equity	2.1 Safeguarding and child protection 2.2 Curriculum 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment 2.4 Personalised support 2.5 Family learning 2.6 Transitions 2.7 Partnerships	3.1 Improving wellbeing, equality and inclusion 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement 3.3 Increasing creativity and employability

Aims

- **Leadership of Learning & Curriculum (1.2, 1.3, 2.2)** – to endorse the values, principles and purposes of Curriculum for Excellence, Barthol Chapel School Curriculum Rational, vision, values and aims and development of our own learning pathways.
- **Learning, Teaching, Assessment & Innovation (2.3, 3.3)** – to deliver well planned, high quality programmes of work which focus on learning experiences, learning outcomes to deliver quality learning. To provide dynamic and purposeful opportunities which motivate, including opportunities to think creatively and innovate learners to develop responsibility for their own lifelong learning. Effective assessment is an integral part of the learning process.
- **Personalised Support & Universal Support (2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 3.1)** – to ensure we use a wide range of teaching strategies which meet individual learners needs by creating an ethos of positive discipline, providing opportunities for interaction and regular feedback and taking account of recent developments in pedagogy. To have arrangements in place to ensure continuity in learning during transitions.
- **Raising Attainment & Achievement (3.2)** – to set challenging but achievable expectations for all learners and recognise and celebrate individual and collective success.
- **Safeguarding & Ensuring Wellbeing, Equity and Inclusion (2.1, 3.1)** – to promote an ethos of achievement by creating a positive, inclusive learning environment where learners feel safe and well cared for through positive relationships.
- **Family Learning & Partnerships (2.5, 2.7)** – to develop and promote partnerships, to engage in dialogue about learning and the life of the school to ensure that learners make the best possible progress.
- **Self-evaluation for Self-improvement (1.1)** – to outline self-evaluation strategies which support staff and learner development and ensure continuous improvement & impact on learners.
- **Leadership (1.2, 1.3, 1.4)** – to develop the shared vision, values & aims of Barthol Chapel School by building & sustaining a professional staff team open to change & continuous improvement.

Curricular Design

Teachers work in partnership to ensure that the curriculum reflects the 7 design principles by:

- Providing all learners with **breadth, depth** and **progression** at all stages
- Ensuring there is continuity and progression between stages and at key transitions
- Ensuring **relevance** and **coherence** to wider life
- Providing opportunities for pupils to exercise **personalisation and choice**
- Taking account of cross cutting themes and interdisciplinary learning to ensure **challenge and enjoyment**.

Further information regarding Our Curriculum Design is contained within our Curriculum Rationale.

Curricular Planning

At Barthol Chapel School, staff use the Aberdeenshire Progression Frameworks, national benchmarks as a tool for effective planning of our curriculum. We understand our unique setting and use this to provide meaningful experience for our learners. Procedures for planning have been agreed by all staff. The aim of planning procedures at Barthol Chapel School is that it must be a tool for professional dialogue.

Learning & Teaching

All staff working within classrooms should embed the following in their practice:

- Use Aberdeenshire Progression Frameworks to ensure a coherent and progressive approach to learning and teaching
- Ensure planning builds upon children's prior learning using the information gained from appropriate assessments
- Provide a balanced range of stimulating and motivating approaches to learning and assessment which should include active, collaborative, independent and written tasks
- Take account of pupils' different learning styles
- Provide clear learning intentions, success criteria and quality feedback on how to improve
- Use a range of strategies to meet the needs of all learners including those with additional needs
- Use a range of assessment approaches which enable learners to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding, skills and abilities
- Provide opportunities for learners to be involved in reflection, planning and evaluation of their own learning and that of peers
- Ensure learners are fully involved in decisions about what needs to be done and who and what can help them
- Maintain and regularly review records of progress
- Provide parents with clear information on their child's progress, next steps in learning and how they can support their child's learning.
- Regularly evaluate the impact of learning and teaching to inform next steps in planning.

We believe that learners learn best when:

- They are happy and feel safe
- They explore, experiment and experience
- There are clear and consistent high expectations
- They are challenged and supported
- They are interested, curious and motivated
- They reflect on their mistakes and use them as learning opportunities
- They experience high quality, well-paced lessons
- The physical learning environment is stimulating and well resourced

To help our learners feel happy and safe, we will:

- treat them fairly and consistently
- show them that we work closely with their families in support of their welfare and education
- smile at them, greet them and ask about their welfare so that they develop positive, trusting relationships with adults
- value their ideas and opinions and make time to listen to what they have to say
- give them opportunities to take part in circle time, role play, show & tell, choose-do-review, pupil voice assemblies and are involved in developing & shaping the ethos and life of the school and community.
- build children's confidence and self-esteem
- provide opportunities for relaxation/energising in and between activities
- ensure that the school is visually attractive and welcoming;
- ensure that they feel 'ownership' through personal spaces, name tags, classroom responsibilities etc.
- rigorously implement equalities and positive relationships policies

To enable our learners to explore, experiment & experience we will:

- provide an interesting, tactile, visual and topic related resources to use/learn from/ask questions about
- look for every opportunity to identify success
- provide opportunities for child-led exploration and investigation
- ensure digital literacy is an integral part of learning
- invite members of the local and global community to share with children their knowledge and experiences
- celebrate variety in culture, religion and language

To enable our learners to have high expectations of themselves and others we will:

- implement the school's vision, values and aims consistently
- give children clear goals and time limits
- have high and clearly communicated expectations that every adult on the school premises will set a good example as a member of the community
- involve them in self-assessment and target setting
- explain the learning expectations clearly
- ensure that they experience success and praise every day

To enable our learners to experience a high quality curriculum we will:

- provide class teachers and support staff with day-to-day, line management support and a planned programme of career long professional learning opportunities.
- fully implement the actions identified in the School Improvement Plan with opportunities to develop leadership capacity in all staff.
- monitor the effectiveness of our learning & teaching through implementation of our quality assurance calendar which details regular self / peer evaluation opportunities, learning visits and other monitoring activities.

To ensure that the learning environment is stimulating and well resourced, we will:

- ensure that classrooms are tidy and free of clutter;
- have appropriate resources according to the varying needs of the children;
- ensure that resources are accessible to children;
- vary the learning environment, using outdoor spaces and educational visits
- set out informative, interactive and celebratory displays.

The Head Teacher will support staff by:

- Providing opportunities for professional dialogue
- Encouraging collegiate working
- Undertaking quality improvement activities
- Facilitating the sharing of good practice
- Encouraging shared moderation of standards
- Ensuring that resources are allocated appropriately
- Tracking monitoring and attainment

Structure of Lessons at Barthol Chapel School

All lessons whether group or class will commence with sharing the learning outcomes/targets with the pupils. The bulk of the lesson will be direct teaching with differentiated follow up activities. There will be a plenary session or summing up of what has been learned at the end of the lesson, whenever possible.

Teachers are at their most effective when teaching directly. We see direct teaching as being an effective teaching tool.

Effective direct teaching includes the following features:

- Varied questioning of pupils and giving clear explanations in a range of contexts
- Listening and responding to pupils and giving clear explanations in a range of contexts
- Providing pupils with feedback and checking, through questioning, that teaching points have been well made and understood
- Sharing objectives/targets with pupils when setting tasks which motivate and challenge
- Monitoring the progress and pace of learning of individuals within groups
- Responding to individual needs by identifying next steps in learning

Direct teaching is effective in introducing and consolidating work.

Direct teaching carries with it a need to ensure that tasks undertaken by pupils are timed appropriately with a clear outcome expected at the end of that time.

Organisation of Classes at Barthol Chapel School

All our classes are multi composite, and to cater for the needs of all learners, we organise them in a variety of flexible ways:

Attainment Grouping

In Literacy and Mathematics, our groups are organised by attainment. This allows time for direct teaching, based on good quality assessment evidence which is used to build on prior learning. It offers appropriate challenge and motivation for the pupils within the group and provides opportunities for pupils to move between the attainment groups.

Mixed Ability Grouping

In other areas of the curriculum the teachers can organise by attainment groups or by mixed ability grouping. The benefit of mixed ability groupings is that the presence of a range of abilities in the one classroom can allow pupils the opportunity to work together. We use working pairs and trios effectively in writing, reading and other curricular areas.

The more able and older pupils can serve as a model for others in the group/trio and an ethos of achievement can be fostered.

Managing differentiation in a class with a wide range of abilities makes demands on the teachers, and teachers need to present work in a way that motivates all pupils. In order to accommodate this we try to have no more than 4 teaching groups within a class whenever this is possible.

Individuals

In all areas of the curriculum there are opportunities for aspects of individual learning but this is often appropriate for able pupils and pupils with specific needs, particularly those with Individual Educational Plans. Teachers will plan and deliver, in collaboration with Additional Support Needs Teacher, a suitable learning and teaching programme for pupils with I.E.P.s. Able pupils may be provided with individual extension activities but at all times pupils will be given opportunities to work individually e.g. in research work, giving presentations/talks etc.

Principles of Assessment

Assessment practice will follow and reinforce the curriculum and promote high quality learning and teaching approaches. Assessment of children's progress and achievement during their broad general education will be based on teachers' assessment of their knowledge and understanding, skills, attributes and capabilities, as described in the experiences and outcomes across the curriculum.

At Barthol Chapel School, assessment is an integral part of learning and teaching. It helps to provide a picture of a child's or young person's progress and achievements and to identify next steps in learning. Assessment approaches promote learner engagement and ensure appropriate support so that all learners can achieve their aspirational goals and maximise their potential.



This diagram provides a summary of the national Framework for Assessment created to support the purposes of learning 3-18 which we base our principles on.

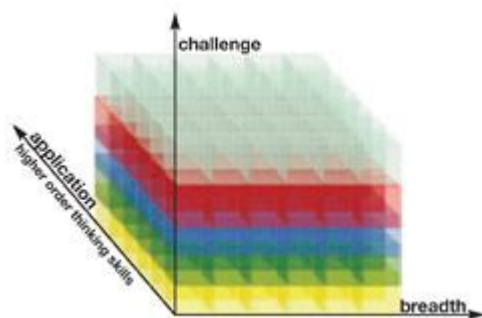
The standards and expectations that form our aspirations for all learners at Barthol Chapel are set out for the whole curriculum in the experiences and outcomes and the Nationally published Benchmarks of Curriculum for Excellence.

At Barthol Chapel School, assessment approaches help learners to show their progress through the levels and enable them to demonstrate their achievements in a range of ways which are appropriate to learning. For learners to demonstrate that their progress is secure and that they have achieved a level, they will need opportunities to show that they:

- have achieved a **breadth** of learning across the experiences and outcomes for an aspect of the curriculum
- can respond to the level of **challenge** set out in the experiences and outcomes and are moving forward to more challenging learning in some aspects
- can **apply** what they have learned in new and unfamiliar situations

Teachers can use these three aspects to decide when a learner has met agreed expectations and achieved a level, either in a part of a curriculum area such as reading, or in a whole curriculum area.

This diagram illustrates a three-dimensional view of assessment.



This approach promotes greater breadth and depth of learning, including a greater focus on the secure development of skills and knowledge. Assessing progress across a breadth of learning allows teachers to plan, track progress, summarise achievements in a rounded way and better prepare children and young people for the next stage in learning. This can also be seen when applying learning in different and unfamiliar contexts.

In all areas of the curriculum at Barthol Chapel School, the benchmarks of Curriculum for Excellence describe the expectations for learning and progression. The knowledge and understanding, skills, attributes and capabilities that contribute to the four capacities* are embedded in the experiences and outcomes and form the basis of day-to-day assessment.

**Four Capacities – Responsible Citizens, Confident Individuals, Successful Learners and Effective Contributors.*

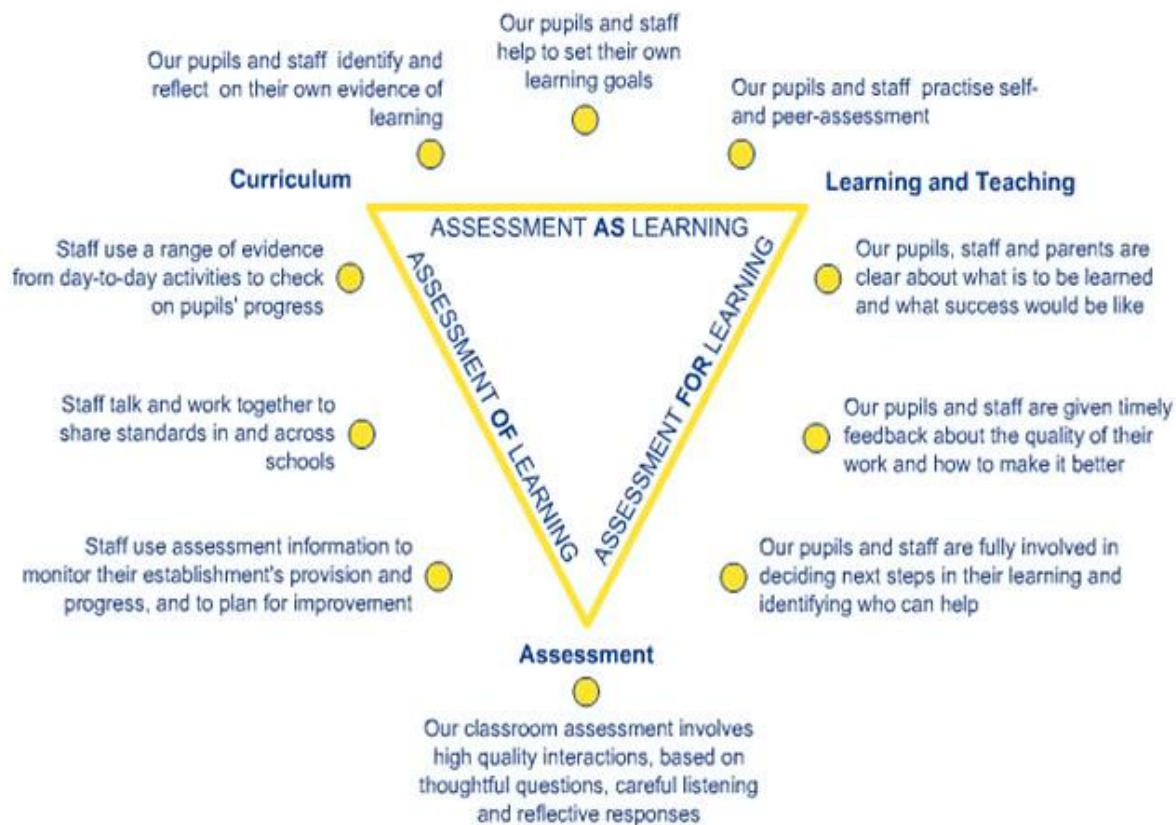
How we assess

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning cycle and is central to ongoing classroom practice.

Standardised assessments are used annually in literacy and numeracy for pupils in Primary 1, 4 and 7.

Learning conversations are used to evidence progress and establish a process of dialogue and reflection between pupils, class teacher and parents about learner's strengths, specific targets and strategies for learning.

Assessment for learning strategies, is an extension of formative assessment. It is the process of seeing and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there. It is ongoing and part of effective learning and teaching.



Why we assess?

The purposes of assessment are to:

- support learning that develops the knowledge and understanding, skills, attributes and capabilities which contribute to the four capacities
- give assurance to parents, children themselves, and others, that children and young people are progressing in their learning and developing in line with expectations
- provide a summary of what learners have achieved
- contribute to planning the next stages of learning ensuring learning is coherent, has breadth and depth
- inform future improvements in learning and teaching.

Supporting Learning

At Barthol Chapel School, staff discuss with learners what they are expected to learn. They clarify and share learning intentions and success criteria and appropriate experiences for achieving these. Both staff and learners foster a sense of achievement by sharing challenging and realistic expectations. Sharing success criteria along with learning intentions allows learners to 'see what success looks like'. With practice, success criteria can often be devised by the learners themselves.

High quality interactions between learners and staff lie at the heart of assessment as part of learning and teaching. These interactions promote thinking and demonstrate learning and development. They are based on thoughtful questions, careful listening and reflective responses and effective feedback strategies. Conversations about learning between teachers and children and young people, among teachers and among learners are part of the planned activities or experiences.

Through learning conversations, learners need timely, accurate feedback about what they have learned and about how well and how much they have learned. This helps them to move forward in their learning and to identify what they need to do next and to decide who can help them build up their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Ensuring Appropriate Support

At Barthol Chapel School, we recognise that assessment has to be fair and inclusive and must allow every learner to show what they have achieved and how well they are progressing. Staff ensure that assessment meets all learners' needs by providing each child and young person with the most appropriate support. In doing so, they ensure that every learner has the best chance of success.

For monitoring and tracking to be successful, we keep records of our learners' achievements and progress in and out of school. Staff use assessment information from a wide range of sources to monitor learners' progress and plan next steps in learning.

Monitoring Standards over Time

All staff at Barthol Chapel School are dedicated to providing the children with the best possible opportunities for learning and are committed in raising standards.

We currently work with other Meldrum Cluster Schools and our local authority officers to support the development of a shared understanding to achieve consistency in standards and expectations and build trust and confidence in our judgements and assurance that we are consistently applying and exceeding national standards and expectations.

We track the progress of all our learners. Details of procedures at Barthol Chapel School can be found in our Policy for Targeting Success.

Reporting on Progress and Achievement

Assessment information is shared and discussed with the learner, parents, other staff as appropriate, and partners involved in supporting learning. All can contribute at appropriate times to setting targets for learning and ensuring appropriate support for each child and young person.

Parents receive regular information about their children's strengths, progress and achievements. This includes brief descriptions of progress across the curriculum areas and through the curriculum levels.

In addition to individual reports on the progress of the child or young person, parents will receive information on:

- how well all learners and particular groups of learners are achieving
- the performance of children and young people in the school in relation to expected levels at particular stages in key areas such as literacy and numeracy

Points of Transition

To ensure a positive transition the use of assessment information focusing on planning and supporting learning we feel is essential at points of transition. Effective transition arrangements ensure that progressive development of the four capacities, (Confident Individual, Effective Contributor, Successful Learner and Responsible Citizen) is clearly recognised.

Staff transfer clear information about each child's or young person's progress, achievements and support needs. Staff at the next stage can use this information to ensure that they build on children's and young people's previous learning and experiences.

It is important that information on progress and achievements provides a valid and reliable account of the amount and quality of learning as concisely as possible. Information relates to aspects of learning across the curriculum and include details of personal achievements and the knowledge and skills gained through them.

Effective partnership working across transitions, including participating in moderation activities, increase the validity, reliability and shared understanding of the information.

Profiling

A profile is a snapshot of a child's or young person's best achievements at a given point in time. Profiles are primarily aimed at learners and their parents, and draw together a range of information about a child's or young person's learning. It is one of the ways in which a learner's achievements can be recognised.

Profiles produced at the key points of transition in learning at P7 emphasises learners' achievements as they complete their primary education and helps with the transition into secondary school.

The purposes of the P7 profile are to:

- provide learners with a reflective summary statement of achievement as they move from primary school into secondary school, or from S3 into the senior phase
- provide learners with a summary of achievements to help them plan for future learning and development
- challenge, motivate and support all children and young people to achieve their best
- build learners' skills and capabilities to reflect on their learning
- support and inform transition.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy has been written in consultation with staff, pupils, parents and the wider community.

A copy of the policy will be made available to all stakeholders and monitored and evaluated in line with our Quality Assurance procedures.

This policy is a working document and will be reviewed on an annual basis as informed by local and national developments.